



**The Rise and Process of Garden Culture in China, a case study of Wuxi
(up to 1949)**

By:

Xiaozhi Yang

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sheffield
Faculty of Social Science
Department of Landscape

July 2024

Abstract

The concept and existence of traditional gardens are facing a crisis in the rapid process of urbanization, particularly in non-core urban areas. This study aims to provide a new example to deepen our comprehension of distinct city gardens, add to the understanding of Chinese garden culture, and examine existing research methods. Wuxi is located in one of the concentrated areas of traditional garden construction in China, in the Jiangnan area near Suzhou and Shanghai. Despite boasting numerous gardens, it is rarely explored in research, warranting increased attention and comprehensive elucidation.

Gardens are spaces integral to daily life and social life of the gentry, constantly influenced by the social context. Therefore, the socio-political context has first been explored through literature and historical document analysis. The study of the garden culture in Wuxi is based on Craig Clunas' conclusion of five discourses for discussing garden culture in the Ming dynasty, with necessary adjustments made according to the historical materials preserved in Wuxi and the different stages of research.

Through the long-history study in a secondary-tier city, Wuxi, it can be concluded that terms such as 'traditional' or similar expressions used to describe the constancy of Chinese society in the context of gardens and garden making can be questioned. Some gradual developments and changes can be observed over earlier and longer time spans, which may not align entirely with the garden culture portrayed within the timeframes commonly tracked. As a recipient assimilating influences from regional hubs, garden culture in Wuxi lags somewhat behind the overall regional development and exhibits diversity. These two characteristics have together led to a slow or insignificant transformation of garden discourse and an insufficiently prominent garden culture. The garden culture proposed by Clunas can be applied to the discussion and extended to non-core cities and longer periods. Simultaneously, new discourses, such as ceremonial life, market, and foreign influences, have appeared.

Foreword

My initial exposure to traditional gardens was primarily centered in the Jiangnan region, which left a profound impression on me. In my master's dissertation, I chose the spatial and temporal distribution of traditional gardens in Wuxi as the focal point of my research. It kindled a strong interest in the development of both the city and its gardens. Consequently, I embarked on a deeper exploration of the city's gardens and its garden culture during my doctoral phase.

The epidemic of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on this thesis. There is a major alteration in the planned analysis of garden rituals, which was envisioned as the core component of garden culture in the thesis proposal. The original plan was based on the changes in rituals and analyzed the transformation of garden culture they showed by combining historic material with existing activities. However, the epidemic directly led to the cancellation of public events and the closure of scenic spots, making it impossible to form a complete systematic record of existing activities with the limited number of photos published on official website of the scenic spots. The first change it caused is that the analysis of materials no longer includes existing activities (rituals) data, relying solely on historic literature to complete it.

The subsequent changes are influenced by the former. In the research, I found the records are not evenly distributed in pre-modern times in Wuxi. There are few records about the rituals of Buddhism and Taoism, while there is rich and detailed information about the rituals of academies belonging to Confucianism and private gardens. At the same time, the existing activity data in Wuxi cannot be collected, losing the possibility of tracing back through comparative analysis of Buddhism and Taoism rituals. Based on this imbalance and absence of data, I believe that simply using nationally promulgated documents and ignoring the levels and local specificity for analysis contradicts the research theme I am concerned with, which emphasizes the uniqueness

of each city. The second change caused by insufficient persuasiveness is that the detailed processes of nationally prevailing Buddhist activities (which had been collected before the epidemic) will no longer appear in the main text during the final draft but will be placed in the appendix as background material for reference.

Furthermore, as a thesis written in chronological order, the collection locations and contents of pre-modern documents are relatively concentrated and are less affected by the epidemic. The modern parts of the documents are scattered, and some of them are collected and organized privately. Due to the increased difficulty of face-to-face communication and the potential impact on the health of elderly scholars caused by the epidemic, unpublished private collections cannot be accessed. Additionally, the increasing length of quarantine required for changing regions in policies has also increased the difficulty and time required to collect modern materials. Therefore, more published research rather than original materials is used for the modern part.

Due to the aforementioned three changes, the continuity of the ritual data has been lost. Eventually, the concept of ritual as defined by the Oxford Dictionary will be used as a guide for exploring the domesticated spaces in garden culture. The narrower definition of ritual (rites) in China will serve as one of the entry points. This will be reiterated in Chapter One.

During my master's studies at Peking University, I delved to history. History, to a certain extent, seeks to establish a foundation for uncovering a 'true story'. When it comes to gardens, especially the history of gardens in a city that had previously received little attention, the pursuit of authenticity seemed like an impractical goal. Nonetheless, in my relentless quest for the most 'authentic' historical narrative, particularly during the early, largely undocumented periods, I spent approximately two years without significant progress. The process involved meticulous examination, discovery of new materials, overturning of previous conclusions, and then rediscovery of new materials, leading to further revisions. Despite these efforts, I found it difficult to advance the

study of ‘garden culture’ onto the right trajectory. It was only when I became disheartened and decided to shift my focus away from the elusive early history that I was able to make progress, delving into later dynasties up to the modern era.

I did not find myself facing a second significant challenge until I finished the first draft of the thesis. This challenge revolved around my understanding of ‘garden culture,’ stemming from a limited perspective on how to perceive gardens. Despite consistently emphasizing that I regarded gardens as vibrant spaces or historical entities, it was not until I truly began to view gardens as a dynamic process, akin to ‘gardening,’ rather than merely as static objects. Consequently, during the revision phase, I made a concerted effort to consider gardens as activities rather than as artifacts enclosed in glass cases. Meanwhile, occasional interference caused by the overlap of historical data with other research topics led this thesis astray from the topic of garden culture.

The third challenge pertained to how to employ critical thinking in interpreting the data and show it in the thesis, which is crucial for narrating a coherent and engaging story. However, in China, many sources do not necessitate interpretation, and there is often no need to translate ancient texts into modern Chinese language. This is because the existence of the data is rarely questioned, and varying translation abilities do not typically affect the readability for reviewers which would be thought obvious. It was only when I realized the significance of crafting a narrative that I found myself nearing the submission deadline.

Despite my utmost efforts, my early thought processes continued to impose rigidity on my thesis, making it appear data-rich but lacking in depth of understanding. My journey has encompassed phases of confidence, doubt, moments of despair, attempts, revisions, persistence, and ultimately the rebuilding of confidence. While the thesis is not perfect, the knowledge and experience I have gained from it far surpass the significance of a single thesis. I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Jan Woudstra, for their unwavering commitment to the direction of my thesis, their unwavering confidence in me, and their

high expectations. This has provided me with an opportunity for a phoenix-like rebirth.
I will forever be grateful for this experience and for every person within it.

Written in 11May 2024

Acknowledgements

This period is distinctly exceptional, potentially constituting the most arduous phase of my life within the last three decades. The prevailing academic anxieties, the indeterminate trajectory amid the pandemic's ramifications, the isolated nature of interpersonal relationships precipitated by physical detachment, and the conceivable weight of age and gender-related apprehensions have collectively engendered a heightened awareness of my personal vulnerability and heightened sensitivity. As a result, I have found myself more inclined than ever before to seek assistance and support.

Devoid of the multifaceted support extended by numerous individuals, the fruition of this thesis would have remained an insurmountable undertaking. Foremost and of paramount significance, I want to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Jan Woudstra. His unwavering commitment was manifested through the consistent provision of invaluable counsel, adeptly steering me towards critical thinking and nurturing the attributes emblematic of an adept researcher. Concurrently, I extend my appreciative sentiments to Nicola Dempsy, my second supervisor, whose judicious guidance furnished me with expeditious methodologies to initiate writing endeavors and expedite the trajectory of my advancement during periods of data immersion. My gratitude is also extended to Colin Roth for his astute grammatical rectifications and the dispensation of sagacious advice in the realm of academic composition.

I also want to acknowledge my colleagues, who are not only my closest friends but also provided companionship and friendship during this challenging period. Dr. Wang Xiaolu, Dr. Zhai Xuezhu, Wang Rui, Dr. Ma Yueshan, Dr. Liu Wenyun, and Dr. Chen Kewei, they have all supported me and helped me through difficult times. Thanks to all my colleagues who shared their experiences on the 9th floor of the Art Tower, giving me wonderful memories. I must also express my gratitude to all the staff at the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield for their continuous support,

creating a pleasant research environment.

The completion of this research project would not have been possible without the help of the staff in Wuxi, China. I would like to thank my senior fellow student, Dr. Weng Yifeng, for providing initial leads for finding date and essential planning diagrams. I extend my thanks to the generous government officials, staff at the Wuxi Library and Museum, Director Jin Shisheng of the Mount Hui Administration, staff at the Donglin Academy, and others who provided the necessary documents. They assisted me in collecting data and offering valuable materials for my research. This also includes the local residents who were willing to share their stories with me. Their enthusiasm provided tremendous encouragement to my research.

Above all, I am most grateful to my beloved family, my parents, Zhao Yang and Yang Jiangjiang, who not only supported my academic journey financially but also believed in me when I doubted myself, and guided me when I felt restless. Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to my circle of friends, including Duan Jin, Yang Chengbo, Wang Weixuan, and Tang Fuhong. You provided a temporary sanctuary for my soul when I felt lost.

I would also like to extend special thanks to an actor, Zhang Zhehan. He and I encountered the most challenging moments of our respective lives simultaneously, yet his strength and efforts served as a beacon of hope for me, propelling me to emerge from the depths more swiftly. Three years ago, in August 2021, we were disheartened; three years later, in ‘August’ 2024, we both experienced a rebirth.¹

I want to express my gratitude to every person I encountered on this journey, making it a memorable and worthwhile experience.

¹ Zhang Zhehan, August. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLwMG6XoJ34>>[accessed 14 April 2024]

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Foreword	3
Acknowledgements	7
Table of Contents	9
List of tables.....	13
List of figures.....	14
Declaration.....	26
Introduction.....	27
Theoretical underpinning	36
Garden.....	36
<i>Garden culture</i>	42
Clunas's way	46
Research objectives and Questions	48
Methodology	49
Sources.....	62
<i>Published sources</i>	63
<i>Archaeological reports and planning documents</i>	67
<i>Field work</i>	68
Outline of the thesis	70
Term of references	72
Notes	81
Early Gardens of Wuxi.....	83
Social-political context	86
Early gardens (7th century)	89
Regional context of Wuxi	89
Worship of sages and virtue for survival's sake.....	96

The longing for mountains and rivers	104
The Sui, Tang, and Song period (1)	106
Social-political context	106
Transforming nature and Emergence of aesthetic awareness.....	109
Buddhism Temples.....	115
Starting of construction-religion and life.....	118
Buildings and Rituals in Buddhism temples	133
Plants and local stones	150
The Sui, Tang, and Song period (2) - Construction under the centralized system.....	153
The politicization of religion garden and the combination with confucianism.....	156
From temple to public landscape	165
Imperial system and the development of Confucian.....	169
Gardens shaped by Neo-Confucianism-External Manifestation of the Inner Self	187
Summary	196
 Yuan and early Ming Garden	 199
Social political context.....	199
Art exchange and Art trading space	200
Refuge and estate	213
Summary	218
 Gardens from Mid-Ming to Early Qing	 219
Social political context.....	220
Wealth: market and status	232
Rise of garden culture in Mid and late Ming: agronomy and aesthetics, Responsibility and entertainment in literati gardens.....	240
Buddhism Folkization and gatherings in artificially modified nature landscape.....	241
Preservation of agricultural concept	253
Involvement in practice of aesthetics.....	259
Entertainment areas and openness of private gardens.....	270
A place for social education and realize public responsibility	274
Academy	291
Family destiny and family temples	317
Sacrificial rituals.....	325
Preference for Large Trees.....	328
Virtuous Woman Ancestral Hall	337
Generation of discourse of ‘Garden 园亭’	351
Summary	353
 The modern garden in Wuxi (1860-1949)	 356

Social political context.....	358
Xue Fucheng's residents and garden—open eyes to see the world.....	374
Public gardens and private gardens open to the public	380
The use of all citizens	380
Activities.....	388
New site and the enlarge of garden culture.....	395
Combined design	396
New schools.....	407
Modern schools.....	407
School rituals	416
The female in modern times	419
Plants.....	427
Summary.....	430
 Conclusion	 432
A changing tradition.....	436
Recommendations for the protection and heritage activation of Wuxi's Garden culture and heritage based on research	443
A Research in a secondary-tier city.....	446
An extension of garden culture	450
 Bibliography	 455
Historic material.....	455
Book.....	467
Journal.....	475
Thesis and dissertation.....	482
Webpage.....	483
Inner information	486
 Appendix.....	 487
Appendix 1: Evolution of Wuxi County (-1949)	487
Appendix 2: Weights and measures	488
Appendix 3: Historic materials used in this thesis	489
Appendix 4: Three big migrations to south in Chinese history.....	495
Appendix 5: Summary of newly established garden in each period (-1937)	496
Appendix 6: Miner in Wuxi	498
Appendix 7: Population of Wuxi (resources comes from Geography of official History book of Tang and Song dynasties, and several Chorography of Wuxi)	498
Appendix 8: Plants in the records of Wuxi from 9 th century.....	498

Appendix 9: Species in garden space in different centuries.....	504
Appendix 10: Old trees over 100 -year-old in Wuxi Garden space (planted during 1390 to 1920)	506
Appendix 11: Old trees over 100-year- old out of the garden space.....	508
Appendix 12: Statistics of the six major industrial cities during 1911-1949	510
Appendix 13: Number of Private enterprise development of Wuxi during 1911-1949	510
Appendix 14: Examples of Buddhism rituals	511

List of tables

Table 1: Diagram of methodology and the type of source	49
Table 2: the Chinese name of most gardens appeared in Wuxi before 1949	72
Table 3: Data about Buddhism during the 3rd to 6th centuries	117
Table 4: Monthly schedule in 1335 edition	137
Table 5: the management structure of Chan temples in 1103	138
Table 6: daily schedule of monks in 1105.....	146
Table 7: The daily schedule of three periods	147
Table 8: Change of the respect orientation in the history	177
Table 9: The categories and meanings of the twelve scenic spots in the garden of Shao Bao in Ranjing Town,	281
Table 10: The categories and meanings of the fifteen scenic spots in the garden of Shao Bao in Mount Hui	282
Table 11: The establishment time and regional distribution of modern private enterprises in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River from 1895 to 1911	368
Table 12: the change of subject from the Song dynasty (960-1127) to early 20 th century.	409
Table 13: the arrangement of the 20th anniversary celebration of Donglin School ..	417
Table 14: the Value Table of Chinese Weights and Measures Units in Past Dynasties (translated by author)	488

List of figures

Figure 1: Location of Wuxi (drawn by author based on maps come from National Platform for Common Geospatial Information Services of China).....	29
Figure 2: Research area of Wuxi. The lake part has not been clearly demarcated historically and the boundary showed based on today's administrative division (drawn by author based on maps come from National Platform for Common Geospatial Information Services).....	31
Figure 3: The origin of the characters related to garden (drawn by author)	37
Figure 4: Internal journals of Wuxi Museum.....	67
Figure 5: Record of the surveys in Wuxi (photo by author)	70
Figure 6: The origin of character ‘寺’ (drawn by author)	73
Figure 7: The location of inner-city of Wuxi in the Han dynasty (redrawn by author based on Chorography of Wuxi, 1881 edition).....	87
Figure 8: Contour map of the Taihu Lake area (the altitude difference of two lines is 30m.) (drawn by author, the data comes from Tianditu, Google map, and the webpage)	90
Figure 9 Primitive social and cultural sites including stone tools, pottery, rice, etc. in Taihu Plain (Majiabang Culture 6700 -5500 ago and Liangzhu Culture 5500-4000 ago)	90
Figure 10: The distribution of Wuxi mountains (drawm by author).....	91
Figure 12 Canal system passed Wuxi area from the 4th century BC to the 7th century	

AD (drawn by author based on Ji Guohuang's work).....	95
Figure 13: Left, Expanding farming areas from 2 nd century BC to 10 th century AD (Re-drawn by author)	108
Figure 14: Two main waterways from Mount Hui to the Grand Canal and Liangxi River(drawn by author based on the map from National Platform for Common Geospatial Information Services < https://www.tianditu.gov.cn/ >).....	112
Figure 15: The historic Map of Mount Hui in the 16th century drawn by author based on Tan, Xiu (Ming dynasty), <i>Huishan Gujin Kao</i> [Records of the Mount Hui], Editor Wang Liren, <i>Wuxi Wenku</i> [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).	113
Figure 16: The historic Map Mount Hui in the 17th century --Huishan Spring was in the middle, Memorial temple of Hua and Huishan Temple in the right, and Xilu studio in the left (from Chorography of Wuxi, Qing edition).....	114
Figure 17: Unearthed Buddhist elements found within Jiangnan artifacts, such as Celadon Buddha wine bottles, small cups, and Buddha and beast mirror	118
Figure 18: the location of Huishan Temple (drawn by author).....	120
Figure 19: The distribution of early Temples in Wuxi (Drawn by author in 2015)...	120
Figure 20: Golden Lotus in Golden lotus pond and in the pot in front of the Main Hall (photo by author in May 2020)	121
Figure 21: 'Listening pine trees' Stone Bed and the 'Golden Lotus' Bridge on the 'Golden Lotus' Pond (photo by author in 2020)	121
Figure 22: the conjectural map of Huishan Temple in the 9 th century (draw by author based on Lu's description and the revolution layout of Chinese Buddhism temples)	

.....	124
Figure 23: two original layout of Buddhism temples with Indian influence (redraw by author)	125
Figure 24: Two stone Toroni Dhvajās: the Uṣṇisa Vijaya Dharani Sutra in 876 and the White umbrella Dharani Sutra in 1070 (photo by author in 2020)	125
Figure 25: Distribution of temples and the relationship with mountain and rivers in Wuxi based on county annals and field work (drawn by author)	131
Figure 26: The sight from Huishan Temple to Mount Xi and the city Center (photo by author in May 2020).....	131
Figure 27: square pond in Huishan temple (photo by author in 2020)	133
Figure 28: top the Datong Hall of Huishan temple (Photo by author in 2020)	140
Figure 29: the notice wooden board in Buddhism temples.....	141
Figure 30: the position of Incense-offering ceremony (redrawn by author based on 1103 edition).....	142
Figure 31: common layout of Chan temples.....	145
Figure 32: the layout of Monk’s Hall and Meditation Hall in different period	149
Figure 33: Wuxi in the Xianchun Period (1265—1274) in the Song dynasty (the earliest map of Wuxi that restored by Wuxi Planning and Design Institute)	155
Figure 34: re-conjectural map of Huishan temple during 13-15th century (draw by author) based on Wang Weiren, Xu Zhu, Topological Study on the evolution of early Chinese Buddhist Monasteries: Layout of Pagoda, Buddha Hall, Lecture Hall and	

Pavilion Tower, South Architecture (Paper Selection for the 5th International Conference on Chinese Architectural History),2011,4,38-49. DOI:10.3969/ j. issn. 1000-0232. 2011. 04. 038. And the tourist record in County Chronicles	159
Figure 35: top left: The location of Huishan Temple and the Meng’s Family Tombs Redrawn by author based on Yao Shuran, Diachronic growth of Ancient Gardens in the Western Suburbs of Wuxi, Doctoral Thesis, University of Southeast, 2020, p41	162
Figure 36: Conifer used in memorial areas:.....	169
Figure 37: Official school of Wuxi during 12 th -19 th century (photo by author in May, 2020. The ritual gate, Minglun Hall, and the lecture Hall were rebuilt in 1874).....	171
Figure 38: Map of official school of Jiankang 建康 in 1261 which is similar to the description of the Wuxi official school from the Chorography of Jiankang, Jingding edition	173
Figure 39: The evolution of ‘Yong’ from the Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.....	174
Figure 40: The conjectural layout of Confucius temples and Imperial colleges in the Tang and South Song dynasties redrawn by author based on Shen Yang, ‘An Indoctrinating Emblem of Imperial Capital Cities: the Evolution of Confucian Temples in Imperial Capitals’	176
Figure 41: Map of official school of Wuxi in 1574 (The darker the color, the later they were built)	178
Figure 42: The conjectural map of Wang Mang’s Imperial college made by Hu Shi 胡适(collage in blue rectangle) and the redraw map by author (without corridors)	179
Figure 43: The display of township drinking rite from Yang Fu, <i>Map of Rites</i>	184

Figure 44: left: The Ink Bamboo in the Qingbi Pavilion (Yunlin House) was drawn by Ke Jiusi. Collected in the Palace Museum in Beijing.....	207
Figure 45: Rongxi Hall, Drawn by Ni Zan in 1372, collected in National Palace Museum in Taipei.....	209
Figure 46: Top Painting of Lion Forest, drawn by Ni Zan, collected in Palace Museum of China in Beijing.....	211
Figure 47: Huilu seclusion garden 惠麓小隐 built by Meng Tong 孟潼 in the Yuan dynasty (drawn by Wang Meng in 14 th century, collected in Indianapolis Museum of Arts)	214
Figure 48: Map of Wuxi in 1494 (restored by Wuxi Planning Bureau). The red circle is the location of Chong'an Temple.....	228
Figure 49: Knickknack peddler in the Ming dynasty (without painters' names), collected in the Palace Museum of China in Beijing.	229
Figure 50: Zhenshang Hall drawn by Wen Zhengming in 1525, collected in Shanghai Museum.....	236
Figure 51: Conjectural map of Huishan Temple during 13-15 th century. The yellow part are the main gardens built based on Buddhist courtyards.....	244
Figure 52: Tea gathering in Mount Hui drawn by Wen Zhengming, in the painting was Wen Zhengming 文征明 and his friend, Cai Yu 蔡羽, Wang Shou 王守、Wang Chong 王宠、Tang Zhen 汤珍, etc. collected in the Palace Museum of China in Beijing ..	245
Figure 53: The nine elders of fragrant Hill drawn by Ma Xingzu, Freer gallery of Asin art , mid-12 th century.....	246

Figure 54: Left: Maps of four gathering of literates-Bamboo stove and tea gathering- in the early 15th century, 1476, 1483(the first three are re-drawn in the 18th century) and in the 18th century. (from Wu Yue. Hui shan Zhu Lu Tu Yong [Poems and Paintings of Bamboo Stove Chant]. Photocopy of the original engraved edition in the 27th year of Qianlong. Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Library], Volume 27. Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011.)	247
Figure 55: Top: Current situation of Bishan garden (photo by author in May, 2021)	248
Figure 56: Landscape in Mount Hui and Xi in the late Ming dynasty, drawn by Wang Yongji in his book Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty. Xishan Jingwu Lue [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)	250
Figure 57: Ideal map of temples by Daoxuan (the top is the left part and the bottom is the right part) from No.1892 Guan Zhong Chuang Li Jie Tan Tu Jing Bing Xu, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook	259
Figure 58: 4 Examples of the 50 scenery Jichang Scenery drawn by Song Maojin in early 17 th century, paper, 27.4x 24.4cm. collected in Hua's family in Taipei.....	268
Figure 59: 32 scenery of Xilin Garden drawn by Zhang Fu in 1580, collected in Wuxi Museum, 16 remained.....	269
Figure 60: Donglin Academy built by Shao Bao, the land provides by Hua Yun, Shao's student. Drawn by Hua Jiaofeng in the Qing dynasty	277
Figure 61: Portrait of Shao Bao and the Ancestor Temple of Shao (Erquan Academy) from Genealogy of Shao's Family in Xishan (Wuxi)	279
Figure 62: First two were Worshipping stone in Gu's ancestor hall	284

Figure 63: Tai Ji Tu by Zhou Dunyi from Cao Duan, <i>Tai Ji Tu Shuo Shu Jie</i> [Interpretation of Tai Ji Figure], Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook	286
Figure 64: The location of the two Donglin academy (draw by author based on 1494 city map)	293
Figure 65: Top: Mingdao academy in Jiangsu; Kuiwen academy in Jiangsu;.....	296
Figure 66: Maps of the Donglin Academy in 1733, 1752, and 1848. All of them are combine Confucius Temple and education halls from Chorography of Donglin Academy	297
Figure 67: Reading in the private houses and Reading I Ching in the autumn	297
Figure 68: 1) Reading in the boat 2) Reading in the forest 3) Reading under the banana tree 4) Reading on the way	298
Figure 69: Ritual vessels used in the Donglin Academy chorography	301
Figure 70: Left: Pictures of musical instruments used in the Donglin academy	301
Figure 71: vessels and instruments kept in Donglin academy (photo by author in May, 2020).....	302
Figure 73: Arrangement of <i>Shi Dian</i> in the official school. 1) overall arrangement inside and in the courtyard 2) offerings of the Confucius 3) offerings of the four affiliated sacrificed sages 4) offerings of the ten affiliated sacrificed Confucians (separated into two groups and each group shared a group of candle and incense sticks	303
Figure 74: Arrangement of vessels in Confucius temple (Yanju Temple) (the candle and	

incense sticks are same as the official schools) and the musical instrument of <i>Shi Dian</i>	303
Figure 75: Arrangement of <i>Shi Dian</i> in the Daonan memorial temple	304
Figure 76:Arrangement of <i>Shi Cai</i> in the Yanju temple and the Daonan temple.....	304
Figure 72: Space of Donglin academy for holding rituals	305
Figure 77: Positions in the courtyard (drawn by author based on Ritual Book of Ming and Chronicle of Donglin Academy)	306
Figure 78:Top: 1) prepare position 2) original position of all staff 3) washing hand	306
Figure 79: Examples of auspicious clothes 1) official robe 2) auspicious clothes in the Imperial college of the Ming Dynasty	307
Figure 80: Arrangement of Drinking rite in official schools (redrawn by author based on Yang Fu, <i>Map of Rites</i>)	314
Figure 81: The Scenery of Mount Jiao area drawn by Hua Po, Qing dynasty from the book <i>Liang Xi Gu Yuan</i> . Wuxi Ancient Gardens	321
Figure 82: Jichang Garden in the early Qianlong Regim (painting from the book Qin Zhihao, <i>Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian</i> [Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)).....	325
Figure 83: The Tomb of Gu Xiaogu and Gu Xiaowu in Gu's Genealogy	326
Figure 84: The native plants showed in the 18th century painting of Wuxi including pine, bamboo, sophora, willow, ulmaceae, fruit trees in rose family, etc. drawn by Wang Hui et al, Kangxi South Tour, from Wuxi to Suzhou Part, collected in the Museum of	

University of Alberta.....	329
Figure 85: old Cinnamomun camphora trees in Jichang garden and ginkgo trees in old Yugong valley (photo from Wuxi Garden Bureau, in 2020.).....	332
Figure 86: Pine and Chinese parasol trees in the middle courtyard of Bishan Club (Drawn by Shen Zhou 15th century, Bi Shan Yin She Tu Juan [gathering of the Bishan garden], paper, 31.7×206 collected by Palace Museum)	334
Figure 87 Crane in gardens paintings for Jichang garden drawn by Song Maojin and Xilin Garden, collected in Wuxi Museum	335
Figure 88: Teaching Classics by Master Xuanwen, collected by Cleveland Museum of Art Drawn by Chen Hongshou in 1638 to celebrate his aunts' birthday.....	343
Figure 89: Gardens and villas built by gentry-merchants based on natural landscape by the northern shore of Taihu Lake connected together to form a cluster over about 30 years. (1911-1931, photo from chorography of Wuxi 1994 edition)	357
Figure 90: the map of Wuxi area in 1881(The square is 3072m*3072m)	360
Figure 91: the map of Wuxi area in 1881(restored by Wuxi Planning Bureau).....	361
Figure 92: historic map of Wuxi city area in 1911 (Data from Wuxi Bureau of Surveying and Mapping)	362
Figure 93: Shanghai- Nanjing railway (map from Percy Horace Kent, Railway Enterprise in China- An Account of its Origin and Development (with maps), (All rights reserved), London: Edward Arnold, 1907, p 127)	365
Figure 94: The railway station of Wuxi in 1912 (photo collected in Wuxi Library) .	366

Figure 95: Maoxin flour factory in 1915 Zhenyi Reeling factory in 1915 Baoxin flour factory in 1915 Yeqin textile factory (all photos collected in Wuxi Library)	368
Figure 96: Distribution and development of industrial and commercial plants area in the Republic China.....	368
Figure 97: historic map of Wuxi city area in 1916, 1948, 1956, 1963, 1974, and 1982 (Data from Wuxi Bureau of Surveying and Mapping)	369
Figure 98: Clothes of Xue Fucheng and his wife (photo by author in May,2020)	376
Figure 99: Excavation Report of the central line of Xue Fucheng Garden (redrawn by author based on Internal Document in Wuxi Museum, drawn in 1999).....	378
Figure 100:The H-Shaped Building in the central line (photo by author in May, 2020) and performance stage in east garden of Ambassador Dwelling (old photo in 1950s provide by Wuxi Library)	379
Figure 101: Photo of Wuxi City Public Garden in 1911 (photo from Wuxi Cultural and Historical Materials, Volume Three (internal documentation), Wuxi Daily Printing Factory, 30 August 1981 and View of Wuxi	383
Figure 102: The south gate of Wuxi City Public Garden, from the Luo, Xinghai, Liang Mingjie. ‘The Public is the public: Garden Landscape Debate in the initial stage of Wuxi Public Garden (1905-1949)’. <i>Chinese Garden</i> , 39.1(2023): 139-144.	384
Figure 103: Map of the Plum Garden in 1930	386
Figure 104: Photo of bus for transportation between Yinglong Bridge (in the city centre) and the Plum Garden.....	387
Figure 105: Swimming pool and dance floors in the Li Garden (from Wang, Yuanyuan,	

and Song Luxia. <i>Business Genius Wang Yuqing</i> . (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technological Literature Publishing House, 2011), and Song Luxia. <i>Shanghai's Small Businesses</i> . (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2013)	390
Figure 106: the layout of the Li Garden (redrawn by author based on Ge Yiyi, Bi Yuming, Chu Yiwei from Huang Xiao, Liu Shanshan, Research of Li Garden in Modern Wuxi)	398
Figure 107: Top: The Songbin Hall (photo by author in May 2020)	400
Figure 108: Pijiang Garden and Yi Garden.....	404
Figure 109: The floor plans of Wuxi No. 1 Higher Primary School (top left), Qin Family Public School (top right), and Jingzhi Female School. During breaks, caregivers would take the students to their respective rooms for rest.(These plans were redrawn by the author based on materials from the 1930s.) ^[28, 29, 30]	413
Figure 110: the old photos of Jingzhi School in 1935	416
Figure 111:Public primary school changed by Donglin academy from Wuxi City Second Primary School Commemorative Publication.....	419
Figure 112: Staff in Jingzhi Female middle School, photo in 1930 from Wuxi Jingzhi Female middle School Commemorative Publication	420
Figure 113: Female Workers Forming Groups in Silk Factories (Selected from "Illustrated Recent Records of Women," Volume 5, Illustrated by Ms. Nanpu Huizhu, Published by Shanghai Xin Xin Novel Publishing House, 1911).....	423
Figure 114: Old photograph of female workers from the Rong family factory during the Republican period, collected at Wuxi Plum Garden (photographed by the author at the Lenong House).....	423

Figure 115: Ringing the Liberty Bell and Opening Parliament (Illustration from ‘Illustrated Recent Records of Women,’ Volume 4, by Ms. Nanpu Huizhu, published by Shanghai Xin Xin Novel Publishing House, Xuanton Year One).	425
Figure 116: Photo of All Staff of Jingzhi Female School (From the Jingzhi Female School 30th Anniversary Commemorative Publication, 1935).	426
Figure 117: Packaging of Preserved Plum with Tangerine Peel	429

Declaration

I, the author, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

Introduction

In recent years, various cities in China have placed an emphasis on cultural development in line with the Outline of the Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China. This includes the protection, utilization, and international integration of historical and cultural cities (towns and villages), cultural heritage sites, folk culture, traditional festivals, rituals, and more.² This has brought focus on local heritage and culture, and gardens have come into their own, as well as continued efforts to re-create them.

The notion of gardens as aesthetic spaces, gathering spaces, and a setting for social events has very much come to the forefront and is now part of general consciousness. Regional garden studies have become popular, yet there remains a tendency to standardize notions of the garden as the 'traditional' or 'classical' Chinese garden. However, like anywhere else in the world, garden style in China evolved over time and differed by region. Thus far, studies have not really backed this up because, even when undertaken in the regions, they concentrate on one period only and therefore lack a longer historical perspective. To explore this more fully, a different type of study is required, focusing on one city over a longer period. But, as with all pioneering work: is this possible, and can sufficient material be retrieved that tells the story of the evolution

² The State Council, 2006, the People's Government of the PRC, 'Outline of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China', <https://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2006/content_268766.htm> [accessed 08 July 2023] Copyright© www.gov.cn

The organizing department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCCCP), 2011, the People's Government of the PRC, 'Outline of the Twelfth Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China' <https://www.gov.cn/2011lh/content_1825838_12.htm> [accessed 08 July 2023] Copyright© www.gov.cn

The State Council, 2016, Communist Party Member, 'Outline of the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China' <<http://www.12371.cn/special/sswgh/>> [accessed 08 July 2023]

of styles and the socio-economic context in which they occurred?

Besides this, existing studies have traditionally concentrated on Suzhou, Beijing and Hangzhou, while studies of other places continue to be frowned upon. Therefore, would it be possible to generate a study of a regional ‘second tier’ city that would provide a prototype for such studies, encourage Chinese academia to accept broader range?

In the 1990s, Craig Clunas introduced into China the notion of garden culture to emphasise more profoundly the cultural context of gardens generally. He provided a seminal study of Suzhou, an already famous city within a limited historical period.³ Could his methodology be extended to examine garden culture over a longer period, and how much evidence is needed to provide an account and consistent narrative?

These were some of the questions that led to Wuxi being selected as a possible case study for this exercise. Since gardens are typically associated with specific centres, gardens in other places are overlooked and not considered. Consequently, they are facing a crisis amidst the rapid process of urbanization, particularly in peri-urban areas. In redevelopment, they are often compromised.

Wuxi is a typical example of this problem. Located in the southern part of the lower Yangtze River plain (Figure 1⁴ and Figure 2), near Suzhou and Shanghai, gardens have been ignored in both planning and research despite numerous references to them. To conserve the remaining ones, much more research alluding to their significance within the local context is needed. Hence, this research also serves a practical purpose: to initiate a movement of appreciation for historic gardens in their cultural contexts as a basis for their conservation.

3 Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

4 Ministry of Natural Resources of the People’s Republic of China, National Platform for Common Geospatial Information Services <<https://www.tianditu.gov.cn/>> [accessed 23 December 2021]

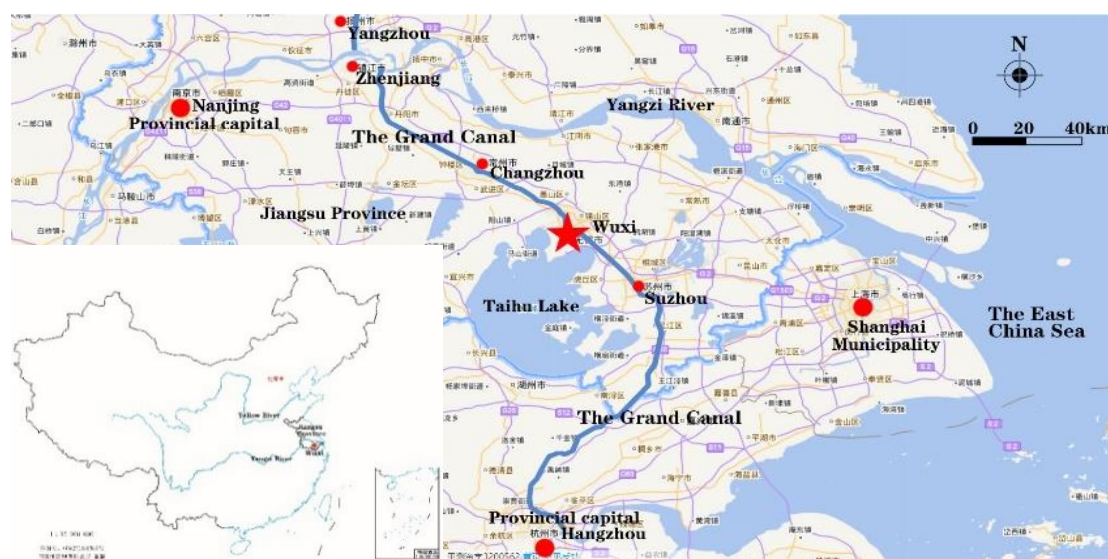


Figure 1: Location of Wuxi (drawn by author based on maps come from National Platform for Common Geospatial Information Services of China)

The thesis surveys some of the practices by local gentry or elites surrounding the idea of a garden within Chinese society, focusing on a restricted geographical area: a small city adjacent to Suzhou in the Jiangnan region, Wuxi. These practices are expressed through textual and visual representations, in the form of Chronicles, literary works collection, paintings, etc. It is necessary to translate part of records of Wuxi gardens into English to help interpret the garden culture of Wuxi. Historical information has gradually become obscure. Benefitting from its locale within the culturally thriving Jiangnan region, Wuxi enjoys a substantial repository of documented garden stories. This abundance of historical records furnishes a robust foundation upon which to substantiate the metamorphosis in garden ideologies over time, thereby affording insight into the divergent garden portrayals.

Wuxi was at the lowest administrative level, county, under the Chinese political system before 1949.⁵ Conducting research with a lengthy temporal span, the enduring stability

5 Fei Xiaotong formed a new understanding of the ‘dual-track system’ of China's social structure in ‘The Rigidity

of Wuxi's city boundaries has mitigated, to a certain extent, the complexities associated with delineating the scope of the study area, making it an ideal location for research at this scale. For consistency in the following narrative, the study area referred to as 'Wuxi' in the following thesis is shown in Figure 2. The focus of this thesis will be directed towards the period spanning from the beginning practice of gardening to the early 20th century. The devastation of World War II resulted in the stagnation of gardening and the destruction of a significant amount of infrastructure, including traces of modern Japanese botanical and design influences. After 1949, upon the ruins, an authoritative government undertook comprehensive reforms encompassing both institutional and ideological aspects. Given the stark disparities, the post-1949 development of 'Parks' and cultural research, emerging within the context of a state-owned system, will constitute subsequent endeavors.

of Basic-Level Administration' and 'Re-discussion on Dual-Track Politics'. 'On the one hand, our previous politics has imprisoned the spirit of autonomy. The political power, on the other hand, imposes extremely serious restrictions on the scope of the administrative organization, which suspends the centralized center and prevents it from entering the scope of local public welfare related to the people's daily life. Officials sent by the central government go as far as the magistrates. No longer going down. The top-down police stops when it reaches the county government gate, and it does not reach the gate of every family's house or within the gate.'

In 1993, Wen Tiejun proposed for the first time that 'imperial power does not go down below the county' (皇权不下县) in view of the country's grassroots governance strategy in historical periods, but it did not attract more attention. In 1999, he re-discussed the concept: 'Due to the small surplus of the peasant economy, although there are district and township offices below the county level, there is no fiscal system, and it is not a complete government at the first level. Rural self-government is still maintained in the countryside. Landlords and self-cultivating farmers pay taxes, while poor and hired farmers only pay rent. The smallholder economy is highly decentralized, and the transaction costs for the government to directly face smallholders are too high. The reason why this political system has lasted for thousands of years is that the ruling hierarchy is simple, the number of redundant staff is small, and the operating cost is low. In Wen, Tiejun. 'Rural Institutional Changes in Half a Century'. *Strategy and Management*, 6(1999), 76-82.



Figure 2: Research area of Wuxi. The lake part has not been clearly demarcated historically and the boundary showed based on today's administrative division (drawn by author based on maps come from National Platform for Common Geospatial Information Services)

There is little research on gardens in Wuxi, and even less on culture and value. Although there are still many celebrated gardens in China, only those in Suzhou, such as Humble Administrator's Garden, and in Beijing, such as the Imperial Garden, are listed by the World Heritage list⁶ and have been extensively studied up to this day.⁷ Historic Garden research needs to be expanded to more cities to provide a comprehensive perspective. The shared attributes of a mild subtropical monsoon climate and landforms, coupled with the historical linkage between Suzhou and Wuxi, contribute to the semblance

6 UNESCO, World Heritage List, <<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>> [accessed 28 August 2022]

7 Chen, Fenfang, 'The Summary Reviews of Chinese Garden History Studies' (unpublished master's dissertation, University of Soochow, 2017) pp.41-60

observed in the gardens of these two cities. This leads Wuxi gardens to serve as ancillary evidence to substantiate the influence wielded by Suzhou's gardens.⁸

Guo and Xia provided a brief comparison of the gardens in Suzhou and Wuxi, covering aspects such as location, owners, construction time, arts. variations in garden practices have emerged due to differences in administrative levels, geographical environments, and urban development.⁹ The differences in these appearances provide the foundation for the research in this thesis. (The reasons for its selection will be further elaborated upon in the Methodology.)

As neighbouring cities within the same regional cultural area in a unified country, Wuxi may have similar or comparative social development with Suzhou. In the narrative, it is inevitable to make comparisons with existing studies. However, the comparison with Suzhou is not the main focus of this thesis. Comparative studies with it are likely to be future work. Showing vivid and meaningful gardens is more important, focusing on why they were built and the underlying logic behind them.

Rather than viewing gardens as static expression of art, this thesis considers them as spaces integral to the daily and social life (rituals) of gentry class, who were the main owners and main users. Within the context of garden culture, this scene of life encompasses an understanding of how ideas were generated, and activities and behaviour were determined in the way they were constructed. This focus extends to the garden practices within a small city and the evolution of garden-making within socio-

8 Such as the examples Jichang Garden in Clunas, Craig., *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996) pp.67

And Qingbi Garden, Lion Forest in thesis Guo, Mingyou, *History of Suzhou Gardens in the Ming Dynasty*, (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Soochow, 2011)

9 Feng, Xiamin, 'Comparative Research between Wuxi Modern Gardens and Suzhou Historical Gardens', *Silicon Valley*, 7(2009),127-128.

Guo, Mingyou, 'Comparison between Wuxi and Suzhou Classical Garden Art', *Journal of Suzhou College of Education*, 27,2(2010),40-44 <DOI:10.16217/j.cnki.szxbsk.2010.02.011>

political contexts. These studies can deepen our comprehension of Wuxi's gardens and the garden culture in lower-tier cities in China.

The main objectives of current research in Wuxi are the restoration, repair, and preservation of existing gardens. These encompass a general history of the projects, evaluations of various landscape elements and restoration goals. For instance, Zhu chose three ancestral halls in the Mount Hui area.¹⁰ Design and artistic features of gardens can provide guidance for conservation-oriented restoration and serve as valuable reference for new garden designs. Therefore, they are the most extensively analyzed aspects which are focus on general characters of gardens.¹¹ As a result, it can be anticipated that in the future, these gardens, aside from their names, might become increasingly similar in style.

Particular phases are better represented in some cities than in others, such as the gardens of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) in Suzhou, the gardens made by salt merchants in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) in Yangzhou, and the modern (1911-1949) industrial and commercial gardens in Wuxi.¹² Focusing on modern gardens is also a notable characteristic of garden research in Wuxi. Wang was the first to publish a survey on modern gardens and summarized the five major characteristics, which include utilizing

10 Zhu, Yunfeng, 'Analysis of Construction Techniques of Huishan Garden in Wuxi City, China', *Journal of Landscape Research*, 4.9 (2012), 32–34

Zhu, Yunfeng, 'Gardening Art of Gu Dongyang's Memorial Temple in Wuxi City, Jiangsu Province', *Journal of Landscape Research*, 5.6 (2013), 16–18

Zhu, Yunfeng, Zhou Wei, 'Study on Landscape Restoration in City Memory Space: A Case Study of Temple of Lord Fan Wenzheng in Ancient Huishan Town', *Journal of Landscape Research*, 6.11/12 (2014), 43–43

11 Zhang, Xiaomei, 'Artistic Features of Spatial Layout in Jichang Garden,' *Journal of Wuxi Vocational Institute of Commerce*, 7.3 (2007), 106–9.

Zhu, Rong and Wu Yao, 'Research on the Design Features of Modern Temples and Gardens in Wuxi: A Case Study of Guangfu Temple,' *Creativity and Design*, 6 (2016), 45–50.

Chen, Ya and Zhu Rong, 'Interpretation of the Design Features of Ancestral Hall Gardens in Huishan Ancient Town,' *Design*, 34.3 (2021), 30–33.

12 Chen, Congzhou. *Shuo Yuan* [About Gardens]. (Shanghai: Tongji University Press, 2007)

the resources of Taihu Lake's landscape, typically selecting one to two species to establish thematic gardens, combining both Chinese and Western architectural styles, often offering free admission, and being owned by industrial and commercial entrepreneurs.¹³ Liu et al demonstrate their high artistic value.¹⁴ Zhu believed that the greatest historical value of modern gardens in Wuxi is that they showcased the most prosperous development of gardens in comparable cities.¹⁵ Due to the limitations of quantity, the overall analysis of modern gardens still cannot avoid certain summarizing and general conclusions.

Research on individual early gardens in Wuxi is extremely limited. Huang Xiao is among the few scholars who have conducted detailed research on Wuxi. He excels in collecting and utilizing a substantial number of materials to analyze specific cases of gardens, such as Jichang Garden, Yi Garden, Li Garden from a historiographical perspective.¹⁶ Jichang Garden stands as one of the few pre-modern gardens with

13 Wang, Wenji, 'A Research on Modern Gardens in Wuxi', *Landscape Architecture*, 28.4(2012): 88-91.

In fact, during a conversation with Mr. Huang Maoru in January 2015, it was revealed that he, as the Director of the Garden Bureau during the early years of the People's Republic of China, had already conducted a summary of modern gardens. However, this summary remained within government internal documents and was not made public. Currently, the government website contains a list of modern gardens and basic information about their historical development.

Huang, Xiao, and Liu Shanshan. 'Research on Modern Wuxi Wang's Li Garden'. *Journal of Chinese Architectural History*, 2017(01): 321-340.

Huang, Xiao, and Liu Shanshan. 'Analysis of Modern Wuxi Qin Yuliu's Lost Garden'. *Architectural History*, 2017(02): 150-159.

14 Liu, Xiaoming. et al. 'On the Artistic Value of Modern Gardens in Wuxi,' *Landscape Architecture*, 33.10 (2017): 52-56.

15 Zhu, Zhenjun, et al. 'On the Historical Status of Modern Gardens in Wuxi,' *Landscape Architecture*, 33.10 (2017): 47-51.

16 Huang, Xiao, and Liu Shanshan. 'Research on Modern Wuxi Wang's Li Garden'. *Journal of Chinese Architectural History*, 01(2017): 321-340.

Huang, Xiao, Liu Shanshan. 'Analysis of Modern Wuxi Qin Yuliu's Lost Garden'. *Architectural History*, 02 (2017): 150-159.

Huang, Xiao, 'The Study of Feng Gu Comfort Zone: An Early History of Jichang Yuan', *Journal of Architecture History*, 27.4(2011):107-125.

publicly disseminated research findings. Yugong Valley and its owner serve as witnesses to the development of private Kunqu opera troupes.¹⁷ Research on the Donglin Academy is closely related to political developments.¹⁸ The research on the latter two does not originate from the gardens themselves.

Research efforts in Wuxi have primarily been undertaken by local scholars and have not gained widespread recognition. These endeavors have expounded upon garden culture from a singular fragmented perspective, yet a comprehensive understanding of its holistic development remains deficient. In terms of the conservation and utilization of Wuxi's gardens, Guo and Zhu have concluded that numerous challenges persist, encompassing inadequate online platforms, insufficient management policies, unclear promotional strategies, inaccurate positioning and revitalization, and undue commercialization. These predicaments can ultimately be attributed to insufficient comprehension of Wuxi gardens.¹⁹ The rapid pace of urbanization has accelerated the swift disappearance of gardens. Both the conceptual and tangible aspects of gardens find themselves in a state of serious crisis, particularly concerning the distinctive local characteristics of a city. As such, this research also serves a pragmatic purpose by instigating an appreciation movement centered around historical gardens within their

Huang, Xiao, Liu Shanshan, 'The History of Qin Yao Jichang Yuan in the Late Ming Dynasty,' *Journal of Architectural History*, 28(2012)2: 112-135

17 Liang, Jie and Zheng Xin, 'A Research on Yugong Valley in Wuxi in Late Ming Period,' *Research on Landscape and Garden*, 2018(5):107-114

18 Elman, Benjamin A., 'Imperial Politics and Confucian Societies in Late Imperial China: The Hanlin and Donglin Academies', *Modern China*, 15.4 (1989), 379-418

Jiangsu Provincial Political Consultative, Conference of the Academic Seminar on Donglin Party Studies and the Academic Seminar of Xue Fucheng, inner information

19 Guo, Mingyou, and Zhou Yunhua, 'Wuxi Garden and Ancient Architecture: Current Issues in Management, Conservation, Development, and Operational Solutions', *Journal of Wuxi Vocational Institute of Commerce*, 12.2 (2012), 26-30

Zhu, Rong, and Wu Yao, 'The Research on Conservation and Development Strategies of Modern Garden Heritage in Wuxi :A Case Study of Taihud Yuantouzhu Scenic Spot,' *Creativity and Design*, 6 (2017), 21-27.

Zhu Rong, et al, 'Investigation and Research on Modern Gardens in Wuxi' *Creativity and Design*, 6, (2015), 66-97.

cultural context. In doing so, it lays the groundwork for their preservation.

Theoretical underpinning

In order to achieve the research aims of this study, the meanings and definitions of research subject and research perspective need to be first defined.

Garden

From the perspective of word meaning development, the meaning of ‘Garden’ in OED is ‘a piece of ground, usually enclosed, where flowers, fruit, or vegetables are cultivated.’ In later use, chiefly (esp. British), it refers to ‘a piece of ground adjoining a building (esp. a private property), often with grass, flowers, trees, etc., and generally used for recreation.’²⁰ This definition is based on the landscape material components. The term became associated with public properties after 1612, and humanistic landscape elements could independently form distinctive gardens separate from plants.²¹

China underwent tremendous changes in the 20th century. Since the establishment of the discipline of Landscape Architecture influenced by Western educational systems, in the Chinese context, the definition of ‘Garden’ similar to that of the Western context.

²⁰ OED, Garden, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/garden_n?tab=meaning_and_use#3217173 > [accessed 12 June 2020]

²¹ ‘as enclosed park or grounds ornamented with plants and trees, or with other displays or exhibits, used for public recreation or entertainment. Often with the type of display, entertainment, etc., specified.’ OED, Garden, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/garden_n?tab=meaning_and_use#3217173 > [accessed 1 April 2024]



Figure 3: The origin of the characters related to garden (drawn by author)

Tong Jun provides an explanation of ‘garden 園’ based on the origin of this characters. The large component ‘口’ represents the enclosing walls, while ‘土’ resembles the floor plan of a building, symbolizing pavilions and halls. The central part of the character ‘口’ represents a pond. The character ‘衣’ resembles both stones and trees.²² Although the interpretation of this character may seem somewhat stretched, when combined with other commonly used Chinese characters in early garden nomenclature (Figure 3: The origin of the characters related to garden (drawn by author)Figure 3), such as 林 (Lin),

²² Tong, Jun, *Jiangnan Yuan Lin Zhi* [Annals of Jiangnan Gardens], (Beijing: China Architecture and Architecture Press, 1963), p7

苑 (Yuan), and 園 (You), it is inferred that a ‘garden’ refers to usually enclosed land with plants, water features, and constructions, used for display (ornamentation), requiring artificial intervention. The physical composition types and primary functions of gardens are essentially similar to the explanation in OED.

Zhou identified mountains, water, plants, and architecture as the four fundamental elements constituting gardens in 1998.²³ Similarly, Zhang also advocated for using more universal intrinsic characteristics, namely material composition, to define gardens after summarizing research of the former scholars.²⁴

From both Chinese and Western perspectives, a garden is typically an enclosed outdoor space, though boundaries may not always be clearly defined. It generally comprises natural landscape elements such as plants, water, and mountain that have undergone certain degrees of human intervention, yet purely human-made constructions can also constitute humanistic landscapes. It was usually private but could possess public characteristics. Gardens served purposes such as appreciation, entertainment, and display. Given that early cultivation features are gradually disappearing, it is reasonable to speculate that perhaps more features have also disappeared or been integrated into current ones.

When considered garden as space integral to the daily and social life of the gentry class in this thesis of historical research refers to ‘garden’ as **‘outdoor areas that are artificial with plants or other landscape element; a public space or a space that allows specific groups of people to enter with a sense of belongings. It usually served as a space for living, working, and socializing, as well as a place for cultural**

²³ Zhou, Weiquan, *Zhong Guo Gu Dian Yuan Lin Shi* [History of Chinese Traditional Gardens], 3rd edition, (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 1998), p4-6

²⁴ Zhang, Jiaji, *Zhong Guo Zao Yuan Lun* [History of Chinese Gardening], (Taiyuan: Shanxi People Publishing Press, 1991), p28.

and religious activities.’

As more research is conducted within the Chinese context, the classification of Chinese gardens is gradually becoming more refined. Chen argued that ‘private gardens’ were the main focus of study, forming the disciplinary concept of garden studies in the 1950s.²⁵ In 1979, based on the study of classical gardens in Suzhou, Liu proposed that gardens are primarily divided into imperial gardens, private gardens, temple gardens, and natural scenic spots, which is similar with Zhou’s Chinese classical garden research later.²⁶

In 1988, Peng proposed the criteria ‘independent landscape significance’ for defining ‘garden’ and excluded ‘courtyards’ or ‘courtyards garden’.²⁷ This criterion is difficult to quantify and overlooks certain relationships between the entirety and components within some gardens. Although the terms ‘courtyard’ and ‘garden’ refer to different spaces in some discussion, they are consistently juxtaposed throughout the text without additional distinction in space types.²⁸ This underscores the close connection and similarity in definition between the two. Courtyards are regarded as integral parts of the garden in more discussions.²⁹ Pan emphasized that the definition of gardens should be

²⁵ Chen, Zhi, *Chen Zhi Zao Yuan Wen Ji*[Compile of Chen’s Gardening Thesis], (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press,1988),p189.

²⁶ Liu, Dunzhen, *Suzhou Gu Dian Yuan Lin*[Classic Gardens in Suzhou],(Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press,1979),p10.

Zhou, Weiquan, *Zhong Guo Gu Dian Yuan Lin Shi* [History of Chinese Traditional Gardens], 3rd edition, (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 1998), p4-6

²⁷ Peng, Yigang, *Zhong Guo Gu Dian Yuan Lin Fen Xi*[Analysis of Chinese Classica Garden],(Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press,2005), p14

²⁸ Liu, Yonglian. A probe into the flow marks of Western-Asian Culture in Tang Gardens and courtyards. *Collection of Essays on the History of the Tang Dynasty*,2009,(00):167-187.

²⁹ John S. Reynolds, William P. Lowry, The Garden in the Building: Cordoba’s Courtyards, *Landscape Journal*, 15.2 (1996) 123-137, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3368/j.15.2.123>.

Yasser, Tabbaa, Towards an interpretation of the use of water in Islamic courtyards and courtyard gardens *Journal of Garden History*, 7,3 (1998), 197-220

based on more fundamental criteria.³⁰

Following this episode, the scope of garden studies expanded after the 1990s, with a continuous trend of increasing classifications. Clunas proposed the type of ‘public landscapes’ based on discussions regarding land functionality, including cemeteries, memorial halls, bridges, and archways.³¹ This type of garden shares similarities with the previously mentioned definition of gardens possessing socio-cultural value. Based on the primary purpose of gardening, ‘landscape creation,’ Pan also introduced new types of gardens, bonsai and government office gardens.³²

For the purpose of distinguishing the significant social-political context differences between the new government of the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of China, there is a clear temporal boundary for ‘gardens’: namely, those built before 1949 are considered historical, classical, and traditional, which constitutes the narrow definition of ‘garden’.³³ Conversely, the broad definition encompasses both built before and after 1949 and is translated as ‘landscape,’ which has replaced ‘garden’ as a new disciplinary concept. Research subjects include urban greening and landscape at different levels, in addition to gardens.³⁴

Due to the emphasis on the temporal boundary, these three descriptive adjectives have

Deng, Weihua. Village gardens and residential courtyards in southern Anhui. *Heilongjiang Science and Technology Information*, 18,(2010):302.

³⁰ Pan, Guxi, *Jiangnan Li Jing Yi Shu* [The Art of Jiangnan Landscape Arrangement], (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2001), p1-4

³¹ Clunas, Craig., *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996) pp131-136

³² Pan, Guxi, *Jiangnan Li Jing Yi Shu* [The Art of Jiangnan Landscape Arrangement], (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2001), p1-4

³³ Cao, Lindi. *Zhongguo Yuanlin Wenhua* [Chinese Garden Culture] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press, 2005), pp.4-6

³⁴ Wang, Juyuan, *Zhong Guo Gu Dai Yuan Lin Shi* [History of Ancient Chinese Gardens],(Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press, 2006), Preface.

created a static context that implies a sense of immutability for gardens before 1949. Therefore, the author believes that excellence in a particular stage cannot replace the entirety of the process. Hence, the stage of research conducted by the author focuses on the evolution of garden culture before 1949.

The garden types are mostly based on chapter titles in local chronicles, such as *Guo Chao Gong Shi* (国朝宫室 Palaces of the National Dynasty), *Yuan Shu* (园墅 Garden and Estates), *Yuan Chi* (园池 Garden and Pools which were usually recording private ones), *Si Guan* (寺观 Buddhism and Daoism Temples), *Ci Miao* (祠庙 Memorial Temples and Ancestral Halls), *Xing Sheng* (行胜 Scenic Spots).³⁵ The later addition of *Xian Zhi* (县治 Government Offices), *Xian Xue* (县学 Official County School), *Shu Yuan* (书院 Academic Garden), etc., follows the same logic., follows the same logic. The classification remains conservative, maintaining similarity with continuously updated local chronicles, which simplifies conflicts in the overall history research. Since modern times, garden construction and classification have been influenced by the new social cognition of ‘public attributes,’ leading to the addition of the classification of ‘public gardens.’ These classifications of garden types are primarily based on the main users or managers. There are also gardens based on landscape elements, such as chrysanthemum gardens, waterside gardens, and so on. Apart from imperial gardens, these classification names have also appeared in Wuxi.

Considering that these types overlap to some extent, for example, imperial gardens belong to a special category of private gardens, and both official buildings and private gardens are primarily used by scholars. Therefore, to simplify research, the types are the result of translating commonly used names for gardens, rather than using types as the basis for discussion. (The English translation and brief introduction of gardens in

³⁵ Zhu, Yizun (Ming), *Ri Xia Jiu Wen Kao* [Records of the Capital], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook
Chorography of Wuxi (mult-edition)

Wuxi are listed in Term of references)

Garden culture

To interpret gardens from a comprehensive perspective, the term ‘garden culture’ should encompass various influences and resources involved in creating and maintaining a garden, including both tangible and intangible dimensions. These meanings are particularly apt within the context of gardens.

Garden culture is a common term in both academic and popular publications. However, its exact meaning is somewhat overlooked. There is no entry for ‘garden culture’ in the Encyclopedia Britannica, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), or the Oxford Companion to Gardens. The term is not clearly defined in academic papers or books. This might suggest that garden culture is either simply a part of ‘culture’ and therefore does not require a separate definition, or that the meaning of garden culture is too diverse to be defined in a straightforward way.³⁶

Since no readily available reference exists, we can begin by analyzing the broader meaning word of culture. The word ‘culture’ has multiple origins, partly borrowed from French and partly from Latin. Its etymology is associated with ‘cultivating, formation, training, etc.’ before the 13th century. More meanings, such as ‘intellectual and artistic conditions,’ were added in the late 18th century.³⁷ In China, ‘culture’ is considered the sum of material and spiritual wealth created by humans throughout social and historical development, specifically referring to spiritual wealth such as literature, art, science,

³⁶ Gao, Lei, Dietze-Schirdewahn, A. ‘Garden culture as heritage: A pilot study of garden culture conservation based on Norwegian examples’, *Urban forestry & urban greening*, 30, (2018) 239–246. doi: 10.1016/j.ufug.2017.03.010.

³⁷ ‘Culture, n’, OED Online. March 2019. Oxford University Press. <<https://www.oed-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/45746?rskey=KHqkW3&result=1&isAdvanced=false>> [accessed 11 May 2019]

and education.³⁸ Both interpretations emphasize generality and comprehensiveness. Therefore, garden culture can be considered a holistic interpretation of gardens.

Existing research on garden culture provides more specific explanations, such as:

Similar to this thesis, one approach analyzes the etymology of the term. The word ‘garden’ is both a noun, referring to the physical entity, and a verb, meaning ‘to tend or cultivate a garden; to carry out horticultural work.’³⁹ Gao posits that garden culture is therefore the culture of gardens and gardening that 1) the artistic and intellectual development or the refinement of gardens and gardening; 2) distinctive thoughts, behaviours, customs or products associated with gardens and gardening that belong to a group of people in a certain period.⁴⁰

Clunas, based on an unconventional historical perspective, connects gardens with the concept of ‘landed property,’ representing a ‘partial alternative history’ within a limited time and space. The garden culture was ‘firmly imbricated in discourses of property, social status, art, numerology, and the understanding of plants.’⁴¹

Many Chinese scholars place garden culture within a broader scope, connecting it to the essence of the Chinese people or nature. Cao Lindi, for instance, regards Chinese garden culture as a distinct realm within Chinese culture, where gardens represent the inner worlds of scholars. The cultural essence of gardens thus transforms into the

³⁸ Lv, Shuxiang, Ding, Shengshu, *Xian Dai Han Yu Ci Dian* [Modern Chinese Dictionary] (7th Edition), (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 2016) Applications

³⁹ OED, Garden, < https://www.oed.com/dictionary/garden_v?tab=meaning_and_use#3220444 > [accessed 1 April 2024]

⁴⁰ Gao, Lei. and Dietze-Schirdewahn, A. (2018) ‘Garden culture as heritage: A pilot study of garden culture conservation based on Norwegian examples’, *Urban forestry & urban greening*, 30, pp. 239–246. doi: 10.1016/j.ufug.2017.03.010.

⁴¹ Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996) pp205-207

culture of the county and literati.⁴² Wang Yi skillfully uses literature to establish a foundational understanding of Chinese garden culture. By emphasizing the subjective agency of individuals, particularly hermits, his work became an influential backdrop for garden research, although lack of facts in the history of Chinese garden.⁴³

Jin Xuezhi asserts that garden culture serves as a form of cognition and expression of human thought, interpreting gardens through psychological cognition from the perspective of ideological history.⁴⁴ Chen Congzhou approaches the techniques of gardens and Chinese cultural traditions from a subjective aesthetic perspective, identifying Yi Jing 意境 ‘artistic conception’ as a keyword in garden culture.⁴⁵

In contrast to the material aspects of studying garden culture, Wang Tiejun highlights the acquisition of a definitive meaning within garden culture, emphasizing the imparting of forms with memory and symbolic significance through ‘masters,’ who view the world through a value system, constitutes the interpretation and repeated revision of gardens and landscapes.⁴⁶

Similarly, some western scholars, such as Fletcher Steele, view Chinese gardens as examples of interpreting and promoting certain ideals and moods of gardens and their designers.⁴⁷ And, in the research of Wing-Tsit Chan, nature is considered as supreme

⁴² Cao, Lindi. *Zhongguo Yuanlin Wenhua* [Chinese Garden Culture] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press, 2005), pp.4-6

⁴³ Wang, Yi, *Yuan Lin Yu Zhong Guo Wen Hua* [Garden and Chinese Culture], (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1990)

⁴⁴ Jin, Xuezhi, *Zhong Guo Yuan Lin Mei Xue* [Chinese garden aesthetics] (second edition), (Beijing, China Architecture & Building Press, 2005) perface

⁴⁵ Chen, Congzhou. *Shuo Yuan* [About Gardens]. (Shanghai: Tongji University Press, 2007)

⁴⁶ Wang Tiejun, *Zhu Ren de Ju Chu: 'Kan' Shi Yu de Gu Dian Yuan Lin Wen Hua Yan Jiu* [The Residence of Masters: Classical Garden Culture Research in the Perspective of 'Viewing', Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2011) abstract

⁴⁷ Fletcher, Steele, ‘China Teaches: Ideas and Moods from Landscape of the Celestial Empire’, *Landscape Architecture*, XXXVII(1946-1947),88-93 and *Gardens and People*, (Boston, 1964) p205

and unquestionable, transcending human capabilities and beyond subjective human will.⁴⁸

Chinese research scholars often have a literary foundation, influenced by implicit ideological impacts. These interpretations of gardens from the perspective of Chinese culture have presented comprehensive cultural aspects while losing a certain subjectivity towards the subject of 'garden'.

Clunas criticizes this perspective as often biased, arguing that linking gardens with overarching traits of Chinese culture can lead to assembling a collection of mutually reinforcing statements that reflect a common expression.⁴⁹ He asserts that understanding gardens requires considering them within the context of their times and social thought, which influenced their appearance and associated activities, including politics, economy, and thought. Practically, conducting research that blurs specificities may result in indistinct characterizations of garden imagery and concepts across ambiguous temporal phases. This conflation can lead to the loss of crucial regional distinctiveness.

This is certainly possible because, for researchers, the traits exhibited by the Chinese may serve as a straightforward backdrop compared to the extensive regional and historical data concerning gardens. Given the current trend in Chinese garden studies, there is a significant effort to avoid oversimplification and generalization in understanding 'Chinese gardens.'⁵⁰

In conclusion, most scholars, within the framework of materialism, despite differing

⁴⁸ Chan, Wing-Tsit, 'Man and Nature in the Chinese Garden', in Henry, Inn, *Chinese Houses and Gardens*, ed. Shaochang Lee, revd edn, (New York, 1950)

⁴⁹ Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996), pp 12

⁵⁰ Gu, Kai, *Mingdai Jiangnan Yuanlin Yanjiu* [Research of Jiangnan Gardens in Ming Dynasty] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press, 2008)

perspectives, the objectives of the research on garden culture in this thesis align with most of those presented in the literature, aiming to comprehensively showcase the culture of garden and gardening. Given that the thesis considers gardens as daily spaces, the term **‘garden culture’ is helpful in defining both the practice of gardening, with the use, traditions and rituals, as one holistic term** that enables this to be approached from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Clunas’s way

Clunas will also serve as the theoretical foundation for the discourse in this thesis. Considering Clunas’ emphasis on the subjectivity of gardens and his in-depth cultural interpretations, which align closely with the fundamental goals of this paper—understanding the historical processes of garden culture in a secondary city—the preference leans towards adopting Clunas’ analytical direction.

In order to achieve the objectives of this thesis, which aims to decipher the garden culture of one city, reference has been made to the research of Clunas.⁵¹ The focus of his work lies in the ‘accounts of the garden,’ and thus, efforts will be made to avoid broadening the discussion into larger topics that could lead to ‘mutually reinforcing statements.’ Instead, a writing approach will be adopted that emphasizes the ‘vivid and dynamic changes process’ over the ‘eternally unchanging abstract essence’.

Clunas initiates his exploration by delving into specific gardens, effectively illustrating certain aspects of garden culture. He undertakes an open-ended investigative study, utilizing a broader range of accessible resources as the foundation for the historical examination of gardens. This approach diverges from conventional literary notions, situating gardens within their contemporary contexts, encompassing sociological, economic, political, and other dimensions. Despite the potential for internal

51 Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

contradictions in his viewpoint, these discrepancies serve to highlight the multifaceted nature of the complex representation of gardens.

Through a comprehensive survey of diverse materials, including gazetteers, garden accounts in literary works, garden paintings, and genealogical records, he identifies a shift in the conceptualization of gardens over time in 200 years- a transition from spaces of production to those of aesthetic appreciation and luxury possessions. The reputation of gardens becomes intertwined with the accomplishments of artistic endeavors, thereby homogenizing the social status of artists and officials to some extent. By scrutinizing the attitudes of individuals and specific families toward garden culture, gardens usually show an integrative nature that is both economic and aesthetic. The elevated social status of gardens finds expression in social networks and public landscapes. In this phase, the discourse surrounding 'gardens' gains increasing authority, as the influence of agronomy on gardens encounters challenges from aesthetics. Moreover, certain spiritual connotations are discernible within texts concerning the arts and numerology.

Clunas concludes that the practice of Garden before the 20th century was 'firmly imbricated in discourses of property, social status, art, numerology and the understanding of plants',⁵² which also serve as the original focal points of this thesis discourse. However, these aspects do not constitute the entirety of garden culture, a fact that Clunas acknowledges. For instance, the interplay among temples, academies, and gardens, as well as the manifestation of gardens within the female demographic, remains largely unexplored. These topics will also be encompassed in the discourse concerning Wuxi, adding to the breadth of the discussion on this thesis.

His research concentrated on Suzhou (including some in Beijing), the political, cultural,

52 Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996) pp.205-207

and economic center in the Jiangnan area, where gardens are exceptionally outstanding in China. Additionally, the Ming Dynasty was an important but relatively short period in Chinese history. He points out that compared to the ‘rapidly shifting cultural and political contexts’ of the 20th century, the ‘long centuries’ before it may have been ‘sustained stable’ with ‘unchanging meanings that were generally asserted at all levels of Chinese society.’ He may have overlooked the variances in practices brought about by city status and the formation and evolution of early garden ideologies, as traditions are not invariably static. Whether his methodology could be extended to look at garden culture over a longer period will be examined in the thesis, and it is also anticipated that a greater variety of evidence can be uncovered.

Research objectives and Questions

This thesis seeks to enhance an understanding of the Chinese gardens culture through the exploration of a long history of one city, Wuxi. By researching a so-called ‘regional-second-tier’ city, it aims to provide a prototype for rich research and encourage further study of garden culture. Additionally, it serves as a testbed for examining the extensibility of Clunas’s research methodology. In doing this, it hopes to contribute to the conception of gardens in history, including their creation and use, and to provide guidance for current conservation strategies and practices.

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, the research questions of this thesis include:

- 1, How have socio-economic and political aspects influenced the garden culture in one Chinese city?
- 2, How did fashion affect design and material culture?
- 3, What do garden and open spaces reveal about use and ritual?

Methodology

The interdisciplinary study of the interpretation of gardens culture requires an examination of its history and an exploration of motivations influenced by various factors. Qualitative research methods were applied in this study. These methods include the interpretation of images and texts, as well as comparison and diachronic analysis to examine changes in the connotation of gardens over time and uncover the ways in which garden spaces reflect the political, social, cultural, and religious thought of the users and their communities. Surveys of existing gardens help reveal detail on scale, location and materials, but can also provide insights into the meaning of the use, disappearance, or preservation of garden space.

Table 1: Diagram of methodology and the type of source

Source	Textuality documents of Wuxi Garden	Source type	location
		Local chorography (annals)	Wuxi Wenku ⁵³ in Wuxi Library
		Gazetteers of landscape and scenery	Ancient and local books room in Wuxi library
		Inscription	
		Complete works of literatus including Diaries and letters	
		Garden Paintings	Collections and the App of Wuxi Museum (local and online)
		School and Academy Rules	
		Buddhist precepts and regulations	
		Novels	Wuxi Natural Resources and Planning Bureau (local)
		Maps	
		Folk story	
		Concepts of Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism	Internal library of Wuxi Archaeological Institute in Wuxi Museum(local)
			Wenjin Building-Ancient Books library of the

⁵³ Edit by Wang, Liren, et al, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi library], (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-12)

It mainly collects the writings of Wuxi writers before 1949 and the historical documents related to Wuxi including a total of five series, 100 volumes. The five series are ‘Official Chorography’, ‘Monographs of Local Historical Materials’, ‘Genealogies and Bibliographies’, ‘Other Historic Documents’ and ‘Collection of pre-Modern and Modern Famous Works’.

		The development of rites (Confucian Zhou rites, Kaiyuan rites, Ming rites, Qing regulations, etc.)	National Library (CN)
		Local gentry and families under the background of political centralization system	Ancient Books Depository-Peking University Library (CN)
		Buddhism and Daoism in special period (southern dynasty, Tang, and Yuan)	National library of China < http://read.nlc.cn/thematDataSearch/toGujiIndex >
		Images of Women and Farmers	The Palace Museum< https://www.dpm.org.cn/home.html > (CN)
		Other images	Library of the University of Sheffield (UK)
			National Palace Museum < https://www.npm.gov.tw/ >(CN)
			Library of Congress < https://www.loc.gov/ >(US)
			Zhong Hua Zhen Bao Guan < https://ltfc.net >(CN)
			<i>Donglin</i> Academy, Mount Hui Scenic Area, etc. (internal information, website, official account)
			(local)
	Document	Archaeological report and planning maps	Wuxi Museum and Wuxi government
	Fieldwork	Site investigation	Sites and stakeholders
		Status quo	Xi-Hui Park area:
		Relics	Huishan Temple, Bamboo Stove House,

			Huishan Spring (Er Quan), Jichang Garden, Erquan Academy, Hu Garden (Yugong Valley), Bishan Club, Xilu Studio, etc. Memorial temples in the Huishan historical Town: Memorial Temple of filial son Hua Bao, Lu Yu, Five sages, soldiers, etc. Ancestral Hall of Four model of <i>Yang</i>, princess's husband <i>Guo Mengyu</i>, <i>Gu</i>, et. City centre: <i>Donglin</i> Academy, County School, Xue Fucheng house and its Garden (Qin Shi Di), Fushou Hall and Yi Garden, Wanbei Hall, Sun Kuijun House, Chong'an temple, Central Park. North shore of the Taihu Lake: Plum Garden, Li Garden, Hengyun Villa, Taihu Villa, Hushan Cottage, Rujing Hall, Huazang Temple, Wangqin Hall, etc. Other areas: Nanchan Temple, the Grand Canal with kiln factory out of the south gate of Wuxi city center. Gu Xiancheng's House and the temples in Zhangjing town. Zhaosi Hall, Memorial halls and tombs of Taibo, Noble Tombs in the Spring and Autumn period and Warring States in Hongshan Town.
		Plants	Jichang Garden, Huishan temple, Huishan Spring, Donglin Academy, Plum Garden, Li Garden, Bishan Club, Memorial temple of Hua
		Oral information	Huang Maoru, former director of Wuxi Gardens Bureau Weng Yifeng, Director of the Overall Planning Management Division of Wuxi Natural

			Resources and Planning Bureau. Jin Shisheng, owner of Huishan Temple Scenic Area Management Office Monk of Huishan Temple, Monk <i>Guolian</i> of Huazang Temple Residents
Critical analysis	history criticism rethinking		Re-textualization and Interpretation
	Multiple influence factors		
	Expression and Utilization of Garden Ritual		Chronological Narrative
	Feminism		Comparative Analysis
	Bottom layer		Archive analysis Historical Spatial Analysis of restored space and historical Image

Step 1, The selection of Wuxi as the research site and the preliminary confirmation of the content and structure of the thesis.

Crucially, Wuxi offers ample access to comprehensive garden records, and is comparable in size and nature to other cities' landscapes. The experience of one-year dissertation research on urban landscape planning in Wuxi, along with the disregard voice by Suzhou researchers for this city, fostered the aspiration to delve even deeper into the intricate tapestry of Wuxi Gardens.

The fundamental rationale for its selection lies in the greater accessibility of archival records pertaining to its garden. Collaborative efforts with officials from Wuxi's Urban Planning Bureau have yielded valuable resources and avenues of further information. The local government in Wuxi has consistently demonstrated a commitment to transparency, facilitating public oversight and citizen services. Historical archives and internal materials preserved within its libraries and museums are readily accessible for study—an attribute that, while seemingly expected, is often hindered by irregular

library hours and cumbersome procedures for historical data gathering. These challenges were further exacerbated by the global pandemic that persisted from January 2020 to December 2022. The isolation policies imposed during the pandemic curtailed both access to archives and field research for this thesis. They also affected use and conservation efforts. Certain garden-related rituals that had already recovered, including the Shi Dian ritual in academies, came to a halt during the period. Some gardens were compelled to close. Altogether, this study predominantly relies upon reprinted, digital, and published historical records as sources.

Wuxi has derived significant advantages from its close association with its neighbouring cities, Suzhou and Shanghai. These cities have consistently remained at the vanguard of horticultural practices within the thriving Jiangnan region, although the outbreak of World War II completely interrupt the traditional process. The sustained cultural interactions, spanning diverse epochs of transformative social ideologies encompassing religious influences and global cultural inputs, have further contributed to Wuxi's distinct garden culture. Additionally, the auspicious occasion of the Qing Emperor's Southern Tour has afforded Wuxi an opportunity to enhance its reputation.

The research is limited by time and resources. It was impossible to analyze all records of gardens even in one city. As a result, most of the examples and demonstrations are focused on a few gardens. These representative instances, along with other documented accounts of gardens, suffice to accomplish the writing of the thesis. To interpret the history and the varying concepts of gardens across different period, an extensive collection of historical sources is essential. These will be comprehensively presented in Step 2, Step 3 and 'Sources' section.

The time span of the garden practice in Wuxi is vast, making it the most fundamental starting point for adopting a chronological narrative. This approach aligns with the laws of historical progression and easily shows the impact of changing fashions on gardens. Almost all research involving temporal changes adopt a narrative structure based on

chronological order. Due to the imbalance between the available materials from different periods, there is an inevitable tendency to focus more on the periods after the Ming dynasties. The chapters covering these later periods maybe shortened to several decades or even a few years, whereas earlier periods often span several centuries.

The focus of this thesis is not to emphasize the uniqueness of Wuxi's gardens but rather to enhance the understanding of a city's gardens. The concepts from different periods will be presented in a comparative manner. Considering Wuxi's relative unfamiliarity to most people and existing research presenting a somewhat biased perspective, comparative analysis with neighbouring areas like Suzhou and Shanghai have been appropriately introduced. This is done to expedite the construction of a more accurate assessment of Wuxi's true hierarchical position, economic conditions, and garden practices.

In the utilization of garden space, spatial analysis will be employed through the use of conjectural space and historical images. This analysis will aid in quickly understanding the process of ceremonies, as well as the spatial experience of gardens at different scales. Rites in gardens include folk customs and gatherings in public gardens, as well as private garden rituals such as sacrifices and discussion meetings.

Step 2, Conducting the initial literature review of official sources such as Wuxi County Annals and countrywide history within the research timeframe. This includes gathering foundational information on Wuxi gardens, preliminarily identifying representative cases for the thesis, delineating chapters, and contextualizing within the social-political context.

Archival research is the bread and butter for history research, as paradigmatic a disciplinary marker.⁵⁴ Been tight link to state power, archives are usually written after

⁵⁴ Michelle T. King, *Working With/In the Archives*, Chapter 2, of Edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire 'Research

the events have occurred and can be preserved for thousands of years. As typically exposed and fragmented, the history of institutional record-keeping is largely ‘a story of dispersion and loss’ that they are often subject to special maintenance during long-term preservation.⁵⁵ Official chronicles are the most easily preserved and found. As an integration of local information, it serves as the foundation for retrieving records of gardens and further expanding search clues. Based on the definition of gardens, a list of Wuxi gardens is summarized, including names, addresses, owners, eras, brief descriptions, etc. Subsequently, a classification table of the material composition of the collected garden data is prepared (Appendix 8 Plant Table).

Selecting Garden examples: As articulated in the introductory section, while the quantity and overarching artistic quality of gardens in Wuxi may not rival those of Suzhou and Beijing, there nonetheless exist certain gardens that exhibit representative manifestations during specific historical periods. A total of six gardens, alongside Memorial Temples within the Mount Hui District, have successively attained the status of national-level cultural heritage preservation sites.⁵⁶

Methods for History’, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012), pp27-47.

⁵⁵ Randolph Starn, ‘Truths in the archives’, *Common Knowledge* (New York, N.Y.), 8.2 (2002), pp387–401

⁵⁶ The ‘National Key Cultural Relics Protection Unit’ is the highest protection level approved by the Cultural Relics Administrative Department of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (State Administration of Cultural Heritage). The 8 units in Wuxi are Jichang Garden, Zhaosi(declare to heir) Hall, Donglin Academy, and Taibo Memorial Temple and Tomb in the Ming, Xue Fucheng’s House in the late Qing, Plum Garden and Qing Bangyan’s House in the modern China, and the landscape group of Ancestor Halls in the Mount Hui area. From Webpage: State Council, ‘Notice of the State Council on Announcing the Third Batch of National Key Cultural Relics Protection Units’, State Council, 2014 <http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2014-07/21/content_2721163.htm> [accessed 24 November 2023]

State Council, ‘Notice of the State Council on Announcing the Fifth Batch of National Key Cultural Relics Protection Units and Merging Projects with Existing National Key Cultural Relics Protection Units’, State Council, 2014 <http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2014-07/21/content_2721168.htm> [accessed 24 November 2023]

State Council, ‘Notice of the State Council on Approving and Announcing the Sixth Batch of National Key Cultural Relics Protection Units’, State Council, 2006 <http://www.gov.cn/zwqk/2006-06/02/content_297818.htm> [accessed 24 November 2023]

Some gardens have more historical records, some gardens have been preserved from the historical periods to the present, and some gardens have been constructed by less common garden owners, etc. These examples are included in the analysis data to achieve a more comprehensive interpretation of Wuxi's garden culture. Select gardens with extensive and detailed coverage of materials, often with abundant records in private archives, which can be further explored as targets (Selection Principle 1). Choose cases with unique features, representing niche aspects of garden culture, which serve as effective supplements to comprehensive analysis (Selection Principle 2). Combining fieldwork with planning drawings and the current state of gardens, select gardens with high preservation (or restoration) levels as examples for further exploration (Selection Principle 3) (Table 2) .

Dividing chapter structures: Based on the foundational information of Wuxi gardens (Appendix 5) and referencing Zhou Weiquan's development cycles of Chinese garden history, the research phases are delineated as chapter structures.

Emergence Phase (1st - 13th century AD): Various common types of gardens emerged during this period, guided primarily by active ideological influences (the reasons they are considered as one chapter is detailed in the beginning of the chapter 2). Except for Buddhist temples, the number of gardens was relatively limited (Chapter 2).

Transitional Phase (14th century): Aesthetic ideologies became the primary objectives of garden construction in Wuxi under the influence of economic policies (Chapter 3).

Flourishing Period (15th - mid-19th century): Wuxi's garden construction reached its

State Council, 'The State Council approved and announced the seventh batch of national key cultural relics protection units', State Council, 2013 < http://www.gov.cn/gzdt/2013-05/03/content_2395234.htm > [accessed 24 November 2023]

first peak during this period (Chapter 4).

Golden Age (1860-1949): Wuxi surpassed its subsidiary status to Suzhou and became a leader in modern Jiangnan gardens (Chapter 5).

Table 2: The main gardens chose in the research

Time	Gardens
Emergence Phase (2nd century - 13th century)	First section: Memorial Temple of Taibo, Memorial temple of Chunshen, Memorial temple of Filial piety Son Second section: Huishan Temple 惠山寺 and Mount Hui public Landscape Third section: County School, Jiang and You's Garden
Transitional Phase (14th century)	Yuan Dynasty: Yunlin Garden End of the Yuan dynasty: Meng's Garden, Hua's Garden Early Ming: Wansong Garden
Flourishing period (15th - mid-19th century)	Mount Hui Scenic Area, Chongan Temple, Zhongxiang Hall, Jichang Garden (include the Memorial Hall), Yugong Vally, Shao Bao's academic Garden, Donglin Academy,
Golden Age (1860-1949)	The end of the Qing: Xue Fucheng garden The early modern period: City Public Garden, Plum Garden, Li Garden, Modern schools The end of modern China: Yi Garden

Contextualizing within the social-political context: Based on the basic information of gardens, corresponding historical records from the official histories are examined, with particular attention to the temporal context of the selected examples. In this thesis, documented garden constructions span from the Han Dynasty to approximately 1800 during the Republic of China era, covering 11 dynasties as recorded in official historical texts. Official historical texts are utilized to ascertain national or regional socio-political policies relevant to Wuxi's development, such as religious practices, rituals, economic activities, and large-scale engineering projects like canals. These sources provide insights into the socio-political context under centralized government rule, delineating Wuxi's positioning within a broader framework and overcoming the limitation of solely

focusing on internal urban studies of Wuxi. Additionally, in conjunction with contemporary Wuxi County Annals, emphasis is placed on documenting the urban-level governance and administration, including urban scope, natural environment, population, taxation, local production, and records of local figures. These records serve as direct reflections of the local socio-political context in Wuxi and provide leads for the third step of private data exploration, particularly regarding records of notable figures and their works.

Step 3, conducting an expansive retrieval of the selected cases, primarily focusing on the life and social connections of the garden owners, literary and artistic works, present remains, as well as usage records and procedures. This information contributes to a more comprehensive interpretation of garden concepts and culture.

Fass advocates for using extensive collections of source data as evidence, instead of relying on a limited set of significant texts, and emphasizes the importance of situating both historical figures and sources within their social and evidential contexts.⁵⁷ Literary works, such as garden notes and paintings, focus on the portrayal of gardens through the eyes of owners and visitors, the guiding ideologies behind garden construction, and the relationships and perceptions between builders and users. Due to the influence of personal experiences and societal norms, textual records are affected by the biographical backgrounds, social circles, and ideological affiliations of the recorders.

Fieldwork

The investigation into the current state of gardens is aimed at enhancing the understanding of garden relics, serving as corroborative evidence in retroactively

⁵⁷ Simon Gunn, Introduction: Why Bother with Method, Chapter 1, of Edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire *Research Methods for History*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012), pp15.

reconstructing historical narratives. This includes documentation such as photographs of the gardens, analysis of sketches, and records encompasses informal exchanges with personnel from garden management authorities and similar stakeholders.

Archival records may be biased, and textual records are susceptible to forgery. Material remains serve as crucial evidence, highlighting the significance of on-site investigations. Archaeologists and historians of the 17th and 18th centuries have verified that visual materials, including images and objects, help to generate insights about past times.⁵⁸ Gardens recorded in history are typically associated with wealth and status, making it impossible to completely detach from elite narratives. This thesis attempts to extend the focus to lower-ranking cities and a broader range of garden builders, thereby addressing scattered, oral traditions and local records. These unrecorded aspects can be explored through the methods developed in the 1920s, when a group of radical historians turned to walks through everyday spaces as the basis for a new methodology. They aimed to study the common life of marginalized groups, those overlooked and undocumented, through the experience of ordinary landscapes, in a manner that allows one to gradually reconstruct events from the records, archaeological finds in the local museum, and direct observations.⁵⁹

In early 2015, the author conducted a preliminary investigation into the historical locations and current conditions of all documented gardens in Wuxi. Based on this survey, four areas with concentrated garden sites and restoration efforts were selected for further study: Mount Xi-Hui area, the northern shore of Lake Tai (the former two have become a contiguous scenic area), the pre-Republican urban area (including the canal running through the city), and three towns to the east (Jingli, Anzhen, and

⁵⁸ Jo Guldi, *Landscape and Place*, Chapter 5, of Edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, *Research Methods for History*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012) , pp94.

⁵⁹ Jo Guldi, *Landscape and Place*, Chapter 5, of Edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, *Research Methods for History*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012) , pp95.

Hongshan). The author conducted field visits to these selected garden sites (Table 1). The focus was on photographing the gardens from the perspective of human use to simulate and hypothesize the landscape, spatial usage, and routes during the garden's initial periods of use. This included photographs of the current state of material compositions (especially the remnants of ancient trees, foundation topography, rockeries, and water features, which have largely retained their original state) are utilized for comparative analysis between past and present, facilitating a better understanding of cultural dynamics.

The timeframe of this study extends only until before 1949, modern perspectives cannot fully represent historical conceptions of gardens. Moreover, while historical research can be conducted solely through documentary sources, the alterations and methods involved in recent garden restorations necessitate targeted verification. Therefore, informal conversations with managers, users, and local residents encountered during the fieldwork have been included in the research methodology. The aim is to gather undocumented historical information and details about modifications, such as ritual processes and the appearance of gardens before restoration, from those most closely involved with garden conservation, restoration, and management.

Due to the pandemic, interviews were conducted with personnel who remained active during the survey period. These included the former Director of the Garden Bureau (Huang Maoru, an expert in modern garden history), the Director of the Planning Bureau (Weng Yifeng, specializing in post-20th-century city maps), the General Manager of the Mount Hui Scenic Area (Jin Shisheng, knowledgeable about the development and restoration of the Mount Hui Scenic Area), and the rotating monks at Huishan Temple and Huazang Temple (for insights on Buddhist ritual processes). Their pride in local gardens has led to an oversight in distinguishing between absolute and relative values. Since most gardens within the scenic area were closed and ceremonies canceled, many on-duty staff refused interviews, citing a lack of knowledge about

garden culture. Tourists were not interviewed as they could not provide historical information. However, occasional conversations with local residents in the eastern site areas were conducted to collect their childhood memories of garden sites or family legends related to the gardens. These residents offered a small amount of non-professional perspectives and local sayings about the gardens.

These casual, fragmented conversations aim to capture the perspectives of ordinary people regarding historical gardens.

Step 4, conducting a comprehensive analysis of the collected classification information from the previous steps based on Clunas way. This step aims to examine the changes in the connotation of gardens over time and uncover the ways in which garden spaces reflect the political, social, cultural, and religious thought of their users and communities.

This includes adopting a diachronic narrative approach, which involves recounting and interpreting the material composition of gardens in conjunction with the social context of different periods.

If illustrations are not analyzed, they become mere decorations. Based on this assessment, Gillian Rose concludes seven distinct methodologies in landscape and place analysis: compositional interpretation, content analysis, semiology, psychoanalysis, discourse analysis, audience studies and anthropology.⁶⁰ These can be used in the analysis of Wuxi research. In this study, it will include compositional interpretation of garden spaces and layouts, content analysis of the material

⁶⁰ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies. An Introduction of the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, 2nd edn (London: Sage, 2007). Ludmilla Jordanova, *Approaching Visual Materials*, Chapter 3, of Edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, *Research Methods for History*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012), pp55.

composition of gardens, semiological interpretation of specific garden elements, analysis of the garden owner's thoughts, discourse analysis of 'garden' narratives, and analysis of the stakeholders.

To be better illustrate the proportions and usage of the spaces to those unfamiliar with the culture, comparative analysis should be employed, utilizing existing research to construct an understanding of Wuxi's garden culture and achieving objectivity across broader contexts, such as different regions and time periods.

*The practical approach to landscape history depended on the researcher's ability to synthesise diverse fields of study.*⁶¹ Additional information and included details can easily lead to deviations from the topic; therefore, in the analysis, it is still necessary to focus on gardens as the core scope, identify the types of data, and balance the required depth. Therefore, not all collected data is necessarily applied and showcased in the article. Regarding historical research, the author believes that this does not affect the accuracy of the study. As a social phenomenon, gardens are subject to multifaceted influences, and it is difficult for various influencing factors to operate independently. Some subtle factors will be integrated. For historical data with significant redundancy, only those with longer preservation times or completeness are selected as reference materials. Regarding conflicting data, preference is given to materials authored by well-known authors with wide dissemination, considering their contemporary relevance, and either incorporating both perspectives or adopting a singular conclusion.

Sources

This study utilized published sources, remains, and documentation to explore the

⁶¹ Jo Guldi, Landscape and Place, Chapter 5, of Edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire 'Research Methods for History', (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd,2012) , pp98.

historical conception of gardens and gardening. Additionally, informal interviews with garden managers and residents were conducted during the fieldwork, providing valuable oral history where written data was scarce or restricted. These unrecorded oral histories complemented the historical knowledge and critical thinking processes of other sources.

Published sources

Published materials were reviewed first for the theoretical underpinning of this study firstly. This included Craig Clunas and Cao Lindi's research of garden culture, these books were bought in China.

The study also reviewed the long history of garden practice in Wuxi. This included texts and illustrations of both western and eastern literature, mainly sourced from electronic and printed materials in the University of Sheffield library, online sources, the Wuxi library and museum, and books purchased in China.

The *Zhengshi* (正史 Official History) includes the official history of 14 dynasties, books of rites, laws, official documents from different dynasties, Confucian classic, Buddhism regulations, etc. Official chronicles are the most easily preserved and found. Within the context of centralized government, gardens are deeply influenced by unified policy. Due to the initially low political status and later high economic status of Wuxi, information in this section is limited but increasing. These sources provide the social-political context, the arrangement of official rituals, and some of the underlying motivations for garden practice in this research. The information is mainly sourced from the online digital library 'Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook' and the photocopies of original books obtained from online libraries, such as Harvard-Yenching

Library.⁶²

The books and papers on the history of Chinese Buddhism, architecture, academies, Confucianism, economy, canal, and modern industry provide a more critical historical context, influencing some gardens during specific period and offering references on their layout. The ‘Cambridge History of China’ allows the author to examine China’s context from a western point of view, helping to gain a more balanced understanding of true history.⁶³ Meyer-Fong’s explanation of the process and influence of cultural creation supports a critical discussion of the early history of Wuxi. Clunas’ research on Ming dynasty gardens provides an economic production perspective on garden landscapes. Meanwhile, a wealth of Chinese research on the Ming and Qing dynasties offers cultural and artistic viewpoint. These different perspectives balance various angles of perception and significance. These sources primarily originate from the University of Sheffield library and its online resources.

Local chorographies are the most concentrated historical and geographical materials for ordinary cities and serve as the primary search clues and introductions for gardens. Before the 14th century, local information in Wuxi were relatively scarce due to a lack of attention and recorders. National history and regional chorographies compiled on a larger scale are the main sources of information about the social, political, and geographical background of Wuxi. After the 14th century, the compilation of county-level annals became a standard government practice, updated approximately every 60 years.⁶⁴ Eight county-level chorographies are preserved from the Yuan Dynasty to the end of the Qing Dynasty, along with the annals of subordinate towns and villages

62 Harvard-Yenching Library, <<https://library.harvard.edu/libraries/yenching>>

63 Twitchett, Denis and Fairbank Mote, *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978-1991) Cambridge library eBook

64 Sixty years is the least common multiple of the counting method of the Chinese celestial stems and earthly branches, so it becomes a reincarnation, and everything is renewed.

compiled in the Qing period. These are included in the series of books known as the *Wuxi Wenku* (无锡文库 Wuxi Library) collected in Wuxi Library. The maps showcase the development of the city and its gardens. A list of gardens names and basic information can be found in chapters such as *Shan Shui* (山水 Mountain and Water), *Gu Ji* (古迹 Historical monuments), *Xue Xiao* (学校 Schools), *Ci Miao* (祠庙 Memorial halls and Temples), *Mu* (墓 Tombs), etc. A new chapter, *Yuan Ting* 园亭/ *Yuan Shu* (园墅 Garden and Pavilions), appeared during the *Kangxi* and *Jiaqing* period of the Qing Dynasty, covering information on specific private gardens. However, due to the gradual decline in ornamental garden construction, individual ‘garden’ chapters were omitted and merged with the Historical Monuments chapters during the *Guangxu* period. This list of basic information can serve as a starting point for further research into gardens, including poetry, painting, and other artistic representations of these structures.

Literary works, including guidebooks of landscape and scenery, genealogies, and personal anthologies by local scholars and tourists, may be fragmented in collections and by chance, making them difficult to detect. These works serve as supplementary materials when the government is unable to maintain records, particularly during times of political upheaval, such as in modern China. For instance, information on modern gardens and photos came from the spontaneous organization and efforts of local elites. It is a tradition that landscape gazetteers commenced as early as the end of the Ming Dynasty. An example is the *Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue* (锡山景物略 Scenery of Wuxi). Although unofficial, these gazetteers were often even more detailed. The observations and discussions of authors on gardens and society also provide insights into the evolving notions of societal landscaping and changes in activities during that period.

Additionally, the family background and life experiences of the garden owners were crucial factors that influenced their design concepts and artistic expression. Therefore, understanding the role of private gardens in Chinese society requires researchers to

examine family genealogies and literary works, which can provide insights into the geographical range of the owners' lives and their social circles, including their friends, political affiliations, and relatives through bloods and marriage. For cities like Wuxi, where reliance on kinship and geographical connections is particularly crucial, these factors are also included in the series of books known as the *Wuxi Library*. Typically, this social circle highly overlaps with literati from the Jiangnan region, particularly those in Suzhou. Consequently, literary works and paintings by Suzhou literati, such as *Zhang Wu Zhi* (长物志 Treatise on Superfluous Things) and *Huishan Chahui Tu* (惠山茶会图 Painting of Tea Party in Mount Hui) are employed to provide a more authentic socio-economic context, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the garden practices in Wuxi.⁶⁵ These works are mainly from the online digital library Guo Xue 'Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook'.

Recent research includes some books, such as *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* (梁溪古园 Gardens in Wuxi) edited by the Wuxi Municipal Archives and Wuxi Garden Bureau, *Donglin Shuyuan Congtan* (东林书院丛谈 Discussion of Donglin Academy) edit by Zhu Wenjie, as well as *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian* (锡山秦氏寄畅园资料长编 Completion of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi) edited by the Wuxi Qin family.⁶⁶ Additionally, thesis and papers by Huang Xiao, Guo Mingyou and Gu Kai on Research in the Jiangnan area provides valuable data for further studies and serves as an essential reference for this thesis.⁶⁷

65 Wen, Zhenheng, c.17th century, *Zhang Wu Zhi* [Treatise on Superfluous Things], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Wen, Zhengming, 1518, *Hui Shan Cha Hui Tu* [Painting of Tea Party in Mount Hui] paper, 21.9× 67cm, the Palace Museum in Beijing

66 Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian* [Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2009)

Zhu, Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan Congtan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing: Chronicle Press, 2013)

67 Guo, Mingyou, 'History of Suzhou Gardens in the Ming Dynasty,' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of

These resources mainly come from online digital academic website, such as the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), as well as physical books. In addition to academic papers accessible to the public, a considerable portion of research outcomes on Wuxi gardens are archived in the internal journals of the Wuxi Museum (Figure 4). During the pandemic, when face-to-face exchanges were hindered, these resources served as valuable information sources. It should be acknowledged that personal records enriched the information; however, caution should be exercised when using these materials to obtain a more accurate understanding of the past, as these records are often subjective and influenced by personal biases.



Figure 4: Internal journals of Wuxi Museum

Archaeological reports and planning documents

Archaeological work in Wuxi commenced relatively late, and formal archaeological reports regarding garden restoration and utilization were practically nonexistent in the pre-existing records. Instead, they primarily existed in the form of on-site

Soochow, 2011)

Guo, Mingyou, and Zhou Yunhua, 'Wuxi Garden and Ancient Architecture: Current Issues in Management, Conservation, Development, and Operational Solutions', *Wuxi Vocational Institute of Commerce*, 12.2 (2012), 26–30

Gu, Kai, *Mingdai Jiangnan Yuanlin Yanjiu* [Research of Jiangnan Gardens in Ming Dynasty] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press, 2008)

documentation. A few reports, including those concerning the Huishan Temple Main Hall, the southeastern corner of Jichang Garden, and the former residence of Xue Fucheng, have been preserved as reference materials within the internal library of the Wuxi Museum. Planning documents, such as the Huishan Ancient Town Plan and the Directory of Ancient Trees and Notable Trees, have been published on the government's official website. The evidence they provide serves as textual comparisons, enhancing the authenticity of historical narratives.

Field work

The analysis of the thesis is based on textual records and material remains; therefore, the method of data collection is not restricted but instead focuses on the richness of the data. Due to the nature of historical records, which can be incomplete or prone to disappearance, a body of radical historians turned to walks through everyday spaces as the basis for a new methodology for those without documentation and remains.⁶⁸

This part includes collection of photographs of ruins and restored gardens, informal interviews with relevant individuals, and records from the official webpages of the Wuxi Archives and History and Chronicle Museum's online archives. Although the research does not cover the period after 1949, recent restorations still aim primarily at reconstruction. Consequently, local stories preserved in the memories of residents have some reference value, providing evidence for 'why something was restored in this manner.'

The field work (Figure 5) was conducted in three phases, taking place in August 2019, May 2020, and May 2021 respectively. The latter two phases involved supplementary

⁶⁸ Jo Guldi, *Landscape and Place*, Chapter 5, of Edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire 'Research Methods for History', (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2012), pp95.

data collection, with delays due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photographing extant archaeological sites or restored gardens based on the gardens chose in Step 2 in the Methodology. It involves capturing landscape spaces from various perspectives, topographical features, architectural elements, textual information such as building names, and vegetation (especially those present during the original construction of the gardens).

Museums from various regions, such as the National Museum, Nanjing Museum, and Wuxi Museum, mostly provide paintings related to gardens and landscapes.

Apart from intentional displays of collected local stories on the websites of archives and historical chronicles, local memories are scarcely documented online. Informal interviews with garden stakeholders serve not only to gather such information but also to understand the usage patterns of the gardens, elicit unpublished opinions, verify the sources of information, and obtain permission to access internal data. For instance, interviews with monks are instrumental in ascertaining the details of historical rituals in Wuxi temples, relying not on official ritual books but on oral traditions passed down through generations. Therefore, official records can only serve as references rather than evidence. Their involvement in garden restoration projects provides highly accurate electronic drawings and confirms the authenticity of the garden's current state. For example, AutoCAD drawings and planning documents from the Huishan Ancient Town redevelopment project offer insights into the original layout. Additionally, nearby residents can offer descriptions from decades ago for recently vanished gardens, such as the accounts of Anzhen residents regarding the An Family Garden. Although these descriptions lack rigor, they complement our understanding of the spatial layout of the gardens and the local residents' cultural perceptions of them.

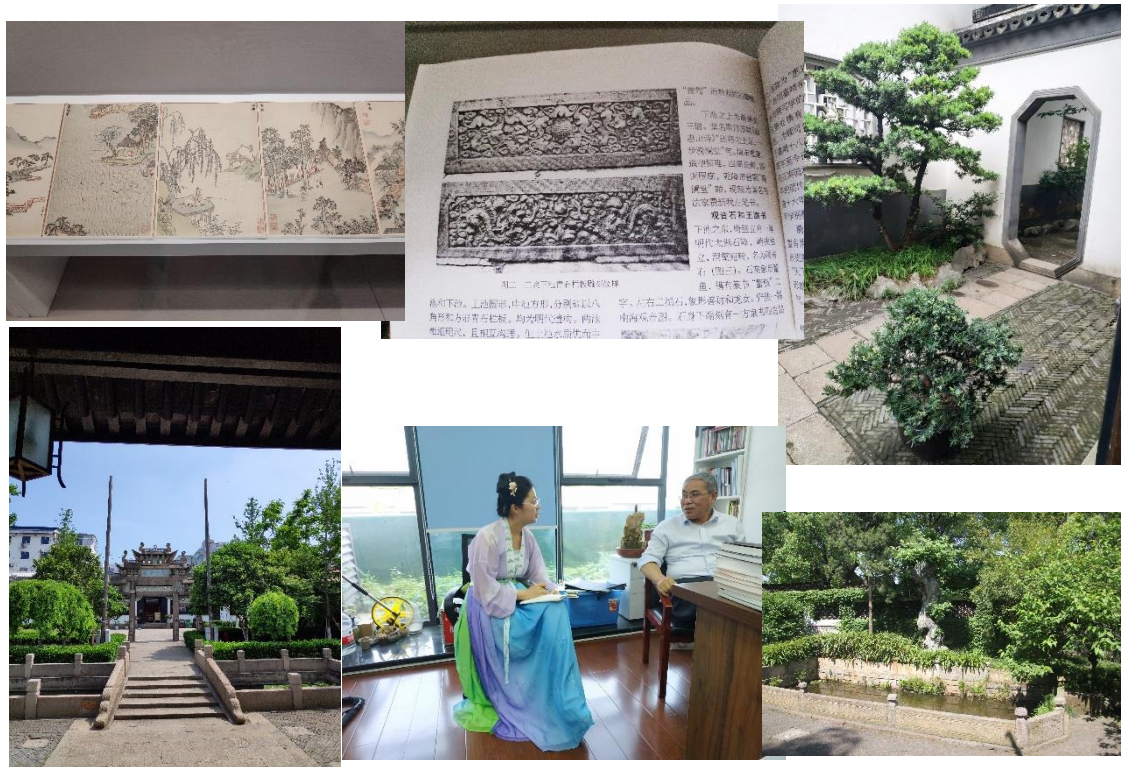


Figure 5: Record of the surveys in Wuxi (photo by author)

Outline of the thesis

This thesis comprises six chapters: an introductory chapter (1), chapters covering content (2-5), and a conclusion (6).

Chapters 2 through 5 examine the development of Wuxi's gardens chronologically, with each stage referencing, though not strictly adhering to, historical dynastic periods in China. Instead, the timeline is segmented based on each observed integral period, including peaks and declines, in garden construction. The early period of gardens spans a broad time frame, while the later period covers a narrower one.

Chapter 2 explores the initial impressions of Wuxi Garden during the 2nd to 13th centuries, documented by limited extant remains and historical records. Low productivity and the slow development of the city were the main social characteristics of Wuxi. Although the discourse surrounding 'gardens' in this period had not fully

crystallized, various gardens given rise to a garden culture. The transformation of the natural environment and religious worship became the driving force behind gardening. They provided a humanistic and ideology foundation for later construction, serving as a means to cultivate refined tastes. These early gardens, mostly using local materials, began to diversify with improved national transportation, reflecting Wuxi's shift from local to national integration. This phase ended with the Yuan army invasion, Wuxi's first major upheaval.

Chapter 3 signifies a transitional period (14th century) in the development of garden culture in Wuxi, pivoting towards an emphasis on both commodity attributes and artistry. Favourable economic policies, and setbacks in the imperial examination system, reshaped the social function of gardens, transforming them into venues for showcasing and artworks trade. Possessed by both wealth and artistic sensibilities, gardens demonstrated the emergence of merchant culture in Wuxi. This phase ended with the tumultuous transition from the Yuan to the Ming Dynasty, which brought about a cessation in the construction of ornamental gardens, supplanted by the emergence of rural retreats and kitchen gardens.

Chapter 4 examines a pivotal era in the evolution of garden culture in Wuxi spanning from the 15th century to the 1860s. During the twilight of the feudal period, the Jiangnan area experienced a period of pronounced economic and cultural prosperity. Social stratification became multifaceted, reflecting in Wuxi's garden culture, which saw a proliferation of garden construction to meet diverse needs. The emergence of garden discourse surrounding aesthetics exhibited some lag in assimilation and less pronounced cultural diversity. In response to external social instability, the development of individual gardens evolved from agrarian functionality to aesthetic appeal and, ultimately, to internal familial ethics. This period concluded with the upheaval of the Taiping Rebellion during the waning years of the Qing dynasty, leaving an indelible scar on Wuxi's gardens.

Chapter 5 discusses the Wuxi's garden culture diverging from the traditional Suzhou cultural center between 1860 to 1949. Amid domestic unrest and flourishing economic and cultural exchanges under international influences, a distinctive fusion of Eastern and Western Garden culture emerged, characterized by new principles of equality and freedom, innovative design, novel materials, and operational modalities. The appreciation for natural landscapes and the demand for urban tourism planning prompted the expansion of garden areas towards the remote northern shores of Taihu Lake. Notably, women began to engage with garden culture independently, showcasing a new cognitive and participatory role. A nascent sense of national consciousness began to permeate garden spaces as external pressures increased. The pre-modern era of garden construction was abruptly halted by Japan's comprehensive invasion of China.

Chapter 6 Conclusion and outlook

Term of references

Common terms such as imperial-reign periods are not listed here.

Terms related to gardens

Based on the identification of 'garden', the table 3 listed Chinese name of most gardens appeared in Wuxi before 1949

Table 2: the Chinese name of most gardens appeared in Wuxi before 1949

Chinese name	English translation	Chinese name	English translation
Yuan 园/Hua Yuan 花园	Garden	Lin 林	Forest
Gu 谷/Chi 池/Tang 堂/Xuan 轩/Ge 阁/Ting 亭/Lou 楼	Garden named based on the main landscape (Valley /Pool /Hall /Pavilion/ Building)	Yin She 吟社	Poem Club
Xiao Pu 小圃/Fang Pu 芳圃	Small Garden/ Fragrance Garden	Shu Tang 书堂	Library or Studio
Di 第/Zhai 斋/She 舍/ Cao Tang 草堂/Wo 窝/Ju 居	garden usually in the residential area included dwellings	Shui Ju 水居	garden near water included dwellings
Zhuang 庄/Lu 庐/Xiao Yin 小隐/Xiao Zhu 小筑	garden usually out of the residential area included dwellings	Jing She 精舍	garden whose owner believes in Buddhism
Shan Guan 山馆/Shan Ju 山居 / Bie Shu 别墅/ Bei Ye 别业/	garden in the mountainous area included dwellings		

Shan Zhuang 山庄			
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Si 寺: Temple

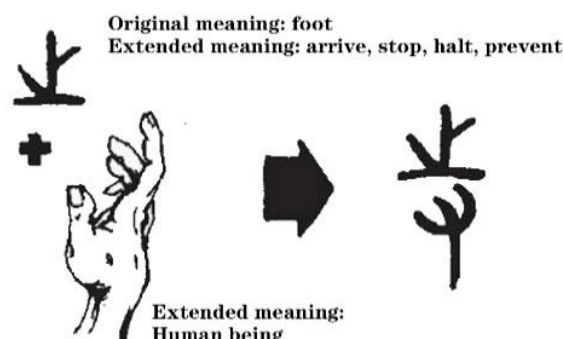


Figure 6: The origin of character '寺' (drawn by author)

It is a place where people need take care of their words and deeds (Figure 6). Normally, it indicates **government office**, such as 'yamen 衙门' and Honglu Temple 鸿胪寺.⁶⁹ Since Baima Temple had been set up for translating sutra and preaching Buddhism in capital Luoyang, **the name for official Buddhist affairs has become another universal meaning of '寺'**.⁷⁰ As religious buildings are under the auspices of the authorities, they are uniformly translated as 'temples.'

Ci/ Miao including Zun Xian Ci 尊贤祠/ Xiang Xian Ci 乡贤祠/ Mou Gong Ci 某公祠/Zhong Lie Ci 忠烈祠/Zhen Lie Ci 贞烈祠, etc.: Memorial Temple

A Memorial Temple is erected to honor individuals or groups for notable contributions

69 Xu, Xuan, et al (North Song Dynasty), *Shuo Wen Jie Zi Jiaoding*[revision of characters], (block-printed edition Jigu Pavilion Press) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Luo, Zhufeng, *Hanyu Da Cidian*[Chinese Dictionary] (Shanghai: Chinese Dictionary Press,1993) p2993.

Zhao Yanwei, Song dynasty, *Yunlu Manchao*,(HanDong Acadamy Press,1206),vol 6, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

70 Liu, Xujie, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhu Shi* [History of Chinese Architecture], (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press,2003), Volume 1, pp.497.

Luo, Zhufeng, *Hanyu Da Cidian*[Chinese Dictionary](Shanghai: Chinese Dictionary Press,1993) p2993.

or achievements, including scholars, artists, government officials, virtuous women, military leaders, or figures revered in folk religion. These structures are usually built posthumously and serve as sites for offerings, memorial ceremonies, and paying respects.

An 庵/Jing She 精舍: private Buddhism Temples.

Private Buddhist architecture built in Wuxi during the early period of Buddhism's introduction and following the restrictions on new temple construction during the Ming Dynasty.

Dao Guan 道观/Miao 庙/Gong 宫: Daoist Temple.

It appears in the form of folk customs and is managed and used mainly by Taoists.

Guan Xue 官学/Xian Xue 县学: official school/ county school

Official schools are educational places run by local government, with the **Confucian Temple dedicated to Confucius and the *Minglun* Hall for lectures** as the core buildings. Selected students study here to prepare for higher-level examinations.

Shu Yuan 书院: Academy

Academies are special private schools refer to Confucianism educational activities presided over, operated and managed by individuals or social groups. They formed a relatively standard organizational structure which visualized into several building partitions in the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) including memorial Confucian temples, lecture halls and dormitories, libraries, buildings for daily life, and economic farmland.⁷¹ Academies were gradually taken back by the government in the late feudal

⁷¹ Deng, Hongbo, *Zhong Guo Shu Yuan Shi* [the history of Chinese academies], (Shang Hai: Oriental Publishing Center, 2004), pp.49-58, 153-174.

period due to their special power of ideological education.

In order to ensure the clarity, ‘academy’ in this thesis specifically refers to standard private schools with six major functional properties, including collection, research, teaching, sacrifice, printing, and farmland economy.⁷² Other gardens in Wuxi intended for personal reading and collection are not included.

***Ci Tang* 祠堂: Family Temple / Ancestral Hall**

An ancestral hall is a building put up and maintained by a patrilineal group to house their ancestor tablets and serve as the center of their ritual and secular activities. The commonest form of the ancestral hall in Wuxi is that which belongs to a lineage, each of them the ritual center of a segment.⁷³

Terms related to social context

Jiangnan 江南

The term historically referred to the region south of the Yangtze River prior to the Qin and Han dynasties.⁷⁴ In 627, Emperor Taizong of the Tang established ‘Jiangnan Province’, which marked the beginning of the definition of the modern concept. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Jiangnan generally referred to the eight prefectures including Suzhou, Songjiang, Changzhou, Zhenjiang, Ningbo, Hangzhou, Jiashan, and

72 Deng Hongbo, *Zhong Guo Shu Yuan Shi* [the history of Chinese academies], (Shang Hai: Oriental Publishing Center, 2004), pp.153-174.

73 Freedman, Maurice., and Joint Committee on Contemporary China. Subcommittee on Research on Chinese Society, *Family and Kinship in Chinese Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970)

74 周元王使人赐勾践, 已受命号去, 还江南 King Yuan of Zhou sent someone to confer a title upon Goujian. After receiving the mandate and title, Goujian returned to the Jiangnan area. Yuan, Kang (Han Dynasty), *Yue Jue Shu* [History of Yue State], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Huzhou.⁷⁵

Menfa 门阀: Aristocracy/noble family

A social class in Chinese history during the Qin and Tang dynasty and disappeared after the Tang. They are similar to ‘Nobles’ in the feudal pre-Qin period with high status and political and economic privileges due to their family background and connections in local areas. These privileges are inheritable based on genealogy.

Shen 乡绅: Gentry

The gentry held a definite position and functioned in the feudal society of China before 200B.C. They were a class at the bottom of the ruling class that possessed real political power. With the development of the centralized system, power rested with the monarch, and everyone else became like his employees.⁷⁶ The hereditary privileges of aristocrats (Menfa 門閥) were declining, making the class unstable, and its definition underwent some changes. It is mainly composed of individuals who **passed the imperial examinations but did not hold official positions, educated local landlords, wealthy merchants, retired or unemployed officials, and influential clan elders. Positioned between officials and commoners, they had no real political power or direct connection but tend to influence the court and were immune from political exploitation**.⁷⁷ They are the absolute main force of garden construction in Wuxi.

Zongzu 宗族/Jiazu 家族: Clan

⁷⁵ Li, Bozhong. ‘A Brief Discussion on the Definition of the Jiangnan Region’. *Research on Chinese Social and Economic History*, 1 (1991): 100-105+107

⁷⁶ Fei, Xiaotong, and Margaret Park. Redfield, *China's Gentry: Essays in Rural-Urban Relations* (Chicago: University Press, 1953), pp17.

⁷⁷ Fei, Xiaotong, and Margaret Park. Redfield, *China's Gentry: Essays in Rural-Urban Relations* (Chicago: University Press, 1953), pp32.

A social unit linked by patrilineal blood and having a common ancestry. It usually includes lots of families of the same surname that livings help each other and mourn the dead in the clan together.⁷⁸ They can be understood as the declining privileged aristocracy. Some of them move to other places and set up new branches are called branch clan.

Ru 儒: Confucianism

A philosophy and religion originating in ancient China based on the teachings of Confucius (c551–479 B.C.) and his followers, which emphasizes human goodness and the importance of ethical relationships, humanistic values, and hierarchy for the maintenance of social harmony.⁷⁹ Its influence extended to other East Asian countries, particularly Korea and Japan.⁸⁰

Li Xue 理学: Neo-Confucianism

A new or revived form of Confucianism after a movement in religious philosophy derived from Confucianism in China around the 11th century in response to the ideas of Taoism and Buddhism.⁸¹ It is the longest dominate thought after the Song. The

78 Lv, Shuxiang, and Ding Shengshu, *Xian Dai Han Yu Ci Dian* [Modern Chinese Dictionary] (7th Edition), (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 2016) pp.1743

族者何也？族者湊也，聚也，谓恩爱相流湊也。上湊高祖，下至玄孙，一家有吉，百家聚之，合而为亲，生相亲爱死相哀痛，有会聚之道，故谓之族 What is a clan? A clan is a gathering, a coming together. It refers to the flow and assembly of mutual affection. From the great-grandfather to the great-grandson, when one family has a joyful event, a hundred families gather. They loving each other and mourning together, having the means to come together. Therefore, it is called a clan. From Ban, Gu (Han), *Bai Hu Tong* [Compilation of Materials of the Confucianism Conference in Baihu Temple], (Lang's Family Tang Ce Jian Press, 1626), vol 3. pp34.

79 Oxford English Dictionary, literati, Oxford English Dictionary, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/confucianism_n?tab=meaning_and_use#1370964920>[accessed 26 March 2024].

80 Tu Weiming, Confucianism, Britannica, <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Confucianism>> [accessed 22 March 2023].

81 Oxford English Dictionary, Neo-confucianism, Oxford English Dictionary,

connotation of Neo-Confucianism rises to a higher principle of heaven and nature. The absorption of speculative philosophy has been seen as the most fundamental principle of all things that should be accepted by all levels of society.⁸²

Xiao Dao 孝道: Filial piety

The character 孝 (xiào) symbolizes offspring showing reverence towards parents, with the elder (老) being revered upward and the child (子) showing reverence downward.⁸³ Generated during the Western Zhou period (11th century-770 BC), filial piety emphasizes honoring ancestors and venerating progenitors, primarily through ancestral sacrifices with significant religious connotation. Confucius emphasized stabilizing family structures to ensure social order, transitioning filial piety from a clan-based to a familial ethic grounded in respect (敬 Jing) and ritual propriety.⁸⁴ Mencius further elevated filial piety to the highest moral virtue and politicized its significance.⁸⁵

<https://www.oed.com/dictionary/neo-confucianism_n?tab=meaning_and_use#11317519>[accessed 26 March 2024].

82 Berthrong, John H., *Transformations of the Confucian Way* (Boulder, Colo.; Oxford: Westview Press, 1998) pp82-85,86,88

83 善事父母者，从老省、从子，子承老也。People who are good at treating their parents are filial, and the font of this word is the child carrying his parents. Xu, Xuan, et al (North Song Dynasty), *Shuo Wen Jie Zi Jiaoding*[Revision of Characters], (block-printed edition Jigu Pavilion Press) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

84 子曰：“今之孝者，是谓能养。至于犬马，皆能有养；不敬，何以别乎。子曰：“生，事之以礼；死，葬之以礼，祭之以礼。” Confucius said ‘those who exhibit filial piety in the present day are those capable of providing for their parents. As for dogs and horses, all are capable of being provided for; without reverence, how can human differentiate?’ Confucius said, ‘In life, treat them with propriety; in death, bury them with propriety, and offer sacrifices to them with propriety.’ From Confucius, (Spring and Autumn Period), Lun Yu [The Analects of Confucius], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

85 事孰为大，事亲为大 What is the greatest duty? Serving one’s parents is the greatest one. From Mencius, *Meng Zi*[Analects of Mencius], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese

Li 礼: Rituals

The concept of ‘ritual’ refers to actions regularly or habitually repeated and related to the performance of rites.’⁸⁶ In Chinese context, it emphasizes the process and standardization of social events due to moral concepts and customs, such as sacrificial rites, festivals and folk customs. This meaning aligns with the function of gardens, which serve as outdoor space for ceremonies or rites, symbolizing the exercise of imperial or patriarchal power by the owner. As the lowest level of administrative region accessible to imperial power, the official gardening of Wuxi and regulated activities in gardens mostly adhere to the standards and decrees related to rituals set by emperors.

Rituals held in Wuxi gardens include a record of procedures for various ceremonies:

Sacrificial rituals for Confucius, local sages, ancestors, etc.

Educational rituals such as the Xiang-yin-jiu-Li 乡饮酒礼 Town Drinking Ceremony, Asking the teacher to accept oneself (later Shi-cai 释菜), and Academic forums.

Daily rituals for the gentry, females, building workers, etc.

Some rituals refer to the standard process and regulations in Chinese ritual system, typically promulgated by emperors as national standard. The rituals themselves and their procedures undergo certain changes across different dynasties. For instance, texts of Li Ji (礼记 Books of Rites), Kaiyuan Li (开元礼 Rituals of the Kaiyuan Era), Chixiu Baizhang Qinggui (敕修百丈清规 Regulation of Chan Temples), and Chenshi Jiashu Dushu Fennian Richeng (程氏家塾读书分年日程 Reading Schedule by Year in Cheng's Family School), Lu Ban Jing (鲁班经 Lu Ban's Treatise on Carpentry)

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86 Oxford English Dictionary, ritual, Oxford English Dictionary, <<https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/166369?redirectedFrom=ritual#eid>> [accessed 26 February 2023].

exemplify this.

Wen Ren 文人: Literati

The term referred to ‘men of letters, the learned class as a whole’. A specific, especially historical, meaning of literati is ‘the learned class of China between the 17th and early 20th centuries.’⁸⁷ Before this period, these educated elites, who typically held political and Confucian scholarly influence, were known by another name: Shi Da Fu 士大夫 (scholar-officials).

Fojiao 佛教: Buddhism

A religious and philosophical system based on the teachings of Siddhārtha Gautama, which is underpinned by the four Noble Truths and maintains that human suffering can be eradicated by achieving enlightenment.⁸⁸ Buddhism was introduced to China in the 1st century BC. After continuous opposition, struggle, reconciliation, and integration with traditional thought and historical society, Buddhism gradually harmonized with Chinese thought, giving rise to the concept of the unity of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism (the Three Teachings). Chinese Buddhism led to the specific development of Chan Buddhism. After the Song Dynasty (960-1279), Buddhism became an integral part of Chinese thought. After the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368), Buddhism from an academic perspective lost its original appearance and gradually declined, but it continued to be popular in folk forms.⁸⁹

87 Oxford English Dictionary, literati, Oxford English Dictionary, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/literati_n?tab=meaning_and_use#38962863> [accessed 26 March 2024].

88 Oxford English Dictionary, Buddhism, Oxford English Dictionary, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/buddhism_n?tab=meaning_and_use#12593776> [accessed 26 March 2024].

89 Oxford English Dictionary, Chinese Buddhism, Oxford English Dictionary, <<https://www.oed.com/search/dictionary/?scope=Entries&q=Chinese%20Buddhism>> [accessed 26 March 2024].

Chan Zong 禅宗: Chan Buddhism

A Chinese school of Mahayana Buddhism which emphasizes the value of meditation as a means of finding spiritual insight and enlightenment, and which gave rise to the development of Zen in Japan.⁹⁰

Dao Jiao 道教: Daoism

A philosophy and religion which emphasizes the importance of living in harmony with the Tao, the source of the universe and the pattern or principle of its natural order in the 3rd century. It incorporate certain Buddhist features and developing a monastic system. The most important text of Taoism is the Dao De Jing 道德经, attributed to the ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi. Philosophical Taoism emphasizes inner contemplation and mystical union with nature; wisdom, learning, and purposive action should be abandoned in favour of simplicity and Wu Wei (无为 Respect natural objective laws and avoid forcing outcomes).⁹¹

Notes

This thesis uses the MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association) referencing style for citing and referencing sources, including the bibliography.

Fo Xue Da Ci Dian [Buddhism Dictionary], Chinese Buddhism, Buddhism Dictionary <https://foxue.bmcx.com/zhongguofujiao__foxued/#google_vignette> [accessed 26 March 2024]

90 Oxford English Dictionary, Chan Buddhism, Oxford English Dictionary, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/chan_n?tab=meaning_and_use#1258585930> [accessed 26 March 2024]

91 Oxford English Dictionary, Daoism, Oxford English Dictionary, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/taoism_n?tab=meaning_and_use#19272452> [accessed 26 March 2024]

Oxford English Dictionary, Daoism, Oxford English Dictionary, <https://www.oed.com/dictionary/tao_n?tab=meaning_and_use#19272174> [accessed 26 March 2024]

When a Chinese name appears in text and in bibliography, it will be translated with Pinyin and put in the original order of family name before given name.

The necessary measurements and conversions have been made in the main chapters. Refer to Appendix 2 for details.

Early Gardens of Wuxi

This chapter explores the emergence phase of Wuxi's garden culture. Situated as a relatively remote secondary city distant from the more developed central plains, Wuxi experienced a prolonged period of early development due to the objectively slower progress in productivity. During this time, residents' attitudes towards nature changed a gradual transformation, as they ceased to fear and reverence the natural environment. Concurrently, the ongoing development of water and land transportation networks facilitated Wuxi's growing integration of culture exchange with regional and national spheres of influence. National influence, as well as guided by the predominant schools of thought, various types of gardens emerged.

This chapter spans thirteen centuries and, for ease of discussion, is divided into three sections. The first section addresses the emergence of garden culture within the context of primitive worship and centralized political power. The second section examines the influence and development of Buddhism in Wuxi's garden culture. The third section explores the role of Confucianism under the imperial examination system as an official means of guidance and education. Throughout this period, the fusion of these ideologies was ongoing.

The gardens discussed in this chapter include:

First phase: Memorial temple of Taibo, Chunshen, and Filial Piety son.

Second phase: Huishan Temple and Mount Hui Public landscape.

Third phase: the County school of Wuxi, and the private gardens of Jiang Chongzhen and You Mao.

Given the extensive time span covered in this chapter, the overall social-political context is presented in broad terms. Each section will provide a detailed analysis of the

specific social and political context relevant to its period. Due to the scarcity of physical remains, the material culture of gardens will be analyzed using the limited existing remnants and supplemented by legends.

This chapter explains how the early environment limit the location of gardening and the standardization and ritualistic impact of political and ideological contexts on the development of garden culture. The dominant ideological schools reflected in garden construction underwent changes and integration, forming the humanistic, spatial development, and ritualistic foundations for garden culture in the subsequent three phases. The material evolution of gardens reflects the growing scope and rapid dissemination of fashion driven by expanding transportation networks, which facilitated the absorption of material culture in garden design. This phase also demonstrates the use of gardens for rituals from three different religions. However, the changes brought about by the convergence of the three teachings (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism) will be discussed in detail only after the 15th century.

This chapter explores encompassing the period from the 1st to the 13th century.

The first textual evidence of gardens and gardening in Wuxi appears in the early 1st century, marking the starting point of the analysis. The earliest material remains of gardens date back to the 9th century and total number of gardens (36) built in the emergence period are relatively low ($\approx 20\%$). Unlike the abundant remains from the Ming and Qing dynasties, the primitive remnants from this period are scarce and primarily stone structures. The first local chronicles of Wuxi County were compiled in the 14th century. Comparably, early accounts and archaeological remains are limited and scattered. Legends from this period offer insights into early perceptions of garden culture but also suggest possible cultural editing, reducing their reliability. And then, gardening activities, material evidence, and documentation increase dramatically after the 15th century, making the 13th and 14th centuries a clear demarcation point.

Unlike the substantial private garden construction in and after the 14th century, earlier garden construction and restoration were primarily dependent on collective community or official efforts. The initial phase saw few private gardens until the implementation of the imperial examination system and land reforms, which eroded local aristocratic politics, leading to a social transformation from aristocratic to civilian society in late Song China. Concurrently, the Jiangnan region had supplanted the Yellow River basin as the new economic centre by the Song dynasty, thereby increasing civilian class power. As a result, the enthusiasm for private garden construction surpassed that of official gardens in later three phases.

The gardens in this period largely driven by social education and management goals rather than leisure, despite the emergence of some Neo-Confucian private gardens towards the end of this period. These were established by scholars with growing academic confidence, aiming to practice self-education through scholarship ('Heavenly principles') rather than official politics. The interruption of academic confidence by foreign cultural in 14th century influences marked the end of this phase.

There was a clear convergence of thought in this phase, though this was not yet evident in garden construction. Mixed elements became common in subsequent gardens, rarely influenced by a single religious type, especially in private ones.

The considerable destructive impact of war on the physical entities of gardens, especially as a result of dynastic transitions, is notable. However, Jiangnan's fortunate status as a developing region during its transition to becoming the new economic centre meant it remained relatively stable, serving as a destination for migrants from the north. Consequently, although documentation is sparse, natural decay and policy shifts, rather than warfare destroy, emerge as the primary influencing factors on Wuxi's garden culture. It was continuously developing until the invasion of Tartars in 13th century.

One significant consideration is whether to include the 14th century in this initial phase,

as the construction during this period did not see significant growth in quantity, and there is little physical evidence remaining. During this period, foreign rule's mistrust of southern Chinese Han intellectuals impacted on scholars' political careers but also stimulating commercial development. Economic prosperity, rather than social management, influenced Wuxi's urban and garden culture in and after the phases. Due to the transformative changes of the Tang and Song dynasties and the Yuan dynasty's uniqueness, the 14th century is treated as a separate transitional chapter.

Social-political context

The entirety of the Jiangnan region came under centralized governance since the Qin dynasty, setting the stage for the commencement of the disintegration of the feudal system, establishment of centralized authority, and the system of prefectures and counties. During the early stages of garden culture development in Wuxi, the Jiangnan region experienced numerous regime changes. These transitions included the Han dynasty (202BC-220AD), Eastern Wu(229-280), Jin dynasty(265-420), Southern Dynasties(420-589), Sui dynasty(589-618), Tang dynasty(618-907), Wuyue Kingdom(907-960), and Song dynasty(960-1179) (Appendix 1).

‘Wuxi county 无锡县’ was first set up in the 201 BC (Han dynasty) and the city was founded at the south intersection of the Liangxi River 梁溪河 and the Jiangnan Canal (Figure 7).⁹² The stable canal waterway greatly determined the stability of Wuxi's urban site.⁹³

92 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

93 Li, Xiaocong. ‘A Study on the Selection of Urban Sites and Urban Form along the Tang-Song Grand Canal.’ from Tang, Xiaofeng and Huang Yijun. *A Handbook of Historical Geography*. (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2006) pp 317.

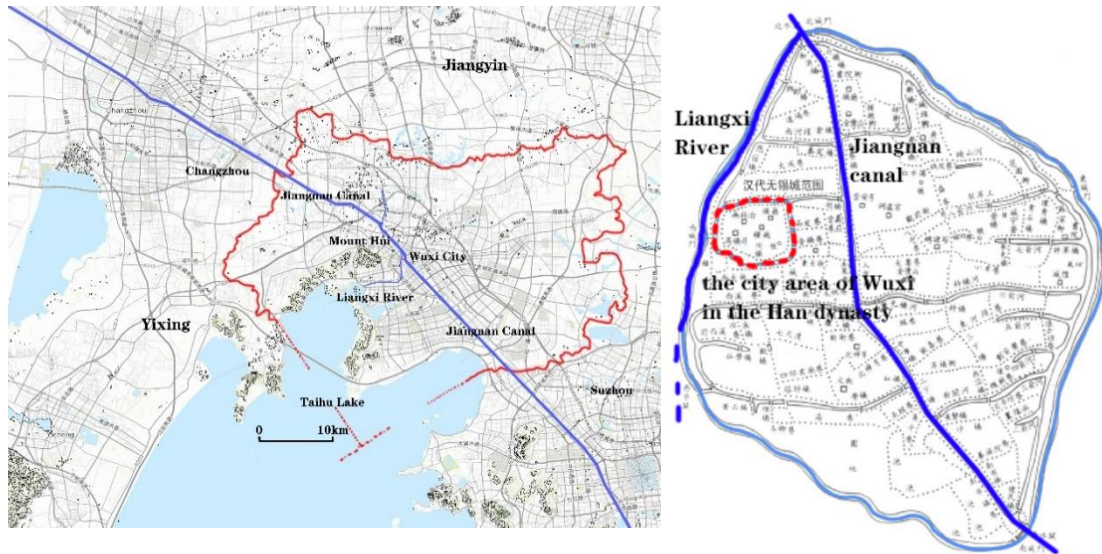


Figure 7: The location of inner-city of Wuxi in the Han dynasty (redrawn by author based on Chorography of Wuxi, 1881 edition)

During the 3rd to 6th centuries, the Yellow River basin, located in the north and considered the cradle of Central Plains culture, faced pressures from northern foreign tribes and internal development challenges. Consequently, a significant population gradually migrated to the Yangtze River and its southern regions, forming the demographic foundation for the development of the Jiangnan area. The improvement in agricultural techniques in the 7th century further promoted the development of grain agriculture in Jiangnan.

The construction of canals, initially relying on natural waterways before the Qin dynasty, established a network of connections for Wuxi within the Jiangnan region, particularly fostering close relations with Suzhou. The completion of the North-South Canal in the 6th century enhanced central government control over Jiangnan to some extent, and facilitated increased cultural and material exchanges between the capital and Wuxi. After the An-Shi Rebellion in the 8th century, unlike the previous migration which involved people from all social classes, the southward migration of more educated aristocrats further promoted cultural development in the Jiangnan region,

where Wuxi is located.

With the improvement of agricultural techniques, the continuous increase in the labour force, and the built of North- South Canal, Jiangnan, as the main grain-producing area, began to commercialize grain and emerged as a new economic zone. Wuxi, located along the Canal, saw the construction of postal stations, which brought economic prosperity. The city of Wuxi developed rapidly, and its urban centre structure was basically formed and has been maintained to this day. Northern aristocrats who migrated settled in the eastern suburbs of Wuxi, laying the foundation for future development near the Suzhou area.

Buddhism was introduced to China during the Eastern Han dynasty. Due to extreme social turmoil during the Southern Dynasties, various social classes craved security, and Confucianism, having failed to address the chaos at the end of the Han dynasty, faced scepticism. Consequently, Buddhism flourished in the world as a religious form. By the Sui and Tang dynasties, Buddhism gradually came under official control and reached its peak as an academic discipline, resulting in the emergence of multiple sects. Among these, Chan Buddhism, which integrated Confucianism, gradually became the mainstream sect. The construction of Buddhist temples in the Jiangnan region continued to flourish until the Southern Song dynasty. To enhance management and restrain followers, the Chan rules were compiled and gradually refined. Meanwhile, Confucianism was re-emphasized as the primary guiding ideology of governance, accompanied by the establishment of systematic and standardized ritual procedures. After this period, the ritual system did not undergo fundamental changes.

The imperial examination system, based mainly on Confucian classics, was implemented, breaking the hereditary political and economic privileges of the aristocracy in the latter half of this period. The fusion of Confucianism with the dialectical views of Buddhism and Daoism during the Tang and Song dynasties led to the formation of Neo-Confucianism. Scholars' academic confidence peaked, and they

aimed to promote moral education. With the transition from an aristocratic society to a civil society, national rituals began to be promoted to all social classes in more practical ways through ‘illustrated guides’ and ‘family rituals.’

Early gardens (7th century)

This period includes constructions prior to the formation of garden concepts, including three commemorative gardens. Scholars commonly adhere to Sha Wugou’s viewpoint, attributing the origin of Wuxi’s gardens to Buddhist temples.⁹⁴ Chronologically, the necessity for a venue to conduct rituals shaped early gardens. Memorial practices and the establishment of commemorative spaces in the Mount Hui area and Meili Town emerged no later than the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220).⁹⁵

Regional context of Wuxi

Archaeological reports provide evidence of human activities in Wuxi during the Neolithic period (Figure 8, Figure 9⁹⁶ and Figure 10). The distribution of early settlements closely aligns with the higher altitude regions of Wuxi, extending from the southwestern to northeastern direction along the Mount Hui Range.

94 Sha Wugou, ‘A brief history of Wuxi Garden’, *Wuxi Archeology and Museology Review*, 2(1991), 15-16. (Internal information of Wuxi Museum)

95 Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

96 Yin, Huanzhang and Zhang Zhengxiang: ‘Some New Understandings of Neolithic Culture on the Map of Taihu Lake, Jiangsu province,’ *Archaeology*, 3 (1962), p147-157+10

Wei, Songshan, ‘Exploration of the Development of Taihu Lake Basin,’ (Nanchang: Jiangxi Education Press, 1993)

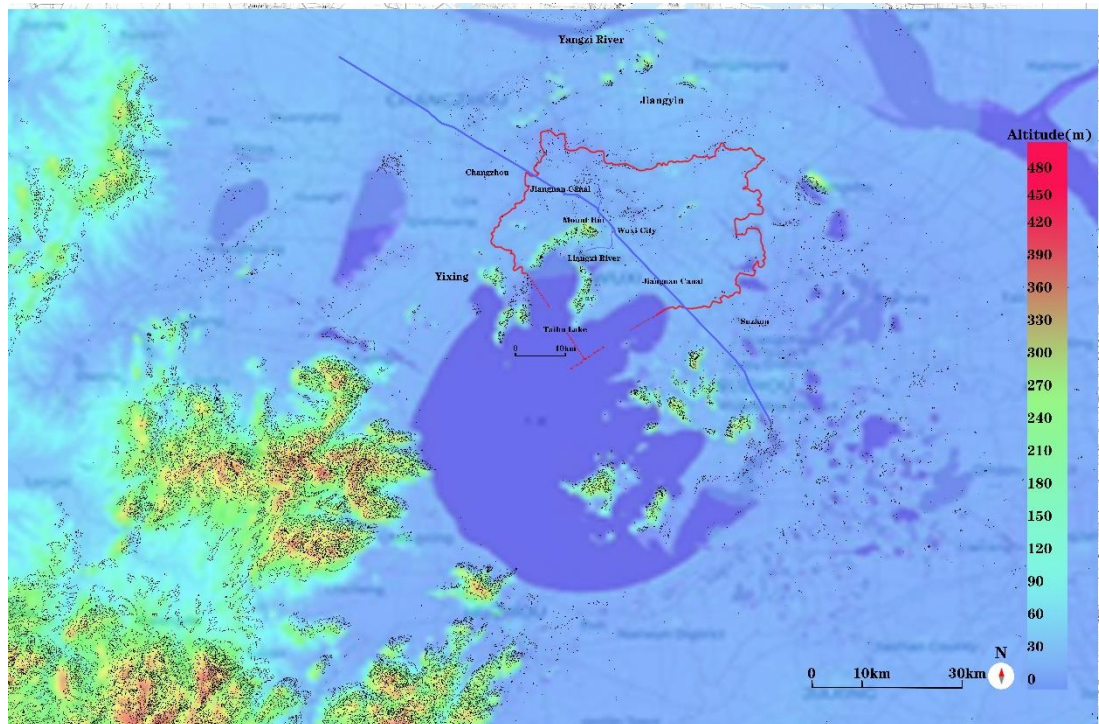


Figure 8: Contour map of the Taihu Lake area (the altitude difference of two lines is 30m.) (drawn by author, the data comes from Tianditu, Google map, and the webpage)

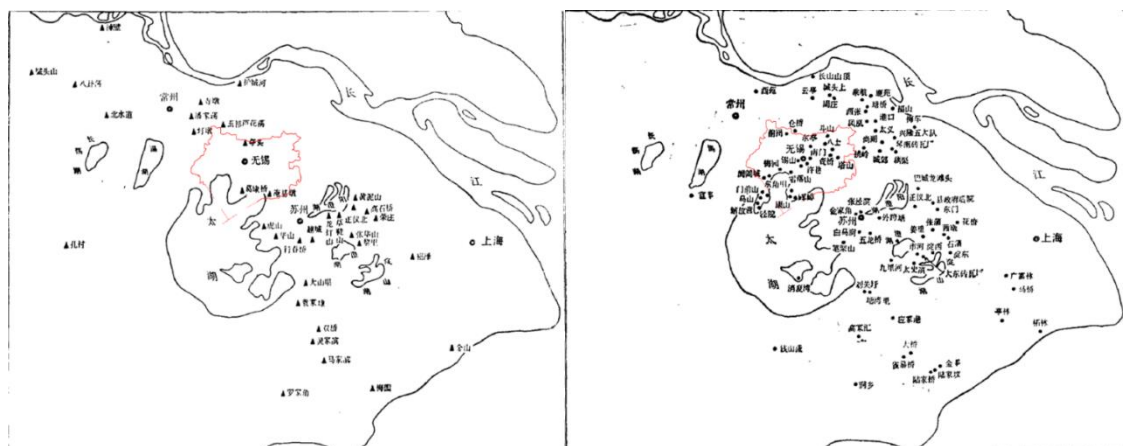


Figure 9 Primitive social and cultural sites including stone tools, pottery, rice, etc. in Taihu Plain (Majiabang Culture 6700 -5500 ago and Liangzhu Culture 5500-4000 ago)



Figure 10: The distribution of Wuxi mountains (drawn by author)

The Cathaysian geological structure underwent folding during the Mesozoic Indochina period (around 180 million years ago), followed by the Yanshan Movement (150 to 70 million years ago), leading to the hilly topography in the Jiangnan area.⁹⁷ The southwest part of Wuxi marks the edge of the Jiangnan Hills, with the city's highest point at Sanmao Peak 三茅峰 of the Mount Hui (328.98 metres).⁹⁸ Around 25 million years ago, the Himalayan movement caused uplift and subsidence, forming a basin centered on today's Taihu Lake in southwest Wuxi, now named the Taihu Basin. In the Holocene, sediment from the Yangtze River accumulated in Taihu Lake's eastern part, creating a barrier between Taihu Basin's freshwater and the East Sea's saltwater. This east section, known as the Taihu Plain, developed a lagoon-like topography around

97 Weng, Wenhao, *Crustal Movements and Igneous Activities in Eastern China since Mesozoic Time*, Acta Geologica Sinica (English Edition), 1(1927):9-37.

98 Wuxi Chorography Office. *Wuxi Annals*. (Beijing: Local Annals Publishing House, 2017)

7000 to 4200 years ago.⁹⁹ Most areas are below 20 metres, averaging 5-6 metres (Figure 8).¹⁰⁰ The abundant water resource is the foremost natural factor influencing early Wuxi's development.¹⁰¹ In the water-net plain, early inhabitants cut off their hair and tattoo their bodies, which seems to be evoke the image of a dragon's offspring, capable of surviving in the water, while their diet was primarily consisted of rice and fish soup.

Early agricultural practices in the Jiangnan region were rooted in water networks and the deposition of alluvial red clay during the Pleistocene era.¹⁰² Challenges included dense rhizomes due to ample rainfall, rudimentary cultivation methods, limited tools, high mortality from humidity-related diseases, and rudimentary medical knowledge.¹⁰³ This environment facilitated rice cultivation, aided by water resources and accumulated heat units.¹⁰⁴

99 Zhang, Xiugui, 'The Historical Process of the Evolution of Taihu Lake,' *Chinese Historical Geography*, 24.1 (2009), 5-12.

100 topographic-map, <<https://zh-cn.topographic-map.com/maps/auth/%E5%A4%AA%E6%B9%96/>> [accessed 20 April 2022]

101 The Taihu Lake, spanning an area of 2338km², serves as the focal point of the water network in the Jiangnan region. From Wuxi Chorography Office. *Wuxi Annals*. (Beijing: Local Annals Publishing House, 2017)

102 '厥土惟涂泥 Its earth is just mud' Confucius, *Shang Shu*[Book of Document] vol Yu Gong, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook Department of History of Peking University, *Archaeology of the Paleolithic Age*, 1981, mimeographed/ Confucius, *Shang Shu* [Book of Document] vol Yu Gong, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

103 '江南卑湿,丈夫早夭 In the Jiangnan region, which is low-lying and damp, human beings often die in their youth' Sima, Qian, c 1st century BC, *Shi Ji* [the Historical Records], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Xu, Wangsheng. 'Analysis on the Reasons for the Relative Backwardness of Agriculture in South of the Yangtze River before the Tang Dynasty.' *Agricultural Archaeology*, 1(1996):54-59

Guo, Kaiyi: 'Research on *Burning and Watering Methods of cultivation and Rich Home* in the Han Dynasties,' *Jiangnan Forum*, 2(1990):65-68

Peng, Shijiang. 'Distinguishing of Fire Ploughing and Water Rush' *Chinese Agricultural history*, 2(1987):10-18

104 '其谷宜稻 Its earth is suitable for growing rice' Ji, Dan (Zhou Dynasty), *Zhou Li*[Rituals in the Zhou Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Established by Taibo 太伯 and centered in Meili 梅里 Town, Wuxi, the state saw the introduction of advanced agricultural techniques by Taibo, which he integrated with local customs.¹⁰⁵ Taibo's endeavors earned the admiration of the local populace, leading to the allegiance of numerous families who recognized him as their sovereign.¹⁰⁶ In the later Spring and Autumn period(770-476BC), the Wu 吴 and Yue 越 states focused on advancing agriculture, using their rice cultivation techniques to build a solid foundation and compete effectively with other states.¹⁰⁷

Zhang analyzes the geographic nomenclature in the Wu language. The political center of Wu, encompassing Helv 阖闾 city in Wuxi, and Gusu in Suzhou, underwent a migratory shift—a hallmark of early state evolution and frequency flooding.¹⁰⁸ Wuxi's role as a provisional political hub ceased after 514 BC (Appendix 1: Evolution of Wuxi County (-1949)).¹⁰⁹

Chen, Wenhua, 'the Development of Agricultural Areas in the Xia, Shang, west Zhou, and Spring and Autumn Period from Archaeological Findings,' *Agricultural Archaeology*,1(2008):29-34.

105 Chen, Qiaoyi, 'Origin and Dispersal of Ancient Yue Ethnicity,' *Southeast Culture*, 6(1989).89-96+130.

106 '於是太伯、仲雍二人乃谿荆蛮，文身断发，示不可用，荆蛮义之，从而归之千馀家，立为吴太伯。 Therefore, Taibo and Zhongyong went to live among with tribal people. They tattooed their bodies and cut their hair short to show that they could give up their original prince roles. The local appreciated their righteousness and, as a result, over a thousand families followed them and select Taibo as the ruler of Wu' Sima, Qian, *Shi Ji* [the Historical Records], vol 31, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

107 Yao, Wenqing, and Tong Kai, 'A Brief Discussion on the Geographical Background of the development of Wu culture,' *Journal of Wuxi Education Collage*, 2(1997):46-48,70

Yuan, Kang (Han Dynasty), *Yue Jue Shu* [History of Yue State], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Zhao, Ye (Han dynasty), *Wu Yue Chun Qiu* [History of Wu and Yue States], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Chen, Wenhua, 'the Development of Agricultural Areas in the Xia, Shang, west Zhou, and Spring and Autumn Period from Archaeological Findings,' *Agricultural Archaeology*, 1 (2008):29-34.

108 Zhang, Xuefeng, 'Rethinking of the History of Wu States- from the Excavated Ruins of Ancient Cities in the Spring and Autumn Period in Southern Jiangsu in Recent Years,' *Collection of Suzhou Literature and Exhibition*, (2011),9-15

109 Wei, Songshan, 'the capital of Suzhou in the Spring and Autumn Period,' *History Teaching Problems*, (1991),48-

The Wu State gradually fostered competition and interaction with the Central Plains during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221BC), facilitated by canal networks. The Meili Site and the ‘Taibo Canal,’ an east-west waterway traversing Meili Town and linking Suzhou and Wuxi, have yielded numerous artifacts embodying distinctive cultural attributes of the Zhou dynasty (1059-256 BC) (Figure 11-a).¹¹⁰ These canals formed a channel connecting the centre area of Wu State (Suzhou and Wuxi) with the Qiantang 钱塘江 River (Hangzhou) in the south, the Yangtze River (Changzhou and Yangzhou), the Huai 淮河 River in the north, as well as the Yangtze River in the west, linking with the Yue 越, Qi 齐, and Chu 楚 States (Figure 11).¹¹¹

51,63

110 Fan, Xigang, ‘Begins at Taibo Canal-The Historical Trajectory of Wuxi Canal and the Shape of Urban Pattern,’ *Jiangsu Chorography*, 3(2021):15-18

Zhao, Xiande, and Xue Huanbing, ‘Expert opinion of Archaeology Symposium of Meili Site, Wuxi, in the Changzhou Canals dredged in the pre-Qin period,’ *Archives and Construction*, 2(2020):78-80,82

111 Yuan, Kang (Han Dynasty), *Yue Jue Shu* [History of Yue State], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Tang, Jie, ‘The Chinese Grand Canan World Heritage Site: Living Heritage in the 21st century?’ (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Sheffield, 2018)

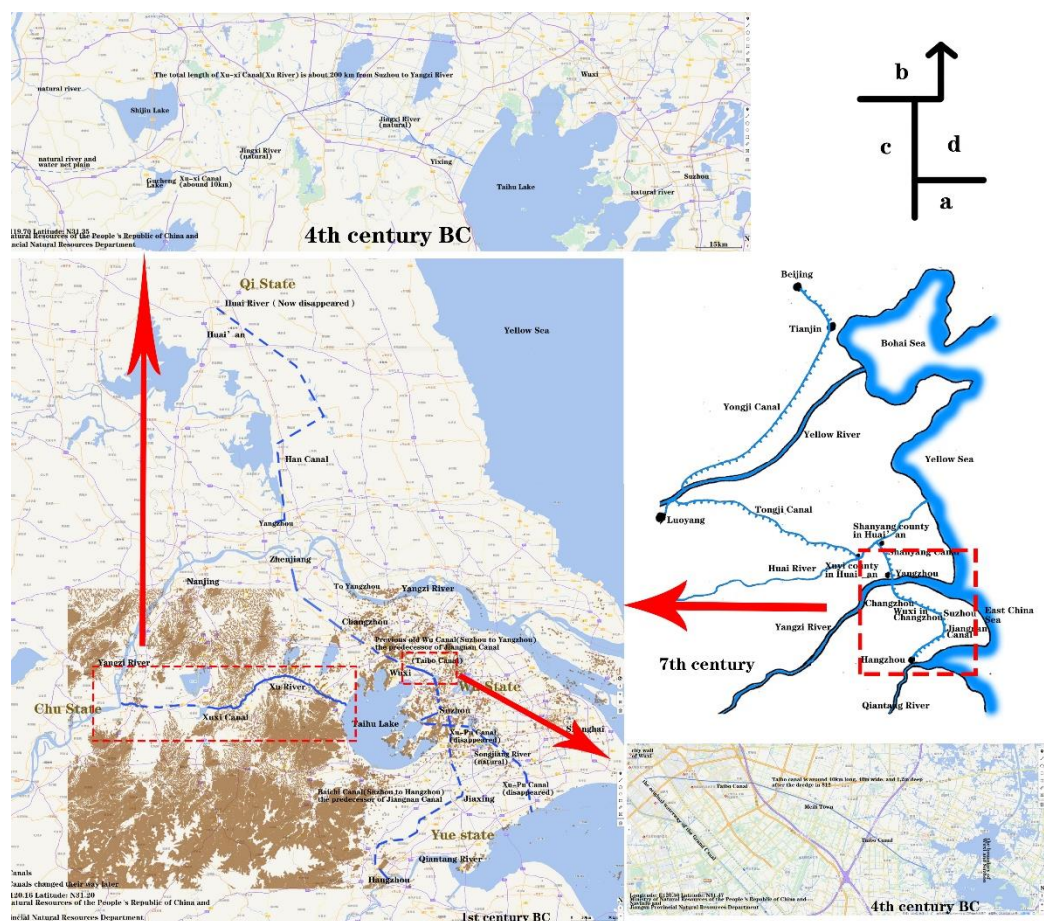


Figure 11 Canal system passed Wuxi area from the 4th century BC to the 7th century AD (drawn by author based on Ji Guohuang's work)¹¹²

- a) Taibo Canal started in 4th century BC and the map shows the condition after the dredge in 812
- b) Xuxi Canal built by Wu State started in 4th century BC
- c) Previous Old Wu Canal and the Prototype of Jiangnan canal system built by the Wu State in Spring and Autumn period (drawn by author, the contour line started from 0m and the interval is 15m)
- d) 4 main parts of the Beijing-Hangzhou Canal (the later Grand Canal) in the 6th and 7th century (re-drawn by author)

¹¹² Ji, Guohuang, *Chinese Canal in 3000 Years*, (Beijing: Encyclopedia of China Publishing House, 2008)

As mentioned earlier, their stories take place in ancient times but appeared relatively late. Early documentation gaps are one thing, and communication between regions was still limited until the Qin 秦国 States unified all regions, establishing the Qin Dynasty (秦朝 221-207 BC). The First Emperor of Qin (259-210 BC) aimed to enhance control over the Jiangnan area and similarly emphasized the construction of canals and roads.¹¹³ Soil was collected nearby to fill high roadbeds. The Jiangnan Canal connected Zhenjiang 镇江 to Hangzhou through Wuxi, and the parallel roads were completed at the same time, which was called Lingshui Road 陵水路.¹¹⁴ The location of the Jiangnan canal remained largely unchanged until the 20th century.¹¹⁵

Worship of sages and virtue for survival's sake

The Wu Yue Chun Qiu (吴越春秋), an annal of the Wu and Yue States written in the early years of the Eastern Han Dynasty, stands as the earliest documented reference to the tomb of Taibo.¹¹⁶ In the 5th century, historian Liu Zhao specified that the Taibo Tomb was situated on Mount Donghuang 东皇山. The local residents held Taibo in high regard and consistently maintained the tomb. Close by, around ten Li (approximately 4.2 kilometres) from the tomb, there are preserved old houses and wells. It can be inferred that the memorial temple was erected based on his former residence.

113 ‘始皇东游，以其有天子(王)气，掘而厌之 When the First Emperor of Qin traveled east in the Jiangnan area, he believed that the region possessed the aura of a future king, so he excavated it to suppress this potential’. Luo, Cheng (Tang dynasty), *Collection of Luo Cheng*, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

114 Ji, Guohuang, *Chinese Canal in 3000 Years*, (Beijing: Encyclopedia of China Publishing House, 2008)

115 See Li, Xiacong. ‘A Study on the Selection of Urban Sites and Urban Form along the Tang-Song Grand Canal.’ from Tang, Xiaofeng and Huang Yijun. *A Handbook of Historical Geography*. (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2006) pp 317.

116 ‘皇山有太伯冢去墓十里有舊宅其井猶存 On Mount Huang, there is Taibo's tomb. Ten Li from the tomb, there are Taibo's old residences, with the well still preserved.’ Zhao, Ye (Han dynasty), *Wu Yue Chun Qiu* [History of Wu and Yue States], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

The Memorial Hall for Taibo had been constructed and regularly maintained over an extended period.¹¹⁷

Taibo 泰伯, who lived in approximately the 11th century BC, was a prince of the Zhou dynasty, traditionally credited with establishing the Wu State. He transformed the primitive way of life of the original inhabitants of Wuxi, who relied solely on the natural environment, by introducing agricultural culture from the Central Plains and fostering relations between Jiangnan and the Central Plains. Nevertheless, recent research suggests that this process may not have been guided by him directly, but may be linked to the ‘process of civilization advancement’ among peripheral States.¹¹⁸

The construction of another memorial temple is still associated with individuals capable of transform nature. To mitigate water-related disasters and harness the benefits of a

117 ‘《皇览》曰：’吴王太伯冢在吴县北梅里聚，去城十里。太伯始所居地名句吴。（魏时期，清代孙冯翼辑本）’臣昭（刘昭，南朝梁人）案：无锡县东皇山有太伯冢，民世修敬焉。去墓十里有旧宅、井犹存。臣昭以为即宅为置庙，不如《皇览》所说也。The Huang Lan (during the Wei period) states that the tomb of Wu King Taibo is located in Meili, north of Wu County, ten li from the city. The place where Taibo originally resided was called Gou Wu. (Compiled by Sun Fengyi in the Qing Dynasty edition). Minister Zhao (Liu Zhao of the Southern Liang Dynasty) comments: On Mount Donghuang in Wuxi County, there is Taibo's tomb, which the people have maintained and revered for generations. Ten li from the tomb, there are old residences with well still preserved. Minister Zhao believes that establishing a temple at this site is more accurate than what is stated in the Huang Lan.’ Fan, Ye, interpreted by Liu Zhao, Li Xian, *Hou Han Shu* [the later History of the Han], vol 22, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

118 Zhang, Xuefeng, ‘Rethinking of the History of Wu States- from the Excavated Ruins of Ancient Cities in the Spring and Autumn Period in Southern Jiangsu in Recent Years,’ Collection of Suzhou Literature and Exhibition, (2011),9-15

‘大伯端委以治周礼，仲雍嗣之，断发文身，羸以为饰，岂礼也哉？有由然也。Taibo governance with Zhou rites, and Zhongyong, who succeeded him. They cut off their hair, tattooed their body, and used ornaments as adornments. Is this not contrary to proper ritual? There is indeed a reason for it.’ Zuo, Qiuming, *Chun Qiu Zuo Zhuan*[The Spring and Autumn Annals], vol Lu Ai Gong Qi Nian (488 BC) ,Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Miyazaki Ichisada: History of Asia, Asahi Shimbun,1976

〔日〕宮崎市定：《東洋における素朴主義の民族と文明主義の社会》（东洋朴素主义的民族与文明主义的社会），载其著《宮崎市定アジア史論考》（宮崎市定亚洲史论考），朝日新闻社1976年。

bountiful water system, indigenous ancestors embarked on environmental transformations during the Wu state period (circa 11th- 473 BC).¹¹⁹

After King Goujian (勾踐 520-464 BC) of Yue annexed the state of Wu, the locus of political power among separatist factions shifted in tandem with their spheres of influence, heralding the commencement of the Warring States period (473-221 BC). Following the state of Chu's conquest of the state of Yue, the area where Wuxi is located was referred to as Huang Xie's (黄歇 or Chun Shen Jun 春申君 314-238 BC) fiefdom. The historical record of the Wuxi population offering sacrifices to Huang briefly surfaces in official histories during the 1st century. It is noted that cattle were offered to Huang Xie every spring.¹²⁰

Huang Xie led efforts to manage the water in Jiangnan area while serving as the commander of this area, which including Furong Lake located to the northwest of Mount Hui. This endeavour represented a pivotal task for early inhabitants in an agrarian region characterized by an intricate network of waterways. Huang Xie earned societal prominence akin to the legendary status attributed to Taibo, garnering widespread support. To commemorate his contributions, the watercourse in Mount Hui was named Huang-gong Stream, while an artificial island in the Liangxi River, designed for water diversion, received the designation Huang-bu Island, derived from his family name, Huang. His memorial shrine was also established in the nearby Mount Hui area.

These two individuals were early contributors to the development of Wuxi. Local deities often encompassed revered figures from the community, with their deification

119 Zhou, Yunzhong, 'Research on the Historical Geography of Jiangsu and Anhui' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Fudan University, 2010)

120 '无锡，有历山，春申君岁祠以牛 In Wuxi, there is Mount Li, where Chunshen's annual sacrifice is conducted with cattle.' Ban, Gu, East Han dyansty, interpreted by Yan Shigu(Tang), *Han Shu* [the History of the Han dynasty], vol 28, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

establishing a reciprocal rapport with the local populace. The initial ceremonies were conducted in commemoration of these sagely individuals, lauding their contributions and beseeching divine favour. As human beings, the historical records acknowledge the substantial roles of Taibo and Huang in the cultural and agricultural advancement of Wuxi. They progressively assumed a sanctified status through successive ceremonial proceedings. This phenomenon likely extends beyond figures like Taibo and Huang Xie and might have persisted due to the challenging conditions of the natural environment.

A great number of memorial temples appear to have been a consistent occurrence in the early Jiangnan region. During the Han Dynasty, the feudal system from the pre-Qin period was still preserved to some extent, and the central government did not yet possess absolute power to control all regions. The worship of folk sages was allowed. This changed after the Sui Dynasty, perhaps due to the establishment of a nationwide transportation network, including the Beijing-Hangzhou Canal, which led to a certain increase in the centralization of authority. Possibly fearing potential challenges to their authority, rulers imposed constraints on local communal gatherings, and the Memorial Temple of Huang Xie was forcibly abandoned due to the proliferation of worship practices involving various local sages and congregations in the Jiangnan region.¹²¹ Huang became the Land God of Wuxi, who continued to receive customary veneration from the populace.¹²² By deifying the sages, excessive worship of local power was

121 ‘吴、楚之俗多淫祠，仁杰奏毁一千七百所，唯留夏禹、吴太伯、季札、伍员四祠。The customs of Wu and Chu were popular with superabundant Memorial Halls. Renjie proposed the destruction of 1,700 such temples, preserving only those dedicated to Yu, Taibo, Ji Zha, and Wu Yuan.’ Liu, Xu, *Jiu Tang Shu* [Old Book of Tang, vol 89, Biography of Di Renjie, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

122 ‘唐垂拱间狄仁杰毁江东淫祀 祠亦见废 今惠山下有土神祠 即春申君也 During the Chuigong era of the Tang dynasty, Di Renjie destroyed the superabundant memorial halls in Jiangdong area, and the temples were also abandoned. Now, at the foot of Mount Hui, there is a memorial hall dedicated to the Earth God, who is actually Lord Chunshen’ Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

avoided.

The depiction of early Wuxi's development of gardens solely as spaces for commemoration, where local residents engage in commemorative activities, is misleading. In fact, the activities within these spaces could extend far beyond this description. Hosting rituals is merely one among several functions of early gardens. The origin of Chinese gardens is frequently linked to the establishment of the Lingyou (灵囿), a Sacred Garden, during the early Western Zhou Dynasty (12th century-771 BC).¹²³ The garden served purposes of entertainment, conducting rituals, making offerings, and cultivating flora and fauna.¹²⁴ It also permitted nearby residents to gather firewood and engage in hunting, which led Liang Sicheng to label it as one of the earliest forms of park.¹²⁵ The ritual honouring the Gods related to Land, named She Ji 社祭, involved both official and grassroots segments of society.¹²⁶ The official iteration

123 《诗经大雅灵台》篇曰：经始灵台，经之营之。庶民攻之，不日成之。经始勿亟，庶民子来。王在灵囿，麀鹿攸伏，麀鹿濯濯，白鸟鹄鹄。At the beginning is the Lingtai, and the people preserve it. The people cultivate it, and it is completed quickly. At the beginning, do not urge it, and the people will come like sons. The king is in the Lingyou, where the deer and the elk lie down, where the deer are clean and sleek, and the white birds are hovering. Zhu, Xi, *Shi Jing Ji Zhuan* [the Classic of Poetry annotated by Zhu Xi], (Sao Ye Shan Fang Cang Ben), vol 6, pp10, National Library ebook.

124 ‘囿人掌囿游之兽禁，牧百兽，祭祀、丧纪等 The park keepers are in charge of the enclosures and the restrictions on roaming animals, tending to all the beasts, and overseeing matters related to sacrificial rites and funerary protocols.’ Ji, Dan, *Zhou Li* [the Rites of Zhou], vol 2 地官司徒第二, from *The Qinding SikuQuanshu*, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

125 Mencius, *Mengzi* [Analect of Mencius] vol Liang Hui Wang Xia, *Qinding SikuQuanshu*, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Liang, Sicheng, *Zhong Guo Jian Zhu Shi* [History of Chinese Architecture] (Beijing: Baihua Wenyi Publishing House, 1998), pp36.

126 ‘高祖十年春，有司清令县常以春二月及腊祠稷以羊、彘，民里社各自裁以祠。制曰：可。’ In the tenth year of Emperor Gaozu, in the spring, officials issued a decree stating that counties should regularly offer sheep and pigs to Ji sacrifices in both the second month of spring and during the Winter Sacrifice festival. Local communities were permitted to conduct their own sacrifices to their neighborhood deities. The decree stated: permissible.’ Ban, Gu (East Han), interpreted by Yan Shigu (Tang), *Han Shu* [the History of the Han dynasty], vol25 Rituals and sacrifice, *Qinding Siku Quanshu*, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books

of the ritual involved offerings of sheep and pigs to Houji 后稷 ‘the God of Agriculture’, while the folk variant varied according to local customs.¹²⁷ All residents partake, and the forms are varied. Ritual offerings, field hunting, labor cessation, and revelry ensue.¹²⁸

During the Han dyansty, construction still reflected a certain demand for primitive natural worship. Water, functioning as a constraining element, was harnessed for hydraulic endeavours aimed at improving the overall living environment. The management of agriculture and water became more important. Early garden culture was closely intertwined with ritual ceremonies worshipping nature and gods manage them. In the primitive religious era, these spaces served as a primary area for venerating local virtuous figures and facilitating recreational activities, akin to the earliest gardens, such as Lingyou.

After the Han, there was a period of fragmentation lasting approximately four centuries, marked by frequent warfare and dynastic changes, leading to shifts in the objects of worship within ancestral halls and shrines. A commemorative temple was set up in the

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127 Houji is the name of the agricultural official in ancient China, and also the god of agriculture and the god of grains

128‘唯为社事，单(殫)出里;唯为社田，国人毕作;唯社，丘乘共粢盛，所以报本反始也。People will individually contribute efforts for the collective benefit of committee; for committee farmland, the citizens will work together with unity and cooperation. Only through the collective efforts of committee can abundant harvests be achieved, serving as a return to the origins and a repayment to the deities.’ Zheng, Xuan, Han dynasty, Li Ji Zheng Yi[True Meaning of Book of Rites], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

‘穷乡之社，扣瓮拊瓶，相和而歌，自以为乐 In the impoverished village, they knock on urns and beat on bottles, singing in harmony, finding joy within themselves.’ Liu, An, Han dynasty, Huai Nan Zi [collection of Liu An], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Zhang, Jun, Shen Mi De Jie Su[Mysterious Festival Customs], (Nanning: Guangxi Renmin Publishing house, 2004), pp.109

5th century to pay homage to a devoted son named Hua Bao based on his old house. Later, Wang Bin rebuilt it underscoring an emphasis on human nature. During the Tang Dynasty, it became a specialized shrine, with memorial archways built by Emperor Qianlong in 1748. Hua's father had passed away while serving in the military. According to their arrangement, upon his father's anticipated return, a coming-of-age ceremony (capping ceremony) was intended for Hua Bao. Regrettably, circumstances prevented the fulfillment of this commitment, resulting in Hua Bao's lifelong bachelorhood. He reached the age of seventy without the ceremony, and as he was not considered an adult, he could not get married. Recognizing his unwavering filial devotion to his father, the state resolved to institute an ancestral hall in his honour.¹²⁹

Gao elucidated the rationales underlying the acclaim and acknowledgment accorded to Hua Bao, thereby facilitating his commendation and historical documentation. During turbulent times, Hua Bao steadfastly endured across the span of three successive dynasties, with his resolute commitment and unwavering filial piety serving as a beacon akin to the enduring constancy of celestial bodies and the firmament. Serving as enduring exemplars, it exhorts individuals to remain steadfast to their inner convictions and resolutely uphold their principles.¹³⁰ In addition to Hua, three other individuals

129 今祠址华孝子所居宅也 初祠久废吴人王彬始复倡建 初址实孝子故居孝子之事, Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).. 华宝, 晋陵无锡人也。父豪, 义熙末成长安, 宝年八岁。临别, 谓宝曰: '须我还, 当为汝上头。'长安陷虏, 豪歿。宝年至七十, 不婚冠, 或问之者, 辄号恸弥日, 不忍答也。Xiao, Zixian, *Nan Qi Shu*[Book of Qi],vol55 filial, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

130 Article of Gao Ming '蓋自西晋以来尚玄虚 贱名检教弛法戮波流风靡而孝子独能笃至行终始不渝其诚意惻怛可以贯金石于云霓若与宇宙日月同其久...一身而天下三易姓当时居朝廷有爵位者朝事司马氏夕事刘朝事刘夕事萧恬不以为恠而孝子奉父一言七十年余未尝斯须忘以至没身不替使当时朝廷有爵位者其奉君命恪官守亦咸若华氏子...则某所以树碑之意云尔夫人性一耳有为者亦若是吾徒宜毋自怠 Since the Western Jin Dynasty, the era has been chaotic and the atmosphere increasingly volatile, various schools of thought have prevailed. However, filial sons have been able to maintain sincere conduct and unwavering loyalty. Their sincerity and filial piety can penetrate through gold and stone, enduring alongside the clouds, the universe, and the sun and moon. Their

from Wuxi were also commemorated for their filial piety.

As articulated by Zeng Zi (505-435 BC),

Filial piety is the foundation that bridges the gap between heaven and earth, extending broadly across the vast expanse of the four seas. Its observance should remain uninterrupted through successive generations.¹³¹

The virtue of filial piety towards parents was further extended to encompass loyalty to the emperor. The practice of employing filial piety as a criterion for selecting officials originated during the Han.¹³² In the societal context of that period, there existed abundant records of filial children. Even with the initiation of the imperial examination system, one's filial piety directly influenced their social status and reputation. Driven by pragmatic interests, the worship of individuals gradually supplanted the veneration of deities or the deified reverence of individuals. This corresponds to the cognitive shift

lives have undergone three changes in dynastic affiliation. Yet, in the courts of that time, some titled individuals served the Sima in the morning and the Liu in the evening; others served the Liu in the morning and the Xiao in the evening. They did not feel ashamed of this. Meanwhile, filial sons have consistently followed their father's commands for seventy years, fulfilling their promise to their fathers until their final moments. It is hoped that those holding titles in the court will respectfully serve the emperor's commands and fulfill their duties, just like descendants of the Hua clan. This is the reason why I have erected this monument. Therefore, a person of achievement should act in this manner, and we should not slacken in our own endeavors.'

from Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)..

131 夫孝，置之而塞乎天地，溥之而横乎四海，施诸后世而无朝夕，Dai, De, *Li Ji* [Records of Ritual], vol 24 Ji Yi, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

132 '立学校之官，州郡举茂材孝廉，皆自仲舒发之 The establishment of official positions for schools, and the recommendation of talented and filial individuals by the prefectures and counties, all originated from Dong Zhongshu.' Ban, Gu(East Han), interpreted by Yan Shigu(Tang), *Han Shu* [the History of the Han dynasty], vol 56 biography of Dong Zhongshu, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

from the worship of gods to the veneration of humanity during the period.¹³³

In the early stages of Wuxi's garden culture, there emerged an emphasis on a pragmatic approach towards practicality from environment transformation to social management. The influence of filial piety began to manifest within garden culture, particularly in later periods concerning the establishment of family ancestral halls and the conducting of associated rituals within the context of these gardens.

The longing for mountains and rivers

The gardens culture of Wuxi began to develop in the Mount Hui area near the city.

No ancillary structures are evident in early practice, and there is no recorded information regarding to botanical elements. Examining the selection of sites for Memorial Temples, they show a strong correlation with earlier settlements and the recognition of the status of celebrities, rather than aesthetic or religious factors. These constructions are largely driven by the practical needs of residents, so the celebrity effect is very pronounced.

This phenomenon could be attributed to the relatively low altitude in the southeastern parts of Wuxi (Figure 8), where the elevated risk of water-related disasters was a prominent concern in its early history. The areas characterized by mountains and forests consistently aligned with settlement patterns (Figure 10), particularly demonstrating a potential concentration of residents in the Mount Hui area. Furthermore, the northern vicinity of Mount Hui might have been selected as an official road/canal station, likely prompted by the aggregation of residential communities.¹³⁴ Convenient transportation, including the presence of the Ancient Wu Waterway (Figure 24 the blue dashed line)

133 Zhang, Qizhi, *Zhong Guo Si Xiang Shi*[History of Chinese Thoughts] (Xi'an: University of Northwest, 2001)

134 Liu, Jizeng, *Ren Cao An Zhi* [Chronicles of Rencao Temple] vol 1, (Wuxi, Suichu Hall Press, 1887) from *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source], Nanjing: Phoenix Press, 2011)

constructed by the Wu State, and the embryonic form of the Jiangnan Canal during the Qin, rendered the Mount Hui area as suitable for habitation. The Mount Hui also brought together the advantages of resources for livelihood. Springs and streams, ten of hectares of farmland on the foot of the mountain, and bushy trees, showing that the site provided adequate water, food and fuel wood.¹³⁵

Qiu Dan, an official in the Tang, believed that the residence of Zhan Ting was on Mount Hui, specially ‘there were still 10 to 20 clan families of Zhan around the mountain area’ when he came here.¹³⁶ Zhan lived and worked in the early 5th century. He retired from his role as the officer whose work was personnel appointment of the Ministry of Civil Affairs (司徒右长史 Situ You Zhang Shi). The position gave him the chance to make friends with Prince Liu Shuo (刘铄 431-453). In their letters, they showed their aspiration to nature and disgust with politics. In the realm of symbolic representation, an incipient incompatibility between gardens and political ideologies has emerged. Later, Liu Shuo was killed by his nephew, and Zhan Ting also disappeared from historical records. Scholar-officials introduced the concept of ‘seclusion within the court’, reflecting their aspiration for mountains and water in city’s outskirts with and enabling hermitic-like lifestyles in secondary-nature ‘gardens.’ This trend paralleled the development of suburban mountainous regions.¹³⁷ The Liu-Song government

135 Nine kilometers to the west of the Mount Hui is an agricultural base in the 3rd century. A poem in 11th century was recorded families on the hillside have a good harvest of rice and fish in autumn wind. 夫江南山浅土薄，不有流水，而此山泉源傍注崖谷，下溉田十余顷，此山又当太湖之西北隅，萦疏四十余里，唯中峯有丛篁灌木，余尽古石嵌崿而已。The low mountains and thin soil do not allow spontaneous flow. However, the springs in Mount Hui could pour over ten hectares (around 200,000m²) of land and flow into the valley and cliff beside it. Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

136 ‘遶访湛氏胄裔，山下犹有一二十族。’ Upon visiting about the descendants of the Zhan family, it was found that there were still around twenty families branches living at the foot of the mountain’ Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

137 Fu, Jing, ‘Research of Traditional Garden History of Wei–Jin–Southern & Northern Dynasties’ (Unpublished

acknowledging the legitimacy of land encroachment, Zhan's residence was likely an estate in Mount Hui, but there is no evidence to support this view.

Zong witnessed the ascendancy of the 'Chinese mountain and water sentiment' marked by the mainstream ideology of 'returning to nature' after the Jin Dynasty (266- 420).¹³⁸ This diverges from the early legends of the need for water management, as significant population migration southward occurred due to the internal conflicts in the Central Plains region. Various geographical environments prompted residents to develop an understanding, description, and modification of nature, bringing them closer to the natural world.¹³⁹

A vague sense of landscape consciousness emerged in Wuxi in the 5th century.

The Sui, Tang, and Song period (1)

Social-political context

The troops of the Sui Dynasty marched southward and conquered the State of Chen in 589, ending more than three hundred years of division and reuniting the state. The ambitious emperor Yang of the Sui launched massive infrastructure projects, such as palaces and canals linked Zhuojun (Beijing) and Yuhang (Hangzhou), and wars with other countries, which triggered peasant uprisings. The Sui dynasty was soon replaced by the Tang Dynasty in 618. The Sui and Tang are as one of the high points of Chinese

doctoral thesis, Tianjin University, 2003)

Zhang, Qiqun, *View of Nature in Wei and Jin Dynasties- Philosophical Investigation of Chinese Art Consciousness* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2000) pp.89

138 Zong, Baihua, *Aesthetic Walk*, (Shanghai, Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1981) pp208. 213. 219

Fu, Jing, 'Research of Traditional Garden History of Wei-Jin-Southern & Northern Dynasties' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Tianjin University, 2003)

139 Hu, Axiang, 'Discussion on the Impact of Population Moving South in the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties', *Jiangsu Research Association of Six Dynasties History*. Paper Album of the History of the Six Dynasties and The Transformation of Wu Culture, 10 (2007). 782-789.

political power and influence, and as one of extraordinary achievements in every field of culture and the arts, including gardening, which had comprehensive and profound impact on Japan and east Asia¹⁴⁰

There were new developments in the Jiangnan region. Cattle-tilling technology and farm tools (Figure 12 Jiangdong plough) particularly suitable for Jiangnan soil were improved.¹⁴¹ For better use of the water-net plain, a group of water conservancy facilities including canals, ponds, earth-filled dams, slopes, and ditches was constructed with gates and the polder water conservancy system consisted of waterways (Figure 12) .¹⁴² At the time, the Taibo Canal in Wuxi was dredged, along with other fifty-four projects.¹⁴³ The Figure 12 made by Xu Chenpan illustrate the continuous expansion of the cultivated area.¹⁴⁴ The primary output in the Jiangdong region came from the land, and a bountiful harvest of grain every year could support the surrounding areas.¹⁴⁵ The agricultural development is the foundation of urban development of Wuxi. Moreover,

140 Twitchett, Denis and Fairbank Mote, *The Cambridge History of China* Volume 3 Sui and T'ang China, 589–906 AD, Part One (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) Cambridge library eBook

141 Li, Bozhong, *The Development of Agriculture in Jiangnan in the Tang Dynasty*, (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2009) pp.80

142 Xu, Chenpan, 'Farming Areas Expanded from the Han to Tang dynasties' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Shaanxi Normal University, 2016.)

Fan, Chengda, Song dynasty, *Wu Jun Zhi* [Chorography of Wu County], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Wang, Zhen, Yuan dynasty, *Nong Shu* [Agriculture Book], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

143 Li, Bozhong, *The Development of Agriculture in Jiangnan in the Tang Dynasty*, (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2009)

144 Xu Chenpan, Farming Areas Expanded from the Han to Tang dynasties. Doctoral Thesis of Shaanxi Normal University, 2016.

145 ‘江东诸州,业在田亩,每一岁善熟, 则旁资数道 In the various prefectures of Jiangdong, the primary source of income lay in the cultivation of fields. When the crops ripened abundantly each year, surplus goods were available to help other prefectures.’ Quan, Deyu, Tang Dynasty, *Quan De Yu Wen Ji* [Collected Works of Quan Zaizhi], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. vol. 47

the advancement of agriculture significantly transformed the excessively damp environment of the Jiangnan region, which was previously unsuitable for human habitation. This transformation provided a favorable setting for northern aristocrats to visit the south, leaving behind records and promoting the dissemination of the imperial garden culture from the capital.

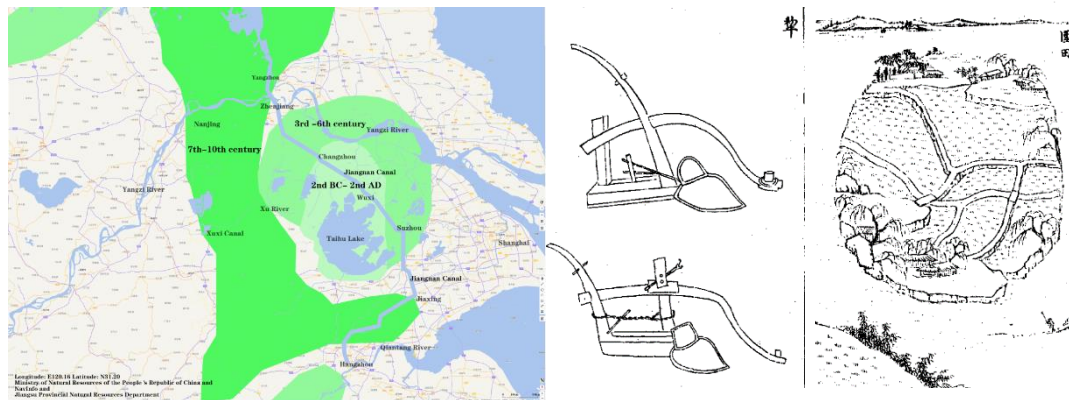


Figure 12: Left, Expanding farming areas from 2nd century BC to 10th century AD (Re-drawn by author)

Middle and right, Jiangdong Plow and polder water conservancy system in historic agriculture book.¹⁴⁶

The outbreak of the An-Shi Rebellion (16/12/755-17/02/763) and the long period of chaos of the five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (907-960) directly led to the second largest population southward migration.¹⁴⁷

Scholars mostly moved to the Jiang-Huai area (Yangtze River and Hui River) in

146 Lu Guimeng (Tang dynasty), *lěi sì jīng* [Farming tools] Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Wang zhen. Yuan dynasty, *Nong Shu* [Agricultural book], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

147 From December 16, 755, to February 17, 763, An Lushan and Shi Siming, the chief officials of Hedong and Pinglu, launched a civil war against the Tang imperial family and a riot of vassal states, which marked the turning point of the Tang Dynasty from prosperity to decline and led to the increasing division of vassal states after the middle of the Tang Dynasty.

the new chaos.¹⁴⁸

At that time, scholars and gentries were more inclined to travel to the Jiangnan area.¹⁴⁹

This was a significant migration of intellectuals and cultural figures compared with the first migration of society as a whole. It attracted a significant influx of external migrants. One third of Wuxi's population (in total 17 thousand families) moved from other places during the Tang.¹⁵⁰ Following this, there was an appreciation and exploration of the scenery in Jiangnan, including Wuxi, by northern literati. The most direct consequence was the increase in record-keepers in Wuxi, who also brought with them an aesthetic awareness of landscapes and appreciation.

Transforming nature and Emergence of aesthetic awareness

From Dugu Ji's description, the original purpose of dredging was as part of the Water Conservancy Project on Mount Hui. The project was overseen by county magistrate, Jing Cheng 敬澄. A local chronicler recorded that after the dredging of the source of the springs in Mount Hui, two waterways from the Huishan Spring to the canal at the foot of the mountain have formed since the Tang (Figure 13).¹⁵¹ The people living

148 '中国新去乱,士多避处江淮间 After Middle Plain recently faced turmoil, many scholars sought refuge in the Jianghuai region.' Han, Yu, Tang dynasty, interpreted by later scholars, compiled by Siku Quanshu: *Wu Bai Jia Zhu Changli Wen Ji* [Collection of Han Yu and the Interpretation], vol.6, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

149 Peng Dingqiu, Qing Dynasty, *Yu Ding Quan Tang Shi* [Complete Poetry of the Tang], vol. 500, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

150 '郡以计不得其详旧称县之主客户共一万六千九百有一而主户尝二倍于客 The prefecture's records are not precise, but it was traditionally stated that the county had a total of 16,901 registered households, with the number of resident households historically being twice that of the guest households' Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

151 '泉自金莲花池迂回 过寺中香积池出寺径达双河合五泻水越江阴界水同入于江 其一道东入暗渠涓涓引

nearby could use the two main waterways to irrigate, with no need to worry about drought over several hectares.¹⁵² The scenic value of Erquan (Second Spring) was simultaneously expressed. Dugu Ji (725-777) was a native of Luoyang (the eastern capital of the Tang). He was one of the earliest Tang Dynasty travelers to arrive in Wuxi and the first person to express aesthetic consciousness. He was a minister and prose writer who sought refuge in Jiangnan during the An-Shi Rebellion. He proposed that ‘Natural things themselves are not realized they are beautiful, but become different when discovered and enhanced by human’.¹⁵³ In this construction, different terrains guided springs to fall in the artificial pond to achieve both visual and auditory beauty, including waterfalls, ponds and streams. ‘The splash seems like wine and milk, and the sound could cleanse the ear’.¹⁵⁴ Branch canals also provided water to the nearby temple.

This kind of project with both landscape and utilization was common in Jiangnan during the Tang, similar to Huang’s contribution, the transformation and utilization of Furong Lake in the northwest of Wuxi. In the process, not only did it promote the diversion and collection of mountain spring water, but it also contributed to the formation of public

流出锡山涧迤邐顺流下梁溪合梁溪入 The spring from golden lotus pond meanders. Passing through the temple, it flows from the Xiangji Pond, exits the temple, and flows into the Shuanghe River, where it joins the Wuhe River, crossing into Jiangyin’s boundary and eventually flowing into the Yangtze River. One branch flows east into a hidden channel, trickling down from Mount Xi, winding smoothly along and merging with Liangxi River’ Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

152 ‘其余旁支别派,斜分曲汇,山民悉为沟畎,导流山下溉田,可数顷无旱干之忧 its branches diverge and flow in meandering paths, winding and converging. Local mountain residents have utilized these to create ditches and furrows, guiding the water down the mountain slopes to irrigate fields, ensuring several hectares are free from concerns of drought.’ Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

153 物不自美, 因人美之 Dugu Ji, New spring in Huishan Temple. Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

154 甘溜湍激, 若醴酬乳喷’ ‘瀑潺有声, 聆之耳清 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang, Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

landscapes. During this period, the capital city entered the heyday of garden design.¹⁵⁵ Wang Wei, known as Chinese landscape poetry and painting, blazed a trail for poetic and artistic gardens with his late-in-life creation of the ‘Wangchuan Retreat’. His pioneering role significantly influenced the subsequent aesthetic sensibilities of garden landscapes.

Except for Huishan Spring (Erquan spring) , the West Lake in Changxing built by Yu Po 于頔, and the landscape of Shantang River and Tiger Hill by Bai Juyi 白居易 in Suzhou.¹⁵⁶ Mao points out that ‘urban landscape construction and its sightseeing activities’ began to become works of literati officials. Under the influence of Confucian thought included ‘sharing happiness with people’, they were expected to improve social education, ease class conflict, and develop the urban economy, which were the assessment standard of officials.¹⁵⁷ Public landscapes flourished. They wrote landscape poems to record their contribution and promoted the construction of urban landscapes in the Jiangnan area.¹⁵⁸ With the urbanization and secularization of cities, the landscape value such as Huishan Spring gradually developed towards the public.

155 Zhou, Weiquan, *Zhong Guo Gu Dian Yuan Lin Shi* [History of Chinese Traditional Gardens], 3rd edition, (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 1998)

156 Ouyang, Xiu (Song Dynasty), *Xin Tang Shu* [The History of the Tang Dynasty (New Edition)], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

157 Mao, Huasong, ‘Research on Public Gardens in the Song Dynasty under the Evolution of Urban Civilization’. (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Chongqing University, 2015)

158 Chen Yao, ‘Jiangnan Complex of Bai Juyi’, (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Zhejiang University of Technology, 2009.)

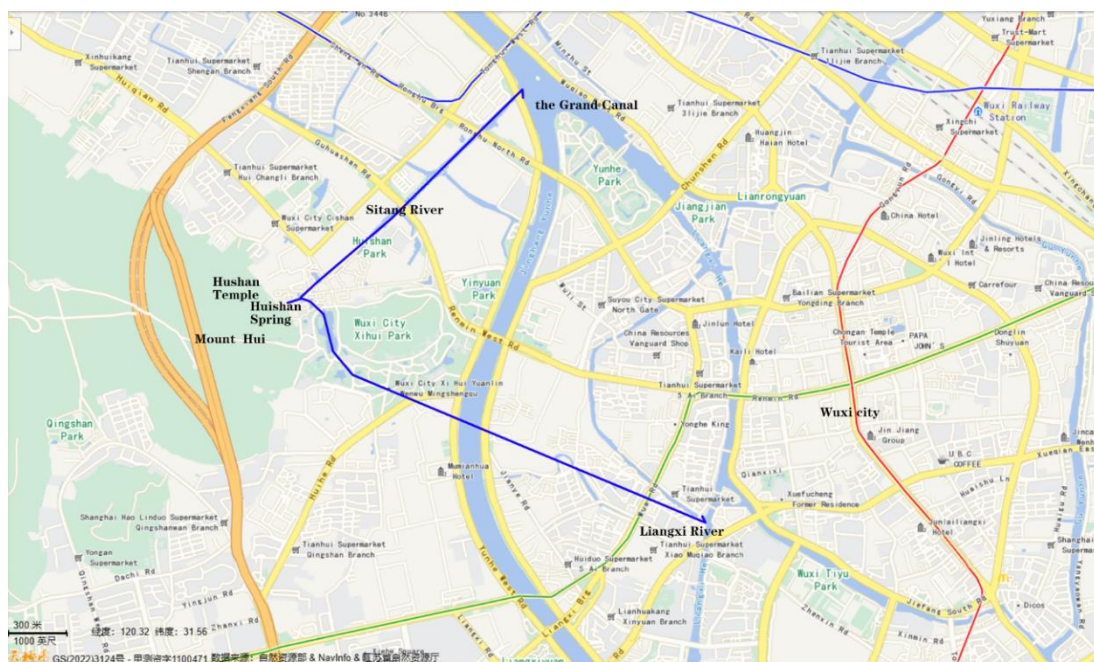


Figure 13: Two main waterways from Mount Hui to the Grand Canal and Liangxi River(drawn by author based on the map from National Platform for Common Geospatial Information Services <<https://www.tianditu.gov.cn/>>)

Near Huishan Temple and the Erquan Spring, there are numerous rest and viewing pavilions in succession (Figure 14 and Figure 15).¹⁵⁹ The Jimu Pavilion 极目亭 was rebuilt as a memorial temple in the Yuan to commemorate the five local sages. On the right side, there are Hanbi ‘涵碧 including the green world’, Shiyun ‘湿云 Wet cloud’, and Shuxiang 漱香 ‘tasting tea’ pavilions, all of which were used for appreciating and enjoying the tea and spring. An official whose surname was Zhang built ten connected rooms beside Erquan Spring, and it was called Liangyuan 梁源 ‘the source of Liangxi’ Pavilion in the 14th century. When Emperor Gaozong of the Southern Song passed by,

159 Tan, Xiu (Ming dynasty), *Huishan Gujin Kao*[Records of the Mount Hui], Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

Xu, Yongnian, et al. (Qing dynasty), *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi] 1690 edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

the temple was used as a palace. A stepped landscape consisted of the upper, middle, and lower pools was formed. The fence was set up to guard the upper pool specifically, for the emperor.



Figure 14: The historic Map of Mount Hui in the 16th century drawn by author based on Tan, Xiu (Ming dynasty), *Huishan Gujin Kao* [Records of the Mount Hui], Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

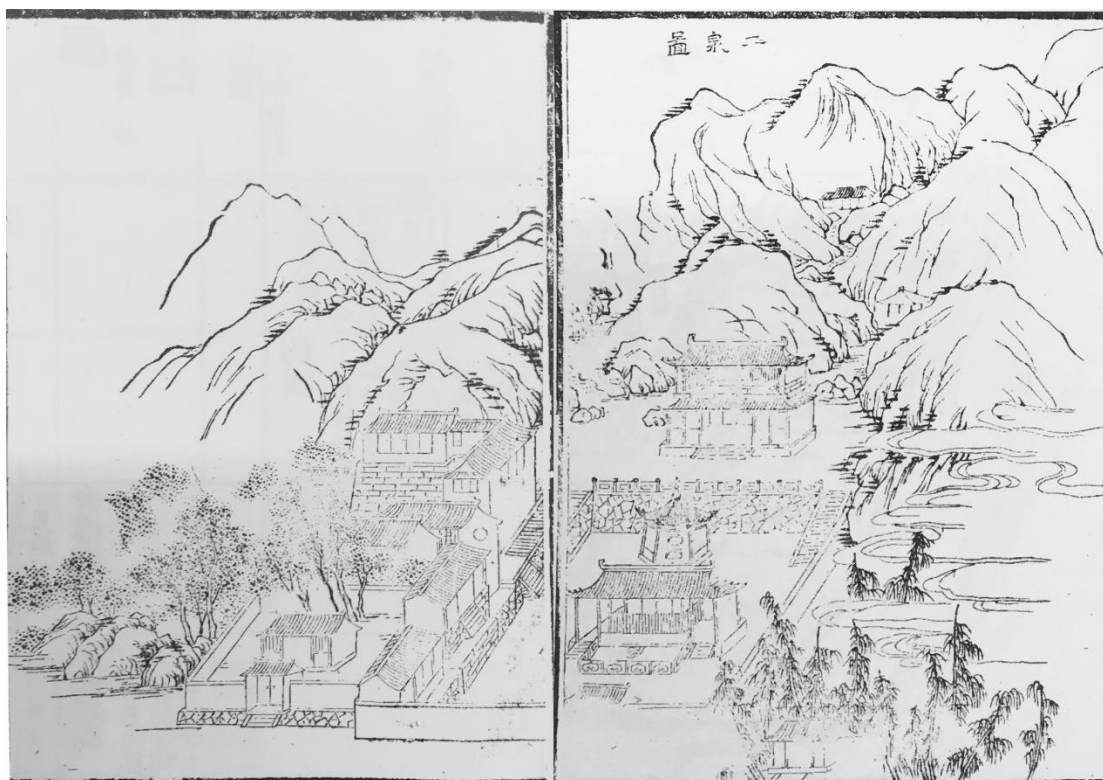


Figure 15: The historic Map Mount Hui in the 17th century --Huishan Spring was in the middle, Memorial temple of Hua and Huishan Temple in the right, and Xilu studio in the left (from Chorography of Wuxi, Qing edition)

After the ninth century, one of the primary purposes for visitors to come to Mount Hui was to appreciate and taste the spring water. Prime Minister Li Deyu (787-850), an intimate friend of Li Shen (772-846), contemplated establishing a dedicated spring post to transport Huishan spring water to Chang'an after he had tasted it. This proposal garnered significant criticism and was likened to Emperor Li Longji using official resources to transport lychee fruit for his concubine.¹⁶⁰ Li's plan was eventually abandoned, but it is probable that Erquan Spring gained fame as a result. Erquan Spring was the first consciously established scenic area.

¹⁶⁰ Pi Rixiu's poem. From Chen Shangjun, *Supplement to the Whole Poetry in the Tang Dynasty*, (Beijing: Zhong Hua Shu Ju, 1992), vol 4.

Erquan Spring became coveted gift in the Song. Local people and those from thousands of kilometres away use all kinds of containers to draw water continuously, transporting it by carts and boats in an endless stream. Su Shi 苏轼 asked Wuxi magistrate Qian Boqiang 钱伯强 for Erquan water. Huang Tingjian 黄庭坚 had also received Erquan water from friends. The focus of the poet here shifted from temples and scenery to tea activities. In order to keep the water fresh in the transportation from Wuxi to other cities, such as the capital, people ‘put stones of Mount Hui in the water to keep it fresh’. Early tourism records about Wuxi including three temples are all linked with good water and tea culture, where tourists tasted Douru Spring 窦乳泉 in Jiaoshan Temple 胶山寺 and Taihu water in Huazang Temple 华藏寺.¹⁶¹ As water was exported in large quantities throughout the country, even a ‘Spring Tax’ was established in the Yuan dyansty.¹⁶² Through the fashion for drinking tea, the association between tea, temple and early scenic spots was established. These factors further enhanced the reputation of Mount Hui.

Buddhism Temples

In the early garden culture of Wuxi, an essential component probably was religion, particularly Buddhism. Besides natural features like Huishan Spring that existed in their own right as scenic elements, records about landscapes began to appear extensively in literati travelogues before the formal documentation of gardens. Temples often featured prominently in this context. Unfortunately, early constructions all disappeared after the Hui Chang Fa Nan 会昌法难 ‘Buddhism Disaster in Huichang period’ (840-846) and during the flooding era of Taihu Lake in the Southern dynasties.¹⁶³

161 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

162 Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

163 Hui Chang Fa Nan: During the Huichang reign (840-846) of Emperor Wuzong, Li Yan, a series of policies of

The records of temples in Wuxi captures the Yuan Dynasty's impressions of the period, based on post-Tang Dynasty records. Fu acclaimed the development of Buddhism of China which reached its peak in the Tang (618-907).¹⁶⁴ This evolution resulted in Yuan Dynasty chroniclers primarily emphasizing the enduring prominence of Buddhism in Wuxi, a trend that extended until the Southern Song Dynasty. The activities within the space of Huishan Temple were diverse, but descriptions of religious activities are lacking.

In the wake of Buddhism's introduction to China in the late 2nd century, it swiftly gained widespread support across all social strata. This surge in popularity can be largely attributed to the diminishing credibility of the Confucian Ritual and Music system as the Han Dynasty drew to a close, as well as the profound disorder during the Southern Dynasties era (420-589).¹⁶⁵ This era was characterized by an unprecedented period of disunity and fragmentation, marked by 'intricate and multifaceted patterns of

'destroying Buddha' were implemented. The edict issued in July, 845 was reached its peak. However, Wuzong passed away in the next year (846). Emperor Xuanzong ascended the throne and revered Buddha again. The extermination of Buddha ended. This incident dealt a serious blow to Buddhism in China.

The reason: Since the founding of the Tang Dynasty, the emperors have believed in Buddhism, advocated Buddhism with high courtesy and vigorously, and even provided benefits such as tax exemption and corvée exemption. Since the mid-Tang Dynasty, various sects of Chinese Buddhism have expanded, and private money usually owned by temples and local governments, some temples attract many monks and nuns. At that time, many men became monks in order to avoid taxes and servitude, resulting in more and more monks, causing social and national security problems. The land of the temple is not taxed, and the monks rely on the people for support, which gradually eroded the tax revenue of the central government of the Tang Dynasty.

Zhang Xiugui, The Historical Process of the Evolution of Taihu Lake, *Journal of Chinese Historical Geography*, 2009 24 (1), 5-12.

164 Wang Guixiang, *Collection of Essays on Chinese Architectural History*, (Changchun: Liaoning Meishu Press. 2011) pp.138

165 Crisis of famous religions: Confucianism and Taoism, as native religions, were closely related to the imperial power and were popular in two Han dynasties (202BC-220AD). They tried to save the political chaos and warlord disputes by adopting radical forms such as reform and uprising in the last years of the Han dynasty in the end of the 2nd century. It was suppressed by the government, and Taoism was banned in particular.

conflict’.¹⁶⁶ People pinned their hopes on afterlife, seeking solace through Buddhism's consolatory doctrines. Rulers strategically harnessed the palliative aspects of Buddhism to fortify their governance. The confluence of Buddhism with political authority further amplified its influence within the societal fabric in the Southern Dynasties’ Jiangnan region.¹⁶⁷ (Table 3¹⁶⁸ and Figure 16)

Table 3: Data about Buddhism during the 3rd to 6th centuries

Dynasty(country)		Monastery	Monks and nuns	Books and Sutra
West Jin 266-316(capital is Luoyang and Chang'an)		180	3700	73
East Jin 317-420 (capital is Nanjing)		1768	24000	263
Southern Dynasty (capital is Nanjing)	Song 420-479	1913	36000	210
	Qi 479-502	2015	32500	72
	Liang 502-557	2846	82700	248
	Chen 557-589	1232	32000	11



166 David A. Graff, ‘The art of War’, chapter 12, in Dien, Albert E., and Keith Nathaniel Knapp, *The Cambridge History of China*. Volume 2, The Six Dynasties, 220-589 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019) pp 273.

167 Du mu’s poem ‘南朝四百八十寺，多少楼台烟雨中 Four hundred and eighty temples of the Southern Dynasties, numerous towers and pavilions amid the mist and rain.’ Peng, Dingqiu, Qing Dynasty, *Yu Ding Quan Tang Shi* [Complete Poetry of the Tang], vol. 500, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

168 The data in the table 1 comes from Monk Fa Lin, Tang dynasty. *Bian Zheng Lun*. Vol 3. Ten Generations Enshrining Buddha Part 1. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

After reorganization by Wang Guixiang, the number of temples built during the entire Southern Dynasty is 447. The records of the Tang are quite different from Wang's textual research, and circumstantial evidence of the prosperity of Buddhist temples in the Southern Dynasties. from Wang, Guixiang, ‘An Introduction to Southern Buddhist Temple Architecture during the Eastern Jin Dynasty and the Southern Dynasties’, *Transactions on Chinese Architectural History*, Vol. 6, (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press. 2012), 3-62.

Figure 16: Unearthed Buddhist elements found within Jiangnan artifacts, such as Celadon Buddha wine bottles, small cups, and Buddha and beast mirror¹⁶⁹

The records evidence the establishment of Buddhist monasteries during the Liang Dynasty (502-557), a development closely intertwined with Emperor Xiao Yan's fervent dedication to Buddhism, but the precise timing of the initial constructions remains obscure.¹⁷⁰

Starting of construction-religion and life

The construction of early temples, except for Buddhist places of spiritual cultivation and preaching, also exhibits a pronounced linkage with good living spaces.

The background to the development of Jiangnan area, including Wuxi, is that internal competition in the Yellow River Basin, caused by the increasing population density and the plundering of the Central Plains by nomadic peoples in the north, led the large population to move continually to the south. Sufficient labour force, advanced technology, and the demand for land promoted the development of Jiangnan area.¹⁷¹ The price of the fertile land here surpassed the land price around the capital in the 5th

169 Jin, Xiangchao, 'Buddhism in the Six Dynasties and social life in the Middle and Lower Reaches of the Yangtze River'(Unpublished doctoral thesis, Hubei Academy of Social Sciences, 2015). According to the thesis, these unearthed cultural relics was found in Nanjing, Danyang, Shaoxing, and Hubei province do not involve Wuxi and Suzhou. It is the hilly landforms in the west of Taihu Lake with higher altitude.

170 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

癸巳，輿駕幸同泰寺，設四部無遮大會，因舍身，公卿以下，以錢一亿万奉贖；三月庚子，高祖幸同泰寺，設無遮大會，舍身，公卿等以錢一亿万奉贖。Em peror Xiao Yan 梁武帝蕭衍 of Liang offered himself twice to Tongtai si 同泰寺 and the ministers spent heavily (100,000,000 coin, approximately 1880kg silver) each time to redeem him in the 6th century from Yao, Silian, Tang Dynasty, *Liang Shu* [History of Liang Kingdom in Southern Dynasty], vol 3 Record of Emperor Wu, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

171 Xu, Hui, and Jiang Fuya, *Economic History of Six Dynasties*, (Nanjing, Phoenix Press, 1993):92-95

century.¹⁷² Other names of Mount Xi 锡山 include Mount Shun 舜山, which means the farming place, and the name of the ancient judicious King in the Yellow River Basin, Shun 舜. Zhao posits that the development of the mountainous and marshy regions in the Jiangnan area is correlated with is correlated with the circumvention of competition between northern migrants and indigenous inhabitants.¹⁷³ The settlement choices of immigrants and local residents in Wuxi were congruent, as evidenced by their collaborative efforts in developing the Mount Hui region (Figure 17Figure 18).



172 ‘良畴亦数十万顷，膏腴上地，亩直一金，鄠、杜之间，不能比也 The fertile lands also span tens of thousands of hectares, rich and productive. Each acre yields up to one Liang of gold, surpassing the lands between Hu and Du(capital area)’ Shen, Yue, Liang in Southern dynasty, *Song Shu* [History of The Song in the Southern dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

173 Zhao, Changxing, and An Lu, ‘Migration in Six Dynasties and the Formation of Jiangnan Economic Zone,’ *Journal of Northwest A&F University (Social Science Edition)* 12 (2012), 144-148.

Figure 17: the location of Huishan Temple (drawn by author)

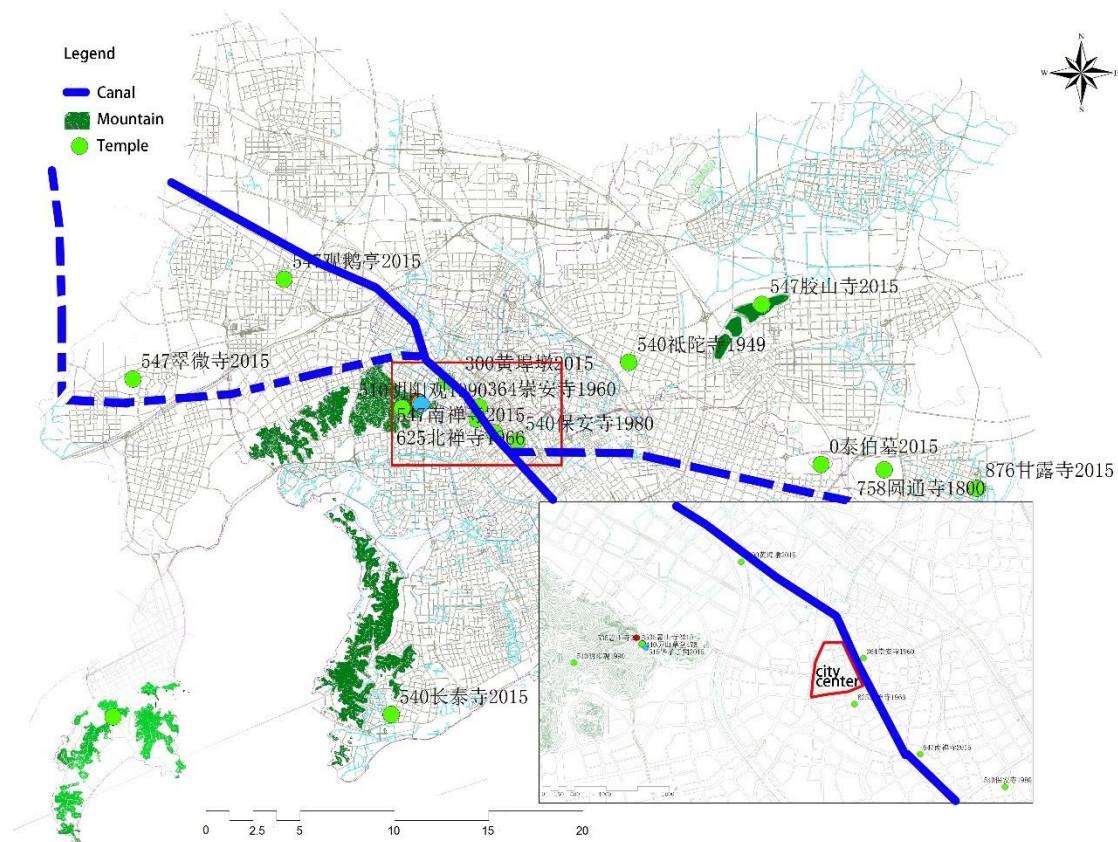


Figure 18: The distribution of early Temples in Wuxi (Drawn by author in 2015)

These also encompass the migration of Buddhists. The widespread popularity of Buddhism across the nation gave rise to a multitude of legends, such as that relating to the eminent monk *Huizhao* 慧照, who is said to have journeyed from the western regions to Wuxi and settled at the foot of the mountain to propagate Buddhist teachings. Subsequently, the mountain was named after his name, ‘Hui’, which is associated with enlightenment and benevolence. Wuxi also has many legends about lotuses. This distinctive lotus was growing in the square pond in front of the Main Hall, consuming which can make human immortal. The Chronicle of Changzhou did not record this particular lotus flower. The name ‘thousand-petal lotus’ was no longer mentioned in the Yuan records and was replaced by the ‘golden lotus,’ which was a closer representation of the actual plant. The golden lotus is colloquially known and is actually

Nuphar pumilum (Figure 19). The metaphorical use of plants, imbued with religious connotations, first manifested in Wuxi. There was also a magical stone called the Tingsong stone bed 听松石床 (Figure 20), which, according to folklore, could measure a person's height and change its length accordingly. It continued to do so until a pregnant woman lay upon it. The stone did not know whether to adjust based on the child's height or the pregnant woman's height, and thereafter, it lost its magical power.



Figure 19: Golden Lotus in Golden lotus pond and in the pot in front of the Main Hall (photo by author in May 2020)



Figure 20: 'Listening pine trees' Stone Bed and the 'Golden Lotus' Bridge on the 'Golden Lotus' Pond

(photo by author in 2020)

Compared with legends, the overwhelming majority of records acknowledge this popular trend. Converting a residence into a temple was a practice that became popular across all social classes throughout the nation during the southern dynasties. It was believed that ‘people exhaust their wealth to offer the monks, including their dwelling; some believers even go bankrupt to worship Buddha.’¹⁷⁴ Hu points out that in addition to the charity of sincere Buddhists and the demand brought by the growth of monks, the Emperor’s reverence for Buddhism led to a number of flatterers and people who feared imperial authority donating their homes.¹⁷⁵ One third of the early temples in Wuxi were claimed to have come from donations, including Huishan temple.¹⁷⁶

This interpretation makes it easier to establish a spatial correspondence between Buddhist temples and private residential gardens, that the main hall was changed to Buddha’s Hall, and the courtyard as garden, especially in the absence of any archaeological support.¹⁷⁷ The earliest description of building sequences appears in the 8th century, penned by Lu Yu.¹⁷⁸ It already had a central axis, from the rest pavilion in front of the gate, the square pond used for washing clothes by local women, and the middle building, Dharma Hall, to the pavilion on the mountainside, Wanghu ‘Watching the Furong Lake’ Pavilion, as well as the wings for ancillary living buildings such as

174 竭财以赴僧,破产以趋佛 Fan, Zhen, Southern Dynasties, *Shen Mie Lun* [without immortal], see Yao, Silian, et al, *Liang Shu* [History of Liang in Southern Dynasties], vol 48, Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

175 Hu, Xiao, ‘Study on the Phenomenon of ‘Donate dwelling to Buddhism in Sui and Tang Dynasties.’ (Unpublished master Dissertation, Shaanxi Normal University, 2014).

176 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

177 Wang Di. ‘Image’ and ‘Teaching’ in The Space of Sinicized Buddhism.’ (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Tianjin University, 2013).

178 Based on sites in Jiangnan area in the same period and the records in the 7th century in the county chronicle.

Buddhist rooms and tombs (Figure 21).¹⁷⁹ Lu's descriptions are based on touring routes, indicating that courtyards along the central axis were accessible and passable, while the associated living spaces and interiors were no longer within the scope of the tour. The presence of a central axis reflects the hierarchical system in China, which is inconsistent with the Buddhist emphasis on the equality of all sentient beings. During the Tang Dynasty in China, the layout of temples had already deviated somewhat from the original Indian Buddhist, particularly in the departure from the central stupa-oriented arrangement(Figure 22).

179 ‘寺前有曲水亭一名憇亭一名歇马亭以备士庶投息之所...寺中有方池一名千叶莲花池一名鱣塘亦名浣沼...池上有大同殿以梁大同年置因名之从大同殿直上至望湖阁 and 及于禅床 周于僧房 灌注于德地 经营于法堂 In front of the temple, there is a pavilion by the winding water called Qi Pavilion or Xiema Pavilion for scholars and commoners to rest... Within the temple, there is a square pond named thousand leaves Lotus Pond, also named washing pond... Above the pond is the Datong Hall established during the Datong years of the Liang Dynasty and named accordingly. From the Datong Hall, it goes straight up to the Wanghu Pavilion and to the Chan Bed, encircles the monks' rooms, pours into the virtuous land, and the Dharma Hall' Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012) Vol.3

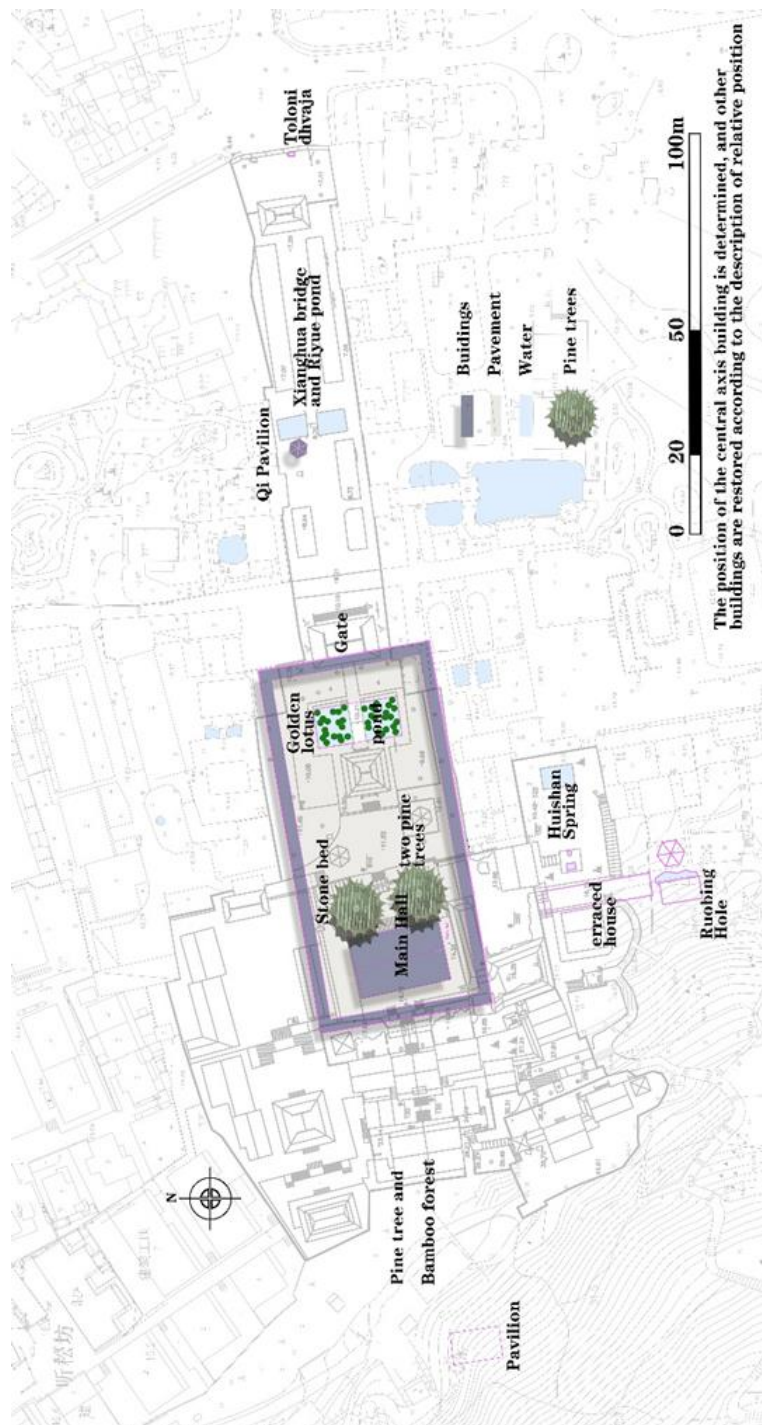


Figure 21: the conjectural map of Huishan Temple in the 9th century (draw by author based on Lu's description and the revolution layout of Chinese Buddhism temples)¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Wang, Weiren, Xu, Zhu, 'Topological Study on the evolution of early Chinese Buddhist Monasteries: Layout of

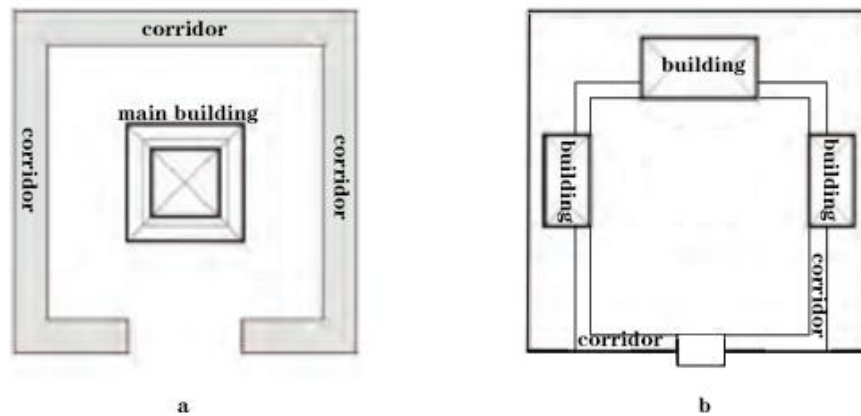


Figure 22: two original layout of Buddhism temples with Indian influence (redraw by author)¹⁸¹



Figure 23: Two stone Toroni Dhvajastones: the Usnisa Vijaya Dharani Sutra in 876 and the White umbrella Dharani Sutra in 1070 (photo by author in 2020)

Right: the original location of two stones (photo from Choragraphy of Wuxi, 1994 edition)

Pagoda, Buddha Hall, Lecture Hall and Pavilion Tower', *South Architecture*, 4(2011),38-49. DOI:10.3969/j. issn. 1000-0232. 2011. 04. 038.

¹⁸¹ Wang, Weiren, Xu, Zhu, 'Topological Study on the evolution of early Chinese Buddhist Monasteries: Layout of Pagoda, Buddha Hall, Lecture Hall and Pavilion Tower', *South Architecture*, 4(2011),38-49. DOI:10.3969/j. issn. 1000-0232. 2011. 04. 038.

The Usnisa Vijaya Dharani Sutra is engraved on the surface of the Sutra building from the Tang era. It consisted of 19 components to ensure structural stability. A composite mixture of clay or limestone clay, ranging from 0.5 to 1 centimetre in thickness, was applied between the overlapping surfaces of each layer, supplemented by fragments of pottery, porcelain, iron blocks, and coins.¹⁸² The sutra was authored by Li Duanfu and narrates the story of the propagation of Buddhism.¹⁸³ The stories depicted on the scripture pillars show that their appearance was initially approved by the emperor for the purpose of expiating sins, attaining merit and wisdom, and benefiting sentient beings. The practice of erecting similar edifices gained popularity across the nation.

Jin Shisheng, the administrator of the Huishan Temple Scenic Area Management Office, contends that the stone scripture building from the Tang period serves as evidence that Buddhism was flourishing and widely embraced in Wuxi during that era (Figure 23). It demonstrates the potential for external exchanges in Wuxi, particularly considering that Wuxi was merely a county-level region and that information being relatively restricted at the time (Figure 23).

There is a very interesting record that, at the reconstruction temple of Huishan Temple, another temple in the east part of Wuxi had been rebuilt, the Jiaoshan Temple. The gate of Huishan Temple faced east and the gate of Jiaoshan temple faced west. They are

182 Yu Jun, 'A Brief Discussion on the Restoration and Conservation of Tang and Song Stone Sutra Pillars at Huishan Temple,' *Wuxi Wenbo*, 4(1998): 9-13 Internal Document

183 Buddha Boli, a monk from Jibin (罽宾 now Afghanistan), carried the Sutra from Tianzhu (天竺 now India) to China. After receiving imperial approval during the Tang Dynasty, he translated and disseminated it. According to this sutra, the Tang populace believed that constructing sutra buildings could absolve sins, attract blessings and wisdom, and bring benefit to all sentient beings. From Zhao, Jun, *Jin Shi Lin Shi Di Kao* [Record of Inscriptions and Stones], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Huishan Si Shi Jing Chuang Ji Dai Jia Hu[The Stone Sutra Building of Huishan Temple is in urgent need of 'protection'], Zhong Guo Jiang Su Wang
<<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1620245657907031702&wfr=spider&for=pc>> [accessed by 05 August 2021]

symmetrical, both the same size and style, so Jiaoshan temple imitated Huishan temple.¹⁸⁴ The imitation reflected the communication between local temples. The architectural style, dimensions, and embellishments of the Dhvaja in the Song closely emulated those of the Tang. Although well-preserved, from an innovative perspective, there were not significant changes in the regulatory framework of flat-layout design and the architectural form of religious structures. This is closely related to the establishment of a nationwide system during the Tang Dynasty, which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

The foundation for its widespread popularity was the establishment of a nationwide transportation network during the Tang Dynasty. Wuxi's literary output and exchanges with other places witnessed a notable expansion during the Tang Dynasty. They came from broader regions, including the northern imperial capital.¹⁸⁵ Almost all of the transportation methods mentioned involved the use of the convenient waterway network. Mount Hui, which is close to the canal, is also the most popular destination for tourists in Wuxi.¹⁸⁶ Emperor Wen of the Sui (589-618) set up the market and Weir in Wangting between Suzhou and Wuxi along the Beijing-Hangzhou Canal.¹⁸⁷ The more than 2,700-kilometre north-south Canal connected densely populated and economically and culturally developed regions across the nation. This initiative

184 Qian, Jiandong, 'Overview of Historic sites on Mount Jiao in Wuxi', *Wuxi Archeology and Museology Review*, 1(2007),40-42. (Internal information of Wuxi Museum)

185 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

186 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012) volume 4, Wang Wuling in 788, Luo Yin (833-910), Qian Shen (11-12 century), Jiang Zhiqi(1031-1104), Jiang Zhimei (11 century), Li Bangzhi (friend of Su Shi), etc.

187 隋文帝至德元年置市, 并置堰闸, 号望亭堰。Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

facilitated extensive exchanges and integration within the country.¹⁸⁸ Cui's observations of countless ships engaging in trade and transportation day and night underscore the vitality of this waterway.¹⁸⁹ Wangting Post was a round-the-clock economic market, as well as Luoshe, Luxu, and Zhutang markets, developing into towns along the canal in the countryside of Wuxi.¹⁹⁰ Drawing from the Tang Dynasty's postal system, which allowed for a daily travel distance of up to 120 Li (approximately 55 kilometers) based on river conditions, this velocity ensured that Wuxi could be reached from surrounding counties within a single day.¹⁹¹

Examining the distribution of temples throughout Wuxi's history reveals the trend (Figure 24). Temples were often situated in proximity to mountainous area with high altitude, at the heart of settlements, particularly within urban areas and in towns near Suzhou along the canals. These waterways facilitated access to Wuxi, and the strategic alignment of transportation routes with population centres served as a means to enhance the propagation of Buddhism. Historical records indicate that the founders of Huishan Temple hailed from the northern regions and arrived at Mount Hui via Nanjing. Three

188 Ji, Guohuang, *Chinese Canal in 3000 Years*, (Beijing: Encyclopedia of China Publishing House, 2008) pp.571

189 ‘控引河洛，兼包淮海，弘舸巨舰，千舳万艘，交贸往还，昧旦永日 Controlling and diverting the Luo rivers and Yellow River, encompassing the regions of Huai and Hai Rivers, with vast ships and huge vessels numbering in the thousands, sailing to and from in trade exchanges from dawn till dusk without interruption.’ Liu, Xu ,late Jin Dynasty, *Jiu Tang Shu* [The History of the Tang Dynasty (Old Edition)], (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1975). Volume 94 Cui Rong Biography

190 Peng, Dingqiu, Qing Dynasty, *Yu Ding Quan Tang Shi* [Complete Poetry of the Tang], vol. 500, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

191 the speed of boat has three level in different rivers: 150 Li(68km), 100 Li(45.8km), and 70 Li (32km) per day. From Li, Linfu, Tang Dynasty, *Tang Liu Dian*[Six Code of the Tang Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

‘The message passing with waterway is similar to the land route that 4 stations (30 Li *4=120 Li≈55.1km) are ensures per day’ based on Qiu, Zhaoao, *Poem of Du Fu*, (Beijing: Zhonghua Press,1979), p1953. Sima, Guang (Song dynasty), *Zi Zhi Tong Jian* [History as A Mirror], vol 181. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Hou, Zhenbing, ‘A Brief Account of Water Station in Tang Dynasty’, *Tangdu Journal*, 3 (2016), 24-29

poems from the early 6th century provide evidence of the existence of a transport route between Nanjing and Mount Hui in Wuxi, at the same time, suggesting that other regions might not have been easily accessible at that time.

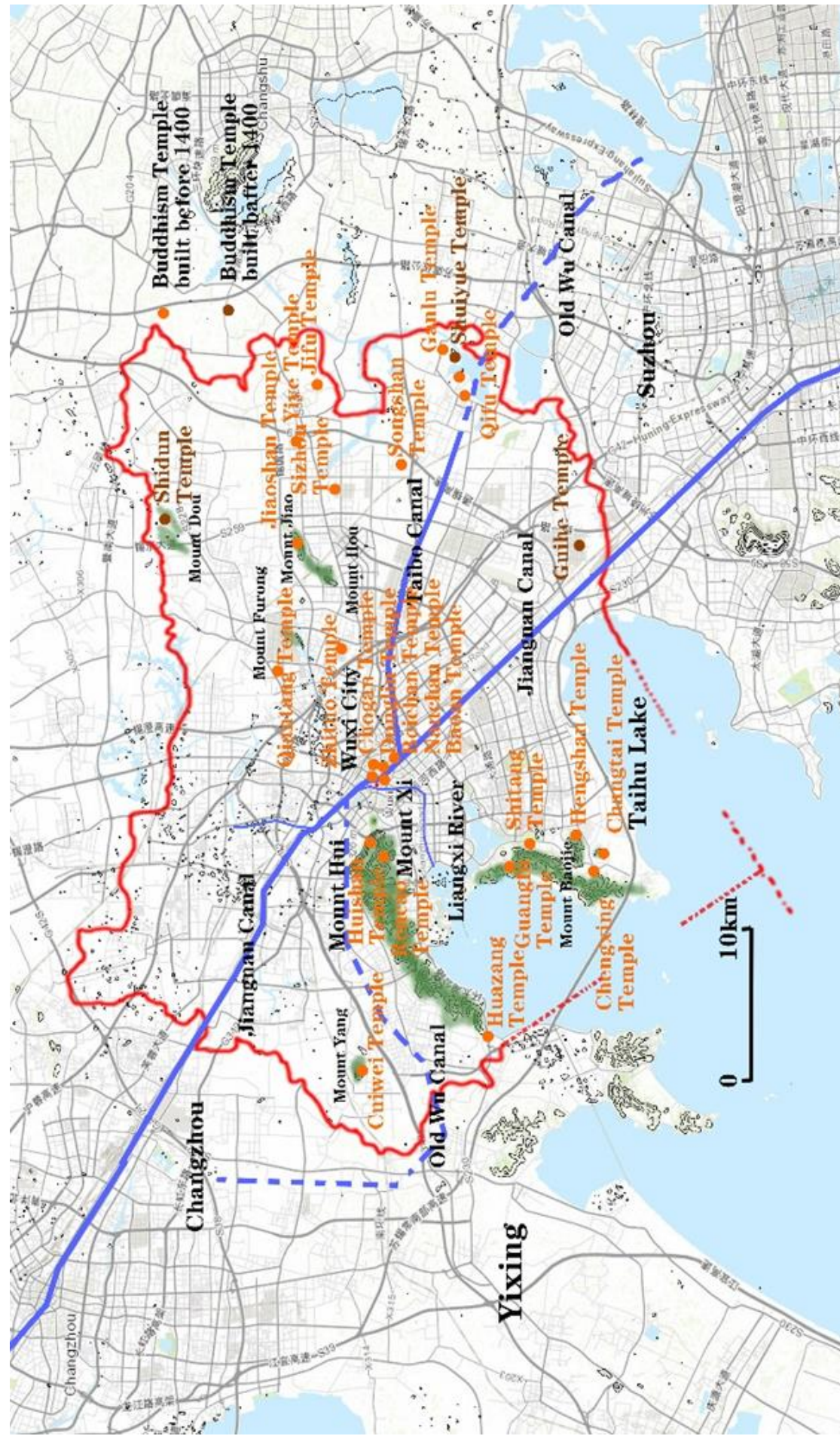


Figure 24: Distribution of temples and the relationship with mountain and rivers in Wuxi based on county annals and field work (drawn by author)



Figure 25: The sight from Huishan Temple to Mount Xi and the city Center (photo by author in May 2020)

Many scholars have provided evidence linking Buddhist monasteries with mountainous and forests in the Southern dynasties, such as Shakyamuni become the Buddha in the mountain and under a tree (*Ficus religiosa L.*), more safety and could evade the conflict due to the ups and downs of the regime.¹⁹²

192 De Hui, monk in Yuan dynasty, *Chixiu Baizhang Qinggui* [Principles for Chan Buddhists], 1335 edn, volume 3, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Hui Jiao, monk of Liang in the Southern dynasty, *Gao Seng Zhuan* [Record of Eminent Monks], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Whether for the purpose of seeking solitude for meditation in the mountains or for increasing the efficiency of proselytization by choosing transportation hubs, the location of Buddhist temples in Wuxi coinciding with settlements indicates that the fundamental living conditions required for both were consistent. Private construction temples were not qualified to use the character 寺 Si, but 招提 Zhaoti or 兰若 Lanruo.¹⁹³ The lack of written evidence in Wuxi might show the original image of temples came from spontaneous actions of the populace. Shao Bao believed that the main Hall of Huishan temple was built by the local monk named Chen Dade 陈大德 in 537.¹⁹⁴ Since these decisions were not made top-down by the authorities, it is not surprising that they appeared near settlements. In the chapter ‘The Longing for Mountains and Rivers’, the superior living conditions of these areas have already been explained. The square pond is one of the earliest recorded constructions (Figure 26). The nearby women came to Square Pond to wash their clothes, and the good quality of the water made their clothes more beautiful. The utilization of ponds in temple held a connection to the local populace and their everyday life space, such as water needs. The monks’ water supply came from the mountain springs of Mount Hui, same as local resident.¹⁹⁵

193 ‘盖官赐额者为寺，私造者为招提兰若 Those granted with official titles are designated as temples, while those privately constructed are known as Zhaoti or Lanruo’ Liu, Zongyuan, *Liu Hedong Ji* [the Collection of Liu Zongyuan], vol 7, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

194 ‘刘宋司徒右长史湛挺历山草堂故址，废帝景平元年入于僧 为华山精舍 元徽间僧显者过江来居之…梁大同三年改名法云禅院…the former site in Mount Li, once the residence of Chief Zhan Ting, was given to monks in the first year of the Jingping era of the Liu Song Dynasty, and became known as Huashan Monastery. During the Yuanhui era, monks Xian came across the river to reside here. In the third year of the Datong era of the Liang Dynasty, its name was changed to Fayun Chan Monastery.’ Shao Bao, Ming dyansty. *Hui Shan Ji* [Record of Mount Hui], vol2, temples, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

195 野客偷煎茗山僧惜净床 ‘A wild guest secretly brews tea, while the mountain monk cherishes the water to clean his bed.’ Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn, *Wuxi Wenku*, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).



Figure 26: square pond in Huishan temple (photo by author in 2020)

Therefore, the development of Wuxi's garden culture ostensibly adopted the form of Buddhism, which was a popular religious choice at the time. However, the selection of sites and spaces still relied on the excellent living and transportation conditions near Mount Hui and other towns.

Buildings and Rituals in Buddhism temples

During the Sui and Tang dynasties, Buddhism had already entered the Age of sad-dharma-vipralopa.¹⁹⁶ As a localized development of Buddhism, the Chan sect grew and

196 Sanskrit: sad-dharma-vipralopa. A Buddhist term means Buddhist Dharma is decayed and destructed. It is a Buddhist eschatology. Although monks followed the old sutras, they did not practice it, had no improvement, and the thought of monks were in chaos. Chinese Buddhism generally believes that the 6th and 7th century has entered the era of the end of the Dharma.

expanded, separating from the Law Temple. Remained temples in wuxi are also influenced under the development of Chan. During this period, Master Baizhang compiled and continuously refined the 'Principles for Chan Buddhists'. As the most mainstream sect in the Jiangnan region during the Tang and Song dynasties, its religious rituals increasingly aligned with imperial authority, and its daily ceremonies and management became progressively more rigorous. This also led to certain changes in the layout of the temples.

Buddhism was continuously influenced by politics. Although the practice of Buddhism was popular across all social classes, there was no direct connection between Buddhist temples and administrative institutions before the 6th century.¹⁹⁷ It was during the reign of Wu Zetian (624-705) that significant changes occurred. She allowed monks to hold official positions and bestowed rewards upon temples, a privilege that had previously been reserved for government officials.¹⁹⁸ Several emperors also issued decrees for the establishment of temples and Taoist shrines throughout the realm, both for the purpose of praying for the country and enhancing the emperor's prestige.¹⁹⁹ This dual process, while stimulating the growth of religion, also led to a gradual dependence of religious institutions on imperial power. Temples began to enshrine portraits of the emperor, creating spaces like 'emperor portrait courtyards' or 'sacred portrait halls' (影堂/圣容院).²⁰⁰ In the principles, rituals for praying for the imperial family were gradually added and became the primary chapters, surpassing the commemoration of the birthdays of

197 Liu, Dunzhen, and Fu Xinnian, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhu Shi* [History of Chinese Architecture] vol. 2, (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press. 2001) pp.183

198 Historical texts, Liu Xu (late Jin Dynasty), *Jiu Tang Shu* [The History of the Tang Dynasty (Old Edition)], Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1975.

199 Michibata, Ryohideu, *A Study on the History of Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty* vol. 2. (Tokyo: Shoyuan Press, 1985), pp. 25-26

200 Liu, Dunzhen, and Fu Xinnian, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhu Shi* [History of Chinese Architecture] vol. 2, (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press. 2001) pp.499

Buddhist patriarchs.

Huishan Temple was used as a school in the Tang, providing books, venues and basic living conditions for the students. Its purpose was to bring scholars closer to Buddhism through subtle influence. Study in Buddhist temples was common in all states in the Tang using general teaching material rather than Buddhist sutras.²⁰¹ For example, Li Shen studied in the school operated by the Huishan Temple where Li Zhi 李颀 also studied between 829 and 831.²⁰² The mutual influence of Buddhism and Confucianism was already evident in the Tang. Qian pointed out that the great contribution to Chinese history and culture of intellectuals during the Tang was not in politics but rather in religion, and that the Chan, Tiantai, and Huayan sects created and developed the new Buddhism within the Chinese cultural tradition.²⁰³

Principles for Chan Buddhists²⁰⁴

Despite the limited records of daily life scenes in Wuxi temples before the Ming dynasty, aside from schools, the majority of accounts left by visitors focused on appreciating the

201 日本学者那波利贞《唐钞本杂钞考》Yan, Gengwang. 'The Tradition of Tang People's Studying in Mountain Monasteries'. *Collected Essays on Tang Dynasty Studies*. (Hong Kong: New Asia Institute, 1969). from Jing, Xiadong; Wang, Houqing. 'A Discussion on Private Education in the Jiangnan Region during the Tang Dynasty'. *Journal of Shayang Teachers College*. 2(2005),31-35

202 Liu, Xu, *Jiu Tang Shu* [Old Book of Tang, vol 89, Biography of Di Renjie, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook
Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

203 Qian, Mu, *Guo Shi Xin Lun* [New Theory of National History] (Beijing: Sanlian Press, 2005) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

²⁰⁴ At rituals part, the source of Huishansi records is all from 'Chorography of Wuxi in Zhizheng period' and the Chan rituals is all from two edition of 'Principles of Chan Buddhists'

Zong Yi (monk in Song dynasty), Chanyuan Qinggui [Principles for Chan Buddhists], 1103 edn, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook
De Hui (monk in Yuan dynasty), Chixiu Baizhang Qinggui [Principles for Chan Buddhists], 1335 edn, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

natural scenery, touring the temples, tasting spring water, and listening to the sounds of bells and chimes. These records did not delve into the internal life of the monasteries. The exploration of religious rituals relied on the Chan regulations.

The most important rules of daily conduct in Chan temples after the Tang Dynasty were the ‘Principles for Chan Buddhists.’²⁰⁵ This system of organization and management also encompassed Buddhist rituals and monks’ cultivation. During the Song and Yuan dynasties, the inheritance of various branches of Chan became clearer, solidifying the basic pattern. The compilation of several versions and the promulgation of a national uniform legal document gradually established Chan regulations.²⁰⁶ As religious organizations grew, temple scales expanded, and the regulatory system became more fixed and improved.

It is important to note that although the Chan regulations, established in the 8th century, were imitated by Chan monasteries nationwide and were standardized for all Chan temples in the 14th century, two stone sutra pillars from the 9th and 11th centuries indicate that Chan Buddhism did not exert absolute control over Wuxi during this period. The widespread influence of Chan on Buddhist temples in Jiangnan likely began during the Southern Song period (1127-1279). This may be related to the rise of the system of merit-making temples. (details show in the next section- The politicization of religion garden and the combination with confucianism P156)

The temple rituals include the religious rituals and monks’ daily meditation (Table 4). As a low-ranking county in the Jiangnan hinterland, there are no clear records preserved indicate the response of Wuxi’s local Chan temples to the national Chan Principles.

²⁰⁵ China Buddhist Association. *Zhong Guo Fo Jiao* [Chinese Buddhism] (Vol. 2). (Beijing: Knowledge Publishing House, 1982). p348.

²⁰⁶ Welch, H., translate by Bao, Kehua, Ah Han. *Buddhist Institutions in Modern China*. In Lan, Jifu, Translation Series of World Buddhist Studies Vol. 82, (Huayu Publishing House, 1989) p 1-3

Considering that Wuxi was under centralized administration, the analysis of temple rituals is based on versions of the Principles.

Table 4: Monthly schedule in 1335 edition ²⁰⁷

Luner calendar					
January	1 st day: stay quiet	4 th : chanting and praying	Officials and benefactor come to temples to celebrate new year (praying)	17 th : Master Baizhang's death day	
February	1 st : knock down stoves in the dormitory (expect the temples on the high mountain)			15 th : Nirvana of Buddha	
March	1 st : Organize the roster of monks	Sacrifice in Qingming Festival: Clean and prepare offerings in advance, gather monks to chant		Logging, digging, and picking bamboo shoots are forbidden in this month	
April	1 st : guest monks will no longer be accepted for temporary accommodation	4 th or 5 th : Gao Xiang (monks burning incense to invite teachers enlighten them)	8 th : Buddha's Birthday (bath Buddha). prepare Black rice dyed with juice from the leaves of the nandina). The abbot invites the public.	13 th : The Shurangama Altar was set up to pray for removing demons and living safe	15 th : Take off the warm curtains and hung up the cool curtains in the dormitory depend on weather
May	Dragon Boat Festival: drink Calamus tea, The praying of ripening grain		Administrators check work, dredge, sacrifices to deceased monks, and hang up mosquito nets		
June	1 st : stop meditation		The hottest days: airing sheet and make charcoal block		
July	1-10: prepare Oben Festival		The Shurangama Altar is over		relieve the summer ban and hold Oben Festival
August	1 st : start accepting guest monks for temporary accommodation		Mend clothing		Take off the mosquito nets
September	1 st : Resume meditation	Take off the cool curtains, hung up the warm curtains, and paste up windows			Double Ninth day: drink cornel tea
October	1 st : furnace firing up			5 th : death day of Bodhidharma	
November	22 nd : the death day of Saskyapa (the monastic official in yuan Dynasty)		Winter Solstice Festival: prepare cakes		appointment and removal of management
December	8 th : Laba Festival and the enlightenment of Buddha day (Buddha into the Road Festival)			year-end summary	

The maintenance and development of a temple, and all kinds of things in monk life

²⁰⁷ In 1335, during the Yuan dynasty, the imperial government issued a set of Principles of Chan Buddhists that were codified into law and made applicable nationwide.

need administrative staff to perform their duties. After the establishment of an independent Chan temples, zen Buddhism formed an organizational management system with abbot as the core and ten affairs as the assistant (Table 5).²⁰⁸

Table 5: the management structure of Chan temples in 1103

Four general managers	監院 Monastic Manger assistant abbot	維那（悅眾） karma-asdana for people management	典座 Dianzuo for food and storage management		直歲 Zhisui for temple construction, repairment, cultivation and go on patrol	
Six leaders	首座 First seat as paragon of all monks	書狀 Shuzhuang: staff working related with texts	藏主 Scripture manager	知客 Guest manager	庫頭 warehouse manager	浴主 Bathroom manager
Others	Managers for beg alms(porridge 粥街坊, rice and weat 米麥街坊, vegetable 菜街坊, sauce 醬街坊, water 水頭, charcoal 炭頭, candle 燈頭)/ Several sutra promoters to promote the dharma（華嚴頭 般若頭 經頭 彌陀頭）/ Managers of mills 磨頭, gardens 園頭, manors 莊主/ 廨院主 Accontant/ 延壽堂主 manager of a hall used for healing and recuperationas hospital/ 淨頭 cleaning staff/ 聖僧侍者 attendant for the abbot/ 爐頭 stove manager/ 直堂 hall manager/ 寮主寮首座 manager of special halls/ 堂頭侍者 attendant of special halls					

The management structure of daily affairs corresponds to the architectural layout of the temple complex. Buildings along the central axis are relatively open to the public, allowing for public participation, while the courtyards on either side are designated for living and meditation spaces and are generally not open to the public. The daily management and layout clearly draw from Chinese political administration and architectural practices, having become localized.

Religious rituals within the Principles for Chan Buddhists primarily include: Blessing rituals: These are related to blessings for benefactors, including both royal patrons and

²⁰⁸ Guo, Daihuan, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhu Shi*, [History of Chinese Architecture] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press,2009), Volume 3, p273, Volume 3, p268

ordinary donors; Prayers for blessings: Often conducted during natural disasters; and Thanks-giving rituals: These are directed towards Buddhist deities and past masters. These collective activities involve the temple and monks as a whole, are related to others, and are conducted in the main hall.

Monks' daily activities encompass regulations for clothing, food, shelter, and travel, as well as the processes and guidelines for birth, aging, sickness, and death. With the increasing segmentation of temple architecture, these activities gradually took place within different auxiliary buildings.

Main hall

The Datong Hall (the Great Buddha's Hall), situated at the core of the central axis of the temple complex, holds a status comparable to that of the Hall of Supreme Harmony in the imperial palace. Nearly all significant ceremonies are conducted in this hall. All monks in a temple should attend the rituals: the abbot, as the top administrator of the temple, is the symbol of the temple and the Dharma hall; the administrator of the specific arrangement and execution process, such as karma-dana 维那, supervisor of the temple, ordinary monks, and sometimes some eminent monks from other temples and secular donors.

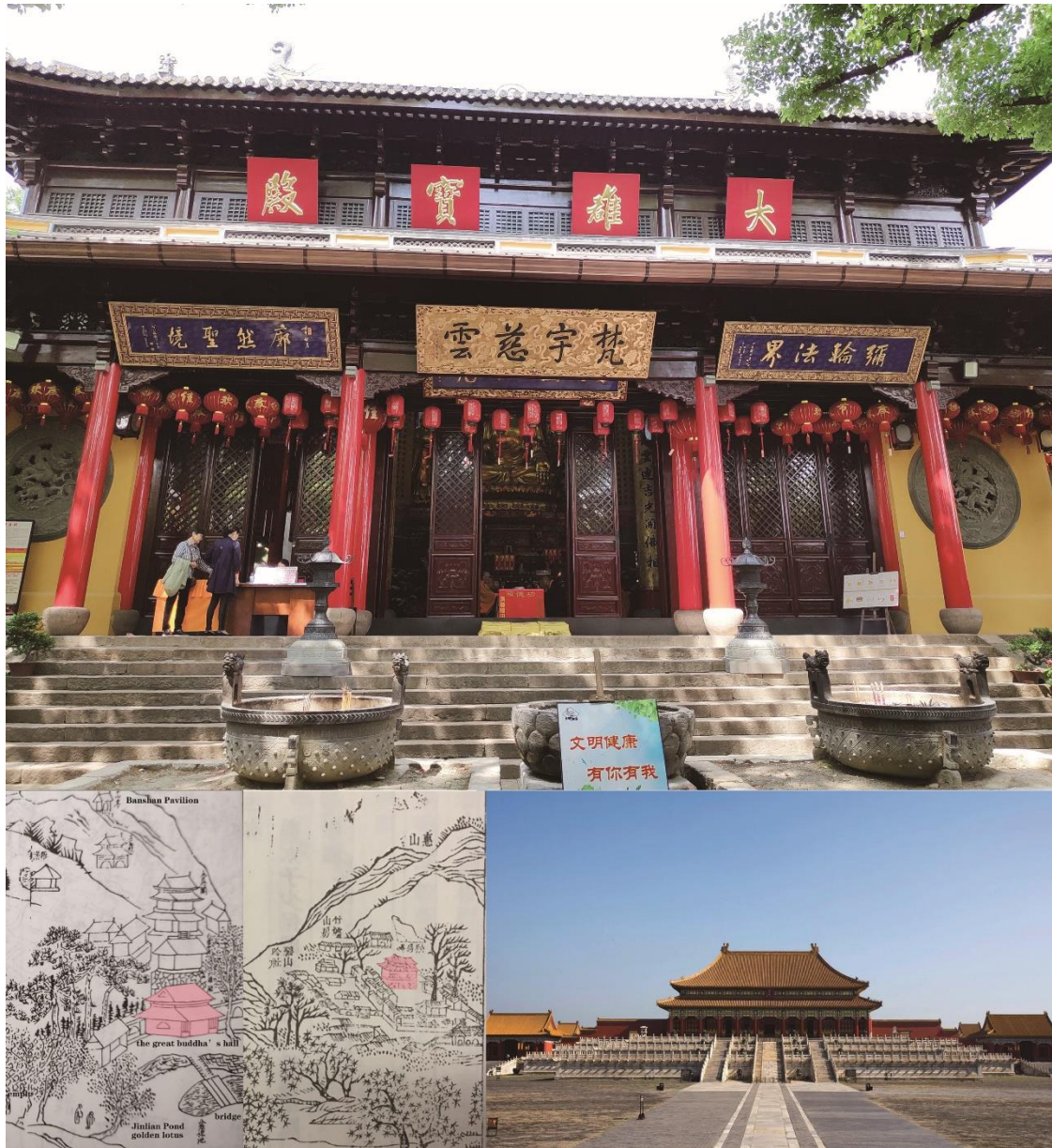


Figure 27: top the Datong Hall of Huishan temple (Photo by author in 2020)

Bottom left and middle: Datong Hall in the 16th century and in the Qing dynasty in the county Chronicles

Bottom right: Super Harmony in Forbidden city (photo by author in 2020)

They obey the regular progress.

In the preparation phase, the date is determined based on the level of the ceremony. Relevant administrators and personnel are assigned to arrange the specific procedures of the ceremony, set up or decorate the venue, retrieve the required items from storage or buy ahead of the time, and prepare the necessary images, incense tables, incense, flowers, candles, tea, fruits, and delicacies according to the specific requirements of the ceremony. The daily schedule needs to be communicated to the monks in advance, typically by posting a wooden board (Figure 28) a day before. Special ceremonies, due to their lengthy preparation time, require the scheduling of duty rosters or mandates that monks may not take leave throughout the duration of the ceremony to show respect.

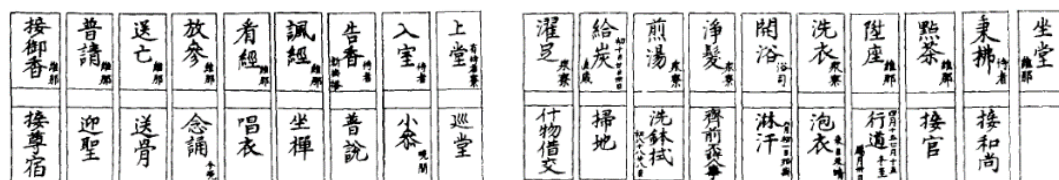


Figure 28: the notice wooden board in Buddhism temples²⁰⁹

Before the start of the activity, the position of each monks will be arranged, indoor or outdoor, such as the arrangement position of incense-offering (Gaoxiang 告香) ceremony(Figure 29).

²⁰⁹ Zhang, Shiqing, *Wushan Shicha Tu Yu Nansong Jiangnan Fosi*[Illustrations of 15 Zen Temples and Temples in Jiangnan area in the South Song Dynasty] (Nanjing: China Architecture & Building Press,2000) p148

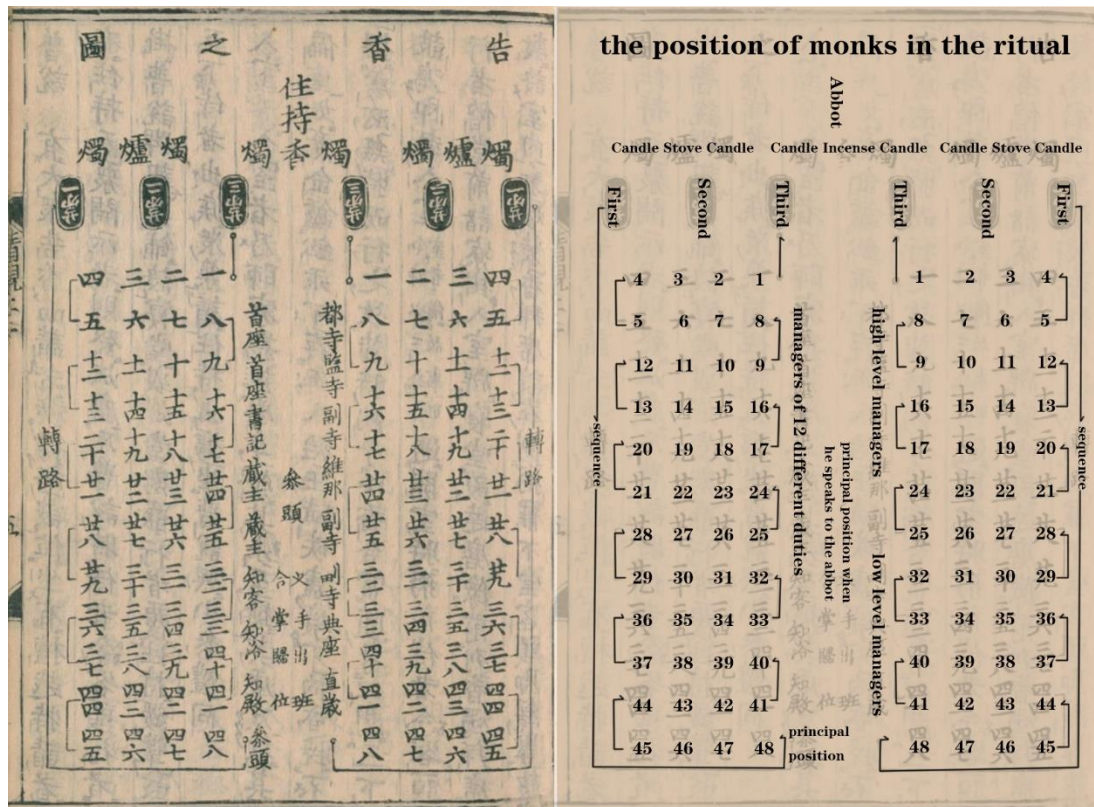


Figure 29: the position of Incense-offering ceremony (redrawn by author based on 1103 edition)

The ceremony will be conducted according to fixed procedures: normally, the process begins after breakfast. The abbot is invited out and receives everyone's salutes. The ceremony begins followed with the detailed process in the ritual book (the examples of detailed process showed in appendix 15), and bell rings, tums or tea are used as cues for instructions or rest intervals. There is sometimes a tribute to the abbot at the end of the rituals. Finally, the monks leave the ritual place, have tea in rooms to thank the participants, and take a rest.

According to Jin Shisheng, director of the Mount Hui scenic area administration office, monks do not strictly enforce principles now except for some basic rules, such as shaving, not killing animals, wearing monk clothes, living in a monk's house, eating vegetarian diet, and not getting married. Recent yearly activities include the Buddha's Birthday and Buddhist festivals. Master Faxiang 法祥 of Huishan Temple says that the

specific procedures of the rituals are in accordance with the old principles.

Master Guolian 果莲 of Huazhang Temple 华藏寺 says that some unseemly rituals, such as the emperor's birthday, have been lost due to changes in the Chinese political system. However, blessing activities, the birthday of various bodhisattvas, and Buddhist practices are remained.

The gates and the sequence

Hall-like buildings, which serve as the climax in a construction sequence, contrast sharply with gates. Passing through a gate is an instantaneous process, representing not a space to linger in but a direct manifestation of entering a new world. The distinction between inside and outside is a clear either-or division. Entering the core area of a temple typically requires passing through three main gates.

There is usually a considerable distance between the mountain gate (the first gate) and the third gate to provide space for preparing for entering the main hall. A specific gate manager is responsible for arranging the gate area and notifying the monks.²¹⁰ When an honored guest arrives, the monks gather at the gate in advance, and the reception personnel then escort the guest to the dharma hall where the abbot awaits. Upon entry, the guest meets monks whose academic levels gradually increase, while upon departure, this order is reversed.²¹¹

Side gates hold a lower, negative, and hidden status within the cultural system. Monks

²¹⁰ De Hui, monk in Yuan dynasty, *Chixiu Baizhang Qinggui* [Principles for Chan Buddhists], 1335 edn, volume 3, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

²¹¹ Zan Ning (monk 919-1001), *Seng Shi Lue* [Brief History of Monks], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Zong Yi (monk in Song dynasty), *Chanyuan Qinggui* [Principles for Chan Buddhists], 1103 edn, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

who have committed transgressions and are expelled from the temple are made to leave through the side gates as a sign of disgrace.²¹² Similarly, during the Ming and Qing periods, side gates and auxiliary paths were designated for servants and women. Most of the time, side gates are considered to exist for convenience, such as providing access to springs or mountain paths. Nowadays, almost all gates in scenic areas are open during tourist hours, diminishing the spatial and hierarchical significance traditionally associated with them.

Buildings for monks' daily life and daily rituals

The 'Seven Halls' become a standard temple layout during the Song dynasty, consisting of seven main functional buildings that varied from sect to sect (Figure 30).²¹³ Buildings on the side wings of the temple were typically designated for the daily life of monks, including the Monks Hall (used for sleeping, meditation, and dining), the abbot's room, the kitchen, etc. Among these, the Monks Hall is the most frequently used and remains in use for the longest duration during daily rituals.

²¹² Dang, Rong, Dai, Jian, 'Study on the Influence of Principles of the Zen Temple on the Architectural Layout of Chinese Zen Temples', *Gansu Technology*, 31, 7 (2015), 118-120.

²¹³ Zhang Shiqing, *Wushan Shicha Tu Yu Nansong Jiangnan Fosi* [Illustrations of 15 Zen Temples and Temples in Jiangnan area in the South Song Dynasty] (Nanjing: China Architecture & Building Press, 2000), p38, 47

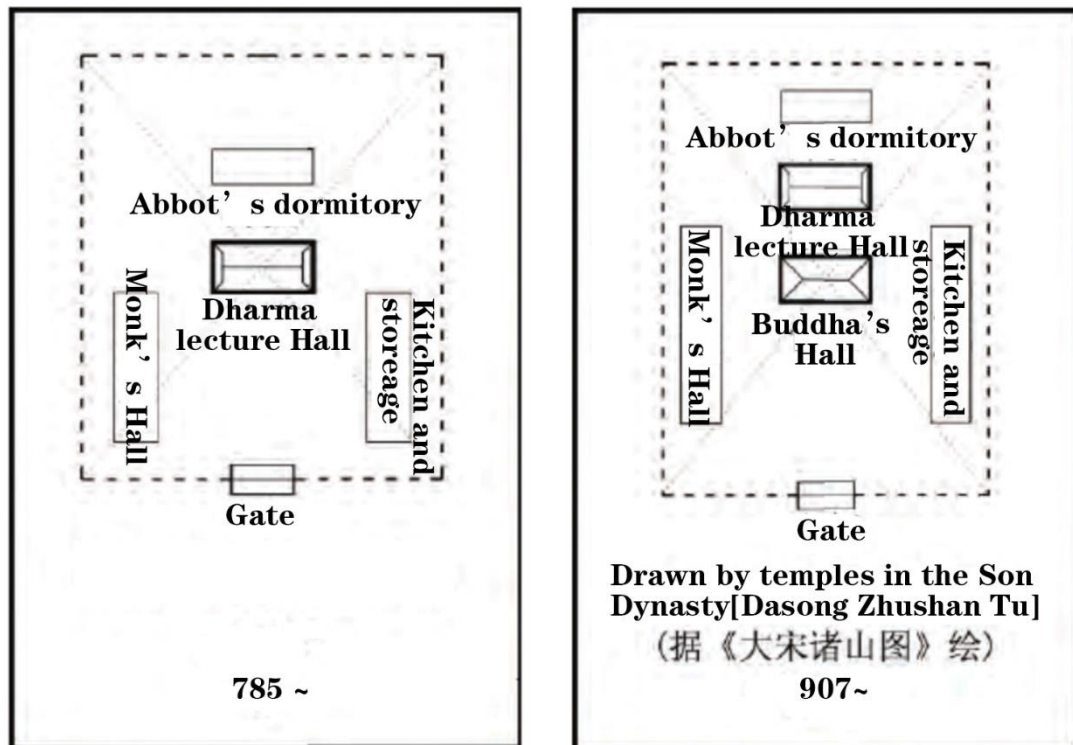


Figure 30: common layout of Chan temples

Influenced by the unity of Chan and precepts, great importance was attached to rituals and the discipline of monks. With the decline of Buddhism as a whole, Buddhist rules became increasingly lax, but with an ever more detailed book of daily regulations. Master Guolian 果莲 of Huazang Temple states that the practical standards and procedures for monk's daily behavior are adhered to strictly, both presently and in the past. However, some monks do not adhere to all religious discipline now. For example, while Guolian required to obey 250 disciplines, some monks only need to obey 10 or even 5.

Records of monks' daily life in the Tang Dynasty indicate two separate meditation sessions in the morning and evening, with breaks in between, as well as two frugal meals per day (Table 6). Each stage of the meditation is guided by tapping different utensils with varying times and lengths of striking, conveying shared meanings for both monastic and lay communities. While tourists' participation in temple rituals may not

be high, the sounds of bells and cloud-shaped percussion instruments are frequently heard. Detailed instructions and rules govern every aspect of monastic life, including eating, sleeping, folding clothes, and using the restroom (the mealtime process is presented as an example in the appendix).

Table 6: daily schedule of monks in 1105

	Object to hit		
Wake up 5: 00	Big bell	Wake up (From deep sleep to light sleep)	Monks Hall (meditation room)
	small bell in front of kitchen	The rotating staff get up	Washing in the bathroom
	Wooden or iron cloud	All monks get up	
Meal	Long board	Monks go into the room	Monks Hall (meditation room)
	wooden fish	Latecomers will not be admitted	
	Drum (three times)	The abbot goes into the dining room	
	Little bell in front of the hall	Greeting to abbot	
	mallet	arrange the bowl and meditate Prajnaparamita Hrdaya Sutra three times	
	mallet	The kitchen prepares porridge	
	Mallet (ten times)	Read ten Buddha's name	
	mallet	Managers fill up the bowl with porridge	
	mallet	Eating	Finished
	mallet	Abbot leaves	Monks Hall (meditation room)
Meditation	Little bell in front of the hall (three times)/drum in the hall	Morning meditation / conference	
	Little bell in front of the hall (three times)		finished
Meal	Wooden or iron cloud (three times)	Monks arrange the bowl	Monks Hall (meditation room)
	Big Bell	Tell mealtime	
	Long board/ mallet	Same as breakfast / if donor donate meals	
Consultation	drum/board	Different drinking ritual (consult abbot or senior monks)	The inviter's residence
Labor	Drum in front of the kitchen	Collective works, mainly physical	Field or in temples
Activities	Bell in front of the hall	Event: Greet or see off distinguished guests, hire a governor or see the death off	Mostly the preparing space
Bathing	Drum in the bathroom	Bathing time	bathroom
Meditation	Bell in front of the hall (three times)/ big bell and little bell every five days	Afternoon meditation/ the big bell is hit to convene the monks and the small bell is to start read sutra	Monks Hall (meditation room)

Dusk	Big bell/drum	workers who do not convert to Buddhism to read sutra / Discipline at any time	Buddha's hall
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Table 7: The daily schedule of three periods²¹⁴

1. Song and Yuan Dynasties (10 th -14 th century)	2. Late Ming dynasty and Early Qing dynasty (16 th -17 th century)	3. Middle and late Qing dynasty (18-19 th century)
Get up, wash face, and rinse mouth	Get up, wash face, and rinse mouth	Get up → go to the toilet → wash face and rinse mouth → worship the Buddha → drink hot water → sit silently (meditation) → early meditation (in the Buddha's Hall) → Back to the Meditation Hall
Back to the Monk's Hall → meditation	worship the Buddha → Drink Hot water → sit silently (meditation)	
make the bed → worship the Buddha	Morning meditation	
Back to the bowl position → meal	Meal	Sit with legs free → breakfast
wear clothes → read sutra in front of Buddha	A quiet walk for mind and body → tea → A quiet walk for mind and body → go to the toilet → sit silently (meditation) → tea → A quiet walk for mind and body → go to the toilet → sit silently (meditation) → sit freely	Morning meditation (Gargle, chew poplar branch to clean teeth → A quiet walk for mind and body → go to the toilet → sit silently (meditation) → sit with legs free → preparation tea of meditation)
Back to the Monk's Hall and consult the abbot or eminent monk, drink tea, and read sutra		The burning time of four incense sticks in the morning (A quiet walk for mind and body → go to the toilet → sit silently (meditation) → drink hot water)
Back to the Monk's Hall → meditation		
Back to the bowl position → meal	Meal	Worship the Buddha → Meal
Wash clothes	Sit silently (meditation)	Afternoon meditation (Gargle, chew poplar branch to clean teeth → A quiet walk for mind and body → tea → A quiet walk for mind and body → go to the toilet → sit silently (meditation) → preparation tea of meditation)
Back to the Monk's Hall → meditation		The burning time of four incense sticks in the afternoon (A quiet walk for mind and body → go to

²¹⁴ Principles of Chan Temples and Wang, Ronghuan, Study on System of Chan Buddhism in Ming and Qing Dynasties. (Doctoral Thesis, Nankai University, 2017.) p144-146

		the toilet→sit silently (meditation)→drink hot water)
The burning time of four incense sticks→ soup/tea/ medicine of preserve monks' health	Meal	Worship the Buddha → meal → chew poplar branch to clean teeth→ back to the meditation position
wear clothes→ read sutra in front of Buddha→ eat donation food	Evening meditation	Evening meditation (in the Buddha's Hall) → go to the toilet→ have a rest on bed
Back to the Monk's Hall→ meditation	A quiet walk for mind and body→sit silently (meditation)- The burning time of four incense sticks	
Sleep	preparation of sleeping	Leave bed → sit silently (meditation) → tea → A quiet walk for mind and body → go to the toilet→ sit silently (meditation) → drink tea indicated be quiet→ daily meditation finished The burning time of four incense sticks in the evening (A quiet walk for mind and body→ go to the toilet→sit silently(meditation)→tea) →The burning time of six incense sticks in the evening (A quiet walk for mind and body→go to the toilet→sit silently(meditation)) → sleep
	The burning time of six incense sticks	
	Sleep	

The daily rituals of the monks in Stage 2(Table 7) did not change much except for the use of different terminology. In Stage 3, the daily life of monks can be divided into five periods: early class, morning, afternoon, evening class, and night, respectively. The specific schedule is varies among different temples, adjusted to local conditions.²¹⁵

The changes in the daily activities of the monks significantly influenced the functions and layout of the Monks' Hall. Practical functions were dispersed, such as the separate dining hall introduced in the late Ming Dynasty. Economic development progressed

²¹⁵ Principles of Chan Temples and Wang, Ronghuan, Study on System of Chan Buddhism in Ming and Qing Dynasties. (Doctoral Thesis, Nankai University,2017.) p114-164

rapidly since the Tang Dynasty. During this time, two or three meals a day became common, gradually shifting to three meals by the 13th century.²¹⁶ The increase in meals frequency also led to a more segmented day, reflecting changes in the daily schedule, the increase in meals necessitated the establishment of separate dining halls.

The second change is that alterations in meditation practices have also transformed the spatial structure of the hall (Figure 31). In the early stages, silent meditation was prevalent, with monks resting their bodies and minds through silent sitting. In stage 2, a form of meditation combining silent sitting with slow walking around the Buddha was developed. The combination led to the creation of different meditation phrase and time arrangement, with the burning time of one incense stick indicating each phrase.

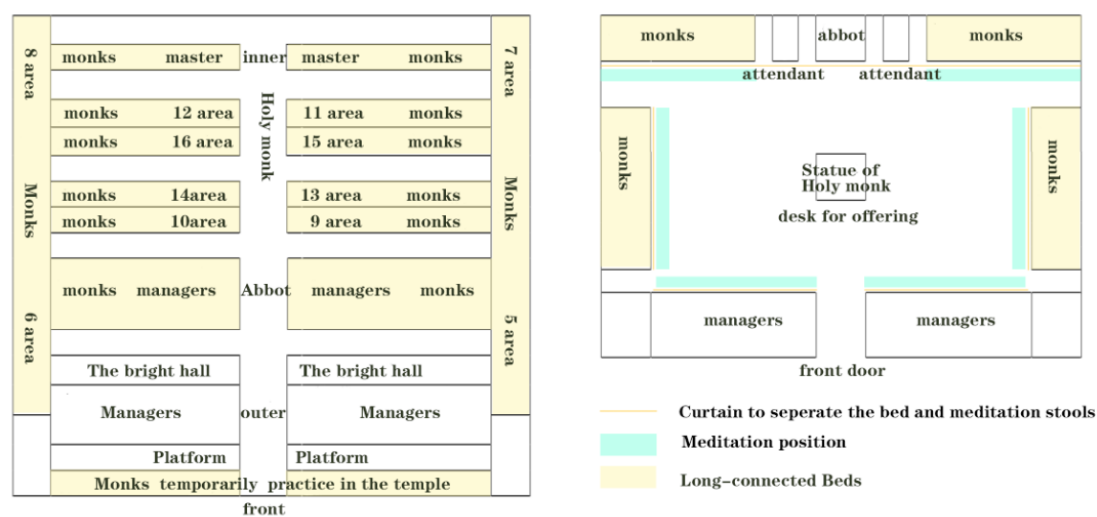


Figure 31: the layout of Monk's Hall and Meditation Hall in different period²¹⁷

The monk's hall was typically with two doors facing the central hall. The outer hall

²¹⁶ Wei, Xiaoyan. 'The historical evolution of ancient food system'. *Yanzhao Academic*, 01,(2011):188-194.

²¹⁷ Zhang Shiqing, *Wushan Shicha Tu Yu Nansong Jiangnan Fosi*[Illustrations of 15 Zen Temples and Temples in Jiangnan area in the South Song Dynasty] (Nanjing: China Architecture & Building Press,2000)

Wang, Ronghuan, Study on System of Chan Buddhism in Ming and Qing Dynasties. (Doctoral Thesis, Nankai University,2017.) p114-164

served as the eating area for rotating staff and temporary residing monks, equipped with beds and Buddhist utensils such as bells and drums. In the inner hall, a shrine dedicated to a holy monk stood in the center, and long-connected beds are arranged along the walls for sleeping or eating. The abbot had a chair, called ‘Tang Tou Yi 堂头椅’. A stove was placed in the middle for cold days. Clothing trees and cabinets beside the beds were used to store monk’s belongings, each numbered and locked.

With the establishment of independent dining halls in the late Ming Dynasty, the outer hall became unnecessary, and the ‘Monk’s hall’ were renamed the ‘Meditation Hall’ as functions specialized.²¹⁸ The layout changed significantly, eliminating the previous complex arrangement. The Buddhist niche remained in the centre, surrounded by square bricks as the way a walking path. The shrine faced the front door, with offerings placed on the desk in front. Stools are arranged in front of the beds for meditation. A desk for on-duty monk, holding items like a wooden fish and incense burner was positioned nearby.

Plants and local stones

The construction of nationwide transportation routes during the Tang Dynasty, along with the establishment of several markets distributed along the Grand Canal in Wuxi, facilitated transportation and the exchange of goods. Two subtropical trees were planted in the courtyard of Huishan Temple, said to have been planted by Li Shen. Li Shen was a friend of Li Deyu, who was working in capital and wrote the ‘Pingquan Huamu Zhi 平泉花木志’ for his plants collection in his garden.²¹⁹ It is said that the earliest surviving private garden site is the Reading Platform, which was built by Li Shen,

²¹⁸ Yi Run(monk in the Qing),*Baizhang Qinggui Zeng Yi Ji*[Interpritation of ‘Principles for Chan Buddhists’],vol 6, In Lan, Jifu, *Translation Series of World Buddhist Studies* Vol. 81, (Huayu Publishing House.1989) p361

²¹⁹ Li, Deyu, *Pingquan huamu Zhi* [List of plants in Pingquan Garden] Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

despite his unpleasant experiences during his youth at the temple.²²⁰ During this time, people in Wuxi with connections to garden enthusiasts in the capital began consciously selecting plants and building gardens. As Wuxi also belongs to a subtropical region, the cultivation environment might not have been significantly different from the original environment of the two subtropical trees, and technological advancements were not yet evident. Most of the plants planted in garden area appear in the local product list, whether they are related to Buddhist symbolism, such as lotus and bamboo, or traditional pine trees associated to sacrificial symbol or burial places of Tang Dynasty temples, such as the thousand pine trees which were planted for the state funeral held for Zhilv 智律 Master during the Tang dyansty.²²¹

For less easily transportable building materials like stone, local production was still the predominant choice. Limestone is one of the few minerals in Wuxi with exploitable

220 Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

221 Shi, Nengzhi, Song dynasty, Xian Chun Pi Ling Zhi[Chorography of Piling] Xianchun edition. vol plants. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

极乐国土有七宝池，八功德水充满其中...池中莲花，大如车轮，青色青光，黄色黄光，赤色赤光，白色白光，微妙香洁。(The land of Bliss is filled with seven treasures pools of and eight virtues waters ...The lotus blossoms in the pool are as big as wheels, blue lotus shining blue light, yellow lotus shining yellow light, red lotus shining red light, white lotus shining white light, fragrance and purity) Yao, Qin, Kumarajiva translated, Master Guangming Interpreted, *Fo Shuo A Mi Tuo Jing*[The Buddha said the Amitabha Sutra], Edo period(1603-1868), collected in National Archives of Japan, pp7. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Lan, Xiaoguang, 'Bamboo in Chinese Buddhism', *World Bamboo and Rattan Network*, 1.1 (2003):39-43. DOI: 10.13640/j.cnki.wbr.2003.01.014

Li, Xiaorong, 'Image group of Temple pines in Tang and Song Dynasties from the perspective of institutional culture - Taking Pine monk and Pine pagoda as examples', *World Religious Culture*, 1(2019): 68-75

Xun, Kuang, the Warring period. Xun Zi. Vol. Rites. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Ding, Jie, 'On the Custom about Planting Pines and Cypresses in Cemeteries in Ancient China and Its Cultural Connotation of Funeral,] *Journal of Beijing Forestry University (Social Sciences)*, 2(2021): 39-46, DOI: 10.13931/j.cnki.bjfuss.2021066

Ji, Dan (Zhou Dynasty), *Zhou Li*[Rituals in the Zhou Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

economic value. Both of the two remaining Dhvaja consisted of 19 separate limestone components. The height of Tang sutra Dhvaja was 6.26 metres, while the other measured 6.22 metres. The Golden Lotus Bridge (Length 10.7m, Width 3.4m) in Huishan temple is the oldest bridge in Wuxi and was first made of Wukang Stone, a purple-brown colored stone commonly used for stone bridges in the Song.²²² The Yunlin Stone Spectrum mentions that the stone is sourced from Huzhou in Zhejiang Province, located across Taihu Lake from Wuxi.²²³

The TingSong Stone Bed (Figure 20) was made of yellow stone (L1.99*W0.87*H0.56), a yellow-brown stone that can be found throughout Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces.

Luxu town is famous for a special stone, Yangshan stone, which has a greenish-yellow colour and is found in Mount Yang near Luxu. This stone is used in many stone bridges, floor tiles, and platform foundations in gardens.²²⁴ It is a hard volcanic granite, a remnant of the ‘Yanshan Movement’. During the major renovation of the Golden Lotus Bridge in 1460, the materials for the railings were extensively replaced with local-produced Yangshan stone. The genealogy of Ding family in the village near Mount Yang records it as a village with many stone bridge builders who constructed most bridges in the surrounding towns and villages.²²⁵ The small mountain is prone to collapse and was completely mined in the late Qing Dynasty.²²⁶ During the restoration

222 Qian, Jiandong, ‘Overview of Historic sites on Mount Jiao in Wuxi’, *Wuxi Archeology and Museology Review* 1,(2007),40-42. (Internal information of Wuxi Museum)

223 Schafer, Edward H., *Tu Wan's Stone Catalogue of Cloudy Forest*, 1st Floating World ed. (Warren, CT): [Easthampton, Mass.]: Floating World Editions ; Distributed by Antique Collectors' Club, 2005)

224 Shi, Nengzhi, Song dynasty, *Xian Chun Pi Ling Zhi*[Chorography of Piling] Xianchun edition. vol plants. *Qinding Siku Quanshu*, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

225 Jiangnan Evening News web edition newspaper, 27 January 2022 ‘Yangshan stone return to the sight of peach culture and stone culture will add color to the local cultural tourism industry’, Wuxi New Media, <<http://www.wxrb.com/doc/2022/01/27/142659.shtml>>[accessed 12 December 2022]

226 Huang Ang, Qing Dynasty, *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], from *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

in the Qing, the bridge was equipped with bluestone railings and granite pillars.

According to Yu Zhi's account, the ancient stone components of Wuxi region's architectural structures were initially made of the Wukang stone, gradually transitioning to Yangshan stone or limestone. In the Qing, granite was used. The stone materials became increasingly harder.²²⁷ The light green stones, called mung bean stone, have been used for restoration in recent times.²²⁸

The Sui, Tang, and Song period (2) - Construction under the centralized system

After the 7th century, another category of garden practices emerged, characterized by construction adhering to nationally standardized criteria. Unlike spontaneous constructions, these gardens were built and utilized with clear political intentions, serving as expressions of urban status. The Tang Dynasty was a pivotal era in China when various systems and institutions, such as the imperial examination system, ritual system, religious system, and architectural system, were proposed or first established. These systems went on to influence all subsequent dynasties in China, reflecting the Tang Dynasty's lasting impact.

The turmoil in the Central Plains accelerated the decline of the Tang Dynasty and also elevated the importance of the Jiangnan Economic Region.²²⁹ The east of the inner city had expanded to the canal when magistrate Li Jinqing rebuilt it in the 11th century. The city wall crossed the Jiangnan canal and enclosed both sides. Chengxun 成寻, a Japanese monk, took a boat along the canal to the north and recorded in 1072, 'I stay in

227 Yu Zhi, 'Bugong Stone in Sangong Temple', *Wuxi Cultural Relics and Museology*, 3(2009) 55-57 Internal materials:

228 Staff of the Donglin Academy Administrative Office

229 Cui Mingde. 'the Ethnic Composition and Ethnic relations of the Anshi Rebellion army.' *Chinese Frontier History and Geography Research*, 03(2001):20-29+115

Wuxi County hotel. It is a big county like a city'.²³⁰

The turmoil at the end of the Northern Song Dynasty forced northern families to migrate south once again. Notable families included the Ni Zan family who moved to Zhituo town and built Yunlin garden in the Yuan, the Hua family, who moved to Longting town and showed a county-life normal garden in the late Yuan, the An family, who built the west garden in the Ming dynasty and settled in Jiaoshan town, and the Yang family, who were prominent capitalists in the early 20th century and moved to Hongshan town.²³¹

The eastern suburbs of Wuxi, which is close to Suzhou, became the preferred settlements of the northern families renowned for their political status and garden making after the 14th century, characterized by a central clustering around family settlements. Their genealogies trace this later prosperity back to the southern migration of the 12th century. Although Wuxi was relatively prosperous in the 11th century, its low political status was insufficient to attract elite families at the time. The families that migrated, relatively lacking in financial and social standing, required a longer period of development to accumulate wealth and influence. Consequently, the impact of their migration did not immediately manifest in the form of garden construction.

Considering that the entire article is written in chronological order, to avoid excessive inversion, this section serves as a foreshadowing of the later chapters concerning local prominent families building gardens. A similar situation is presented earlier in the text, where the development of agriculture in the Jiangnan economic region laid the groundwork for the emergence of the Suzhou area as an economic and cultural center during the Ming and Qing dynasties. In fact, this chapter's context significantly lays the

230 常州无锡县宿，广大县也，宛如州做法 Monk Cheng Xun (1011-1081), *Can Tiantai Wutai Shan Ji*[the Record of visiting Mount Tiantai and Wutai], (Shijiazhuang, Huashan Art Press, 2008), pp.87

231 Genealogy in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source], Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012

foundation for the explosive development of garden culture in the later periods.

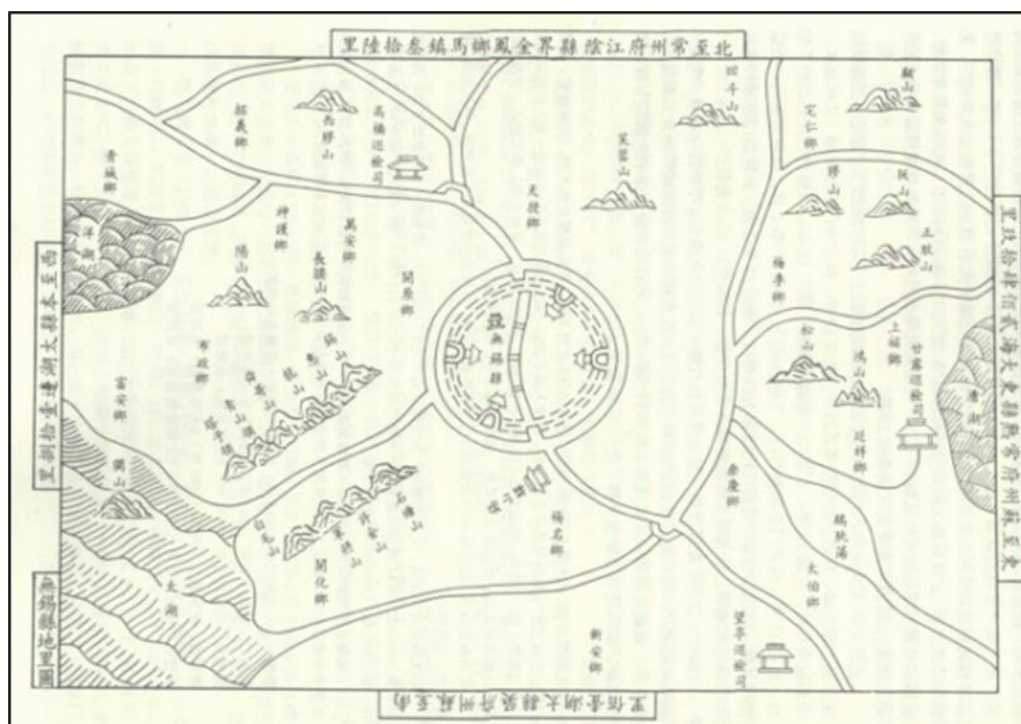


Figure 32: Wuxi in the Xianchun Period (1265—1274) in the Song dynasty (the earliest map of Wuxi that restored by Wuxi Planning and Design Institute)

The implementation of new economic and election policies served to eliminate the privileges of local power and monopoly position, fostering the strengthening of a centralized political system. Intellectuals changed their attitude from shunning the world during the Northern and Southern Dynasties to become the main force of national officials through the pursuit of fame.²³² By the time of the five dynasties (907-960),

232 Imperial system is fairly fair. From then on, those born in the poor family could rise rapidly based on their capability. A man of power cannot keep his position only by his background. From Lv, Simian, *General History of China*, (Shanghai: Kaiming Shudian, 1940) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Niao, Tingyu, 'The New View of Tang Changru on the Aristocracy Family System', *Journal of History Research*, 6(1962), pp176.

Zhou, Weiwan, *Zhongguo Gudian Yuanlin Shi (3rd edition)* [History of the Chinese Classical Gardens], (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2008)

the dominant influence of noble families had disappeared.²³³ Known as the Tang-Song Transformation, China began to evolve from a ‘noble society’ into a ‘civilian society.’²³⁴ The autocratic centralized system became more rigorous, intensified, and even rigid, which was evident in the material used in the construction of large-scale projects. Politically, it had quite strict and complete institutions, rules and regulations, which demonstrated high administrative efficiency. Economically and culturally, it was easy to communicate and integrate, so after the Tang dynasty, later dynasties basically maintained a unified form.

Wuxi’s political status determined its relatively unimportant position within the centralized system, and as a result, garden concepts related to policies generally exhibited a lagging effect. At the same time, its interference in economic life and ideology is gradually stronger.²³⁵ The construction and disappearance of gardens became increasingly sensitive responses to policies, such as those related to educational institutions.

The politicization of religion garden and the combination with confucianism

The change of temple name indicates that the decision lay with the emperor, rather than the buddhists themselves.²³⁶ Around 80% of early temples, such as Huishan temple in

233 Zheng, Qiao, Song Dynasty, Tong Shi [General Annals], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook)

234 Lv, Simian, *General History of China*, (Shanghai: Kaiming Shudian, 1940), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook, pp67-70

It was called ‘Tang-Song Transformation’ promoted by Japanese scholar Konan Naito. The bureaucratic system was perfected as a product of the power game, and the composition of intellectual groups, class mobility, and aesthetic concepts of literature and art also underwent major changes, and two eras of relatively free thinking appeared in the mid Tang-Northern Song and the late Ming. From Li Zehou, ‘Beautiful Journey’

235 Ning, Ke, ‘The Autocratic Centralized System of Feudal Society in China, Journal of Literature’, *History and Philosophy*, 1(2009): 89-100.

236 Liu, Dunzhen, and Fu Xinnian, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhu Shi* [History of Chinese Architecture] vol. 2, (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press. 2001), pp.499

the Mount Hui, Chong'an Temple in the city centre, Kaili Temple in Luoshe Town, were granted names with 'Si 寺' by the Northern Song court (960-1127).²³⁷ Sun points out that these names grants were aimed at peacefully reunifying the prosperous Buddhist area of the Wuyue Kingdom (907-960). The Song court recognized these private Buddhist temples as a means to win the hearts of the local people.²³⁸

The influence of Confucianism and politics is very clear in the changes of the Chan Ritual book from the 8th to the 14th centuries. Under the influence of Confucianism, which respects teachers and ancestors, a blessing ceremony for teachers was added following the ceremony for Buddha, followed by a blessing ceremony on the emperor's birthday.²³⁹ Prayers for the emperor and his family were listed at the beginning of the Chan Ritual book, completely changing the chapter structure that was originally led by monks' cultivation.²⁴⁰ The regulations, while retaining monks' daily behavioral norms and Buddhist practices, underwent changes that placed a heightened emphasis on the idea that the primary purpose of religion was to serve political objectives. This shift diluted the religious sanctity of Buddhism and facilitated the state's increased control over it. This standardization aimed at the effective management of Buddhism and served the consolidation of political power.²⁴¹ During visits to temples in Wuxi, without

237 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

238 Sun, Xu, 'A Discussion on the Temple Policy during the reign of Emperor Zhenzong in the Northern Song Dynasty' *Journal of Fa Yin*, 06(2012):36-39.DOI:10.16805/j.cnki.11-1671/b.2012.06.012.

239 Monk Zong Yi, Song dynasty, *Chanyuan Qinggui* [Principles for Chan Buddhists], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

240 De Hui, monk in Yuan dynasty, *Chixiu Baizhang Qinggui* [Principles for Chan Buddhists], 1335 edn, volume 3, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

241 De Hui, monk in Yuan dynasty, *Chixiu Baizhang Qinggui* [Principles for Chan Buddhists], 1335 edn, volume 3, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Yin, Yan, and He Qi, 'Division of Powers in the Management of Buddhism in the Yuan Dynasty', *Lan Zhou Xue Kan*, 7(2011), 168-172.

exception, the monks all mentioned the continued adherence to the Baizhang Regulation of Chan Temples.

When the royal family of the Northern Song migrated south due to the Jurchen invasion, it is believed that they passed through Wuxi and used Huishan Temple as a temporary Palace. Baiyun Hall (Yanfa Hall) used as a Dharma Hall as Buddhism lecture Hall behind the Buddha's Hall provide accommodation for the emperor and his entourage (Figure 33). The altitude difference between the location of the two Halls is about 5.5 metres which could assist with safety concerns.



Figure 33: re-conjectural map of Huishan temple during 13-15th century (draw by author) based on Wang Weiren, Xu Zhu, Topological Study on the evolution of early Chinese Buddhist Monasteries: Layout of Pagoda, Buddha Hall, Lecture Hall and Pavilion Tower, South Architecture (Paper Selection for the 5th International Conference on Chinese Architectural History), 2011, 4, 38-49. DOI:10.3969/j.issn. 1000-0232. 2011. 04. 038. And the tourist record in County Chronicles

Some Buddhist temples were granted to officials. During the Song and Yuan Dynasties, customs such as establishing memorial halls for ancestors in Buddhist and Taoist

temples, acquiring sacrificial fields and organizing ancestor worship by monks were prevalent in the Jiangnan area.²⁴² Zhang pointed out that the flourishing of the Chan Buddhism in the Jiangnan region did not occur until the Southern Song Dynasty.²⁴³ In Wuxi, this could be related to the combination of Chan Buddhist temples and official ancestral halls. The prevailing practice of combining ancestor worship with tourism in the Jiangnan region increased the likelihood of being recorded.

During the last four years in the Northern Song (1123-1127), Huishan Temple was briefly granted to the renowned anti-Jin statesman Li Gang by Emperor Qinzong. It was renamed 'Gong De Yuan' (功德院 Success and Virtue Temple), which is associated with the Li Gang family.²⁴⁴ The golden lotus bridge was built with an inscription of the five characters 懋德堂李府 'Maode Hall in Li's Family'. The carving technique of Ya Di Yin Qi was used, depicting the pattern of 'interwoven branches with blooming peonies and figures of children.' The peony flower pattern is one of the 11 patterns specified in the Song Dynasty as a valuable example of the stone carving and pattern system outlined of 'Construction Regulations.'²⁴⁵ It is highly likely that the renovation took

242 Feng, Erkang, et al. *The History of Chinese Clans*. (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2009) pp.176; 178.

243 Zhang, Shiqing, *Wushan Shicha Tu Yu Nansong Jiangnan Fosi* [Illustrations of 15 Chan Temples and Temples in Jiangnan area in the South Song Dynasty] (Nanjing: China Architecture & Building Press, 2000), p16-17.

244 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

245 '其所造华文制度有十一品：一曰海石榴华；二曰宝相华；三曰牡丹华；四曰蕙草；五曰云文；六曰水浪；七曰宝山；八曰宝阶；九曰铺地莲华；十曰仰覆莲华；十一曰宝装莲华。或于华文之内，间以龙凤狮兽及化生之类者，随其所宜，分布用之。The systems of ornate patterns in Chinese system are classified into eleven types: firstly, the pomegranate flower; secondly, the Buddhism flower; thirdly, the peony; fourthly, the orchid; fifthly, cloud; sixthly, water wave; seventhly, precious mountain; eighthly, precious steps; ninthly, lotus flower carpet; tenthly, inverted lotus flower; eleventhly, precious adorned lotus flower. These patterns may include dragons, phoenixes, lions, other mythical creatures, and transforming life forms, to be distributed and used as appropriate within the ornate patterns.' Li Jie, Song dynasty, *Ying Zao Fa Shi* [Construction Regulations] vol 2 Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

place due to Li Gang's fame and social status.

It became the family temple and the ancestral grave of the Meng family, serving as a place to memorialize the merit and virtues of Meng Zhonghou to the royal family. The name changed to Jingzhong Jianfu Chan Temple 旌忠荐福功德禅院 in 1131 (Figure 34), early in the Southern Song (1127-1279). Meng Zhonghou was the nephew of the Queen of Emperor Zhezong. During the invasion of Nuzhen (later Manzhou), the Queen was protected by the Meng family and helped Emperor Gaozong ascend the throne. At the same time, the Jiaoshan Temple changed to Congqin Baode Chan Temple 崇亲报德禅寺 and Huazang Temple was built as Baozhong Xianqin Chan Temple 褒忠显亲禅寺. They were all tomb temples which showed the flourishing state of Chan Buddhism in the Jiangnan area.²⁴⁶ Guo points out that not only is the politics close to the royal court, but that the doctrine also tends to Confucianism. Buddhism has been greatly secularized, which is also the root of the prosperity of Chan.²⁴⁷

246 ‘旌忠荐福禅寺在历山梁大同三年建名法云唐会昌中废咸通重建亦名慧山至道中更名普利绍兴初 照慈圣宪后宅请为坟刹改今额

崇亲报德禅寺在胶山梁大建名弥勒隋大业五年重创至道中更名兴化绍兴间李丞相纲请为坟刹改今额
华藏褒忠显亲禅寺在县西三十六里青山弯 国朝绍兴中张循王俊即坟建刹

Jingzhong Jianfu Chan Temple, initially built in the third year of Datong during the Liang Dynasty in Mount Li, was named Fayun. It was abolished during the Xiantong era and rebuilt in the reign of Mount Hui of Tang, also known as Huishan temple. It was renamed Puli temple during the Zhidao era. Later, the mansion of ?? requested it to be converted into a cemetery, and it is known by this name today.

Chongqin Baode Chan Temple, initially built in the early years of Daqing during the Liang Dynasty on Mount Jiao, was named Mile temple. It was severely damaged during the fifth year of Daye in Sui Dynasty and renamed Xinghua temple during the Zhidao era. Prime Minister Li Gang requested it to be converted into a cemetery during the early years of Shaoxing, and it is known by this name today.

Huazang Baozhong Xianqin Chan Temple, located 36 miles west of the county, in Qingshan Bend, was built during the Song Dynasty. During the Shaoxing era of the Southern Song Dynasty, Zhang Xun and Wang Jun built the temple on the grave site.’

Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

247 Guo, Daihuan, *Zhongguo Gudai Jianzhu Shi* [History of Chinese Architecture] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press,2009), Volume 3, pp.269

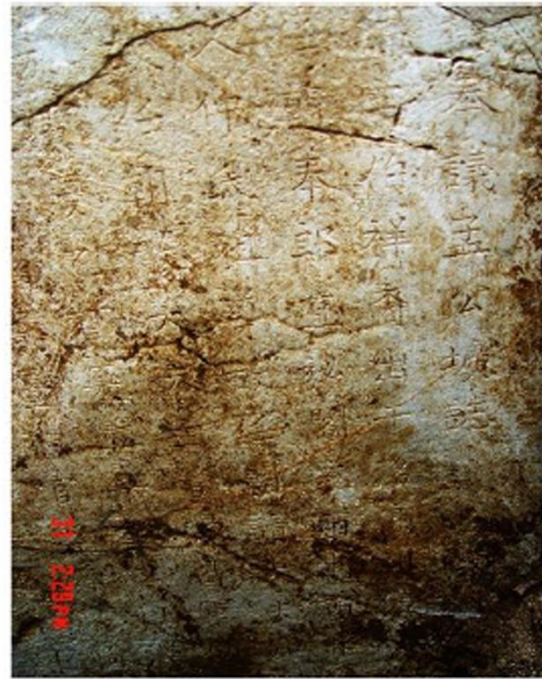
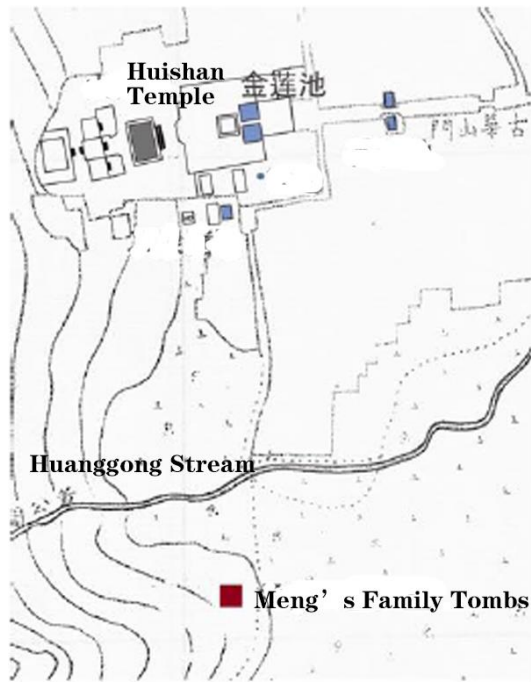


Figure 34: top left: The location of Huishan Temple and the Meng's Family Tombs Redrawn by author based on Yao Shuran, Diachronic growth of Ancient Gardens in the Western Suburbs of Wuxi, Doctoral Thesis, University of Southeast, 2020, p41

Top right: Epitaph of Meng Boxiang(1225-1270) (photo by staff in Wuxi Museum in 2005)

Bottom: Excavation site (photo by staff in Wuxi Museum in 2005)

These three temples are the only ones with tour records by literati among all early temples that still bear names given before the compilation of local county chorography in the Yuan. They are all Chan temples, which is likely not a coincidence. Although they are called Buddhist temples, they are combined with family temples granted to officials by the emperor to express the emperor's grace. Chan, already closely related to the government and Confucianism with contemplation practice and 'blood lineage', became the best choice.²⁴⁸ Temples had begun to combine with official tombs, which can be seen as a variant of building a memorial temple next to the tomb to guard the tomb, such as the Taibo tomb and its memorial hall.

In the Song Dynasty, Chan temples functioned as family temples, a unique arrangement where the emperor granted them to dignitaries to take care ancestral tombs. These temples managed daily rituals, including incense offerings and sacrificial ceremonies, praying for ancestors. Lower-ranking individuals had similar setups called Fen An 坟庵 'Tomb Hut' or Yuan 院 'Courtyard.' For example, there was also Renshou An in the South of the Mount Hui built by Qiang Yide.²⁴⁹ Officials used these temples because they could not return to their hometowns due to work. Based on the land near the Buddhist temples which was also given to the officials, the income from the land was used to fund the daily expenses of the monks, and the free-tax policy can be mutually beneficial to officials and monks. However, abuse of power or corruption occasionally

248 '故知一切万法，尽在自身心中 Therefore, it is understood that all phenomena and principles are entirely within one's own mind.' Monk Hui Neng, *Tan Jing* [Buddhism Sutra], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Zhang, Qizhi, *Zhong Guo Si Xiang Shi* [History of Chinese Thoughts], (Xi'an: University of Northwest, 2001), pp262-266

249 '仁寿庵 在山南 元儒学提举强以德建 黄回卿记 Renshou Temple is located in the south of Mount Hui. It was built during the Yuan Dynasty by the Confucian scholar official Qiang Yide. Recorded by Huang Jingqing.' Shao, Bao. *Hui Shan Ji* [Record of Mount Hui], vol2, temples, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

marred this practice.²⁵⁰

The origins of this could be traced from the ‘Family Temple System’ and the Tang court completed the compilation of the ‘Kaiyuan Rituals’, which was a standard model for later ritual process.²⁵¹ As the tool and concept of rule, recognition of Confucianism by Emperor Wu 汉武帝 in the Han connected the rituals with Confucianism. Berthrong demonstrated that the ‘Confucian legislative concept always maintained a certain status in the upper class’ of society during Dynasties with complex ideological trend. Rituals such as offering sacrifices to heaven, earth, and ancestors are still held regularly.²⁵²

250 Huang, Minzhi, ‘Relationship between Shi’s Family in Siming and the the Buddhism in the Southern Song, Collection of Research Papers on Song History’, *International Symposium on Song History and the Ninth Annual Conference of China Song History Research Association*. (Baoding: Hebei University Press, 2000) pp.554-583.

251 唐之五礼之文始备，而后世用之，虽时小有损益，不能过也 The ‘five rites’ of the Tang dynasty is firstly completed and used by later dynasties. Although small changes are frequently made, no others could surpass it Ouyang, Xiu (Song Dynasty), *Xin Tang Shu* [The History of the Tang Dynasty (New Edition)], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook ‘天下有王，分地建国，设祖宗，乃为亲疏贵贱多少之数。是故天子立七庙，三昭三穆，与太祖之庙七。太祖近庙，皆月祭之。远庙为祧，有二祧焉，享尝乃止。诸侯立五庙，二昭二穆，与太祖之庙而五，曰祖考庙，享尝乃止。大夫立三庙，一昭一穆，与太祖而三，曰皇考庙，享尝乃止。士立一庙，曰考庙，王考无庙，合而享尝乃止。庶人无庙，四时祭于寝。 In the world, when there is a king who divides the land and establishes the nation, he sets up ancestral temples to differentiate degrees of kinship and social status. Therefore, the emperor establishes seven ancestral temples: three for the illustrious and three for the solemn, in addition to the ancestral temple of the founder of the dynasty, totaling seven. The ancestral temple of the founder of the dynasty is worshipped monthly. Temples for more distant ancestors are called family temples, with sacrifices offered on special occasions. Feudal lords establish five ancestral temples: two for the illustrious and two for the solemn, plus one for the founder of the dynasty, also with sacrifices offered on special occasions. Officials establish three ancestral temples: one for the illustrious and one for the solemn, plus one for the grandfather of the emperor, also with sacrifices offered on special occasions. Scholars establish one ancestral temple, called the ‘ancestral temple,’ and kings who do not have ancestral temples are combined with their ancestors for sacrifices, also with sacrifices offered on special occasions. Commoners without ancestral temples perform seasonal sacrifices at home.’

Wang, Su, Kong Zi Jia Yu [Sayings of Confucius], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

252 ‘贡旌帛以礼之，设好爵以縻之...遵问道之仪，观释奠之礼. Adorn banners and silk with ritual, use good wine to bind them... adhere to the rites of respecting teacher, observe the rituals of offering sacrifice’ Wei Zheng et al., Tang dynasty *Sui Shu* [History of Sui Dynasty], Vol 6 rituals, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan

Despite Confucianism experiencing challenges during the Southern Dynasties, Emperor Wen of the Sui Dynasty (581–619) attached great importance to Confucianism after reunifying China again.²⁵³ The Rituals of the Sui listed the disasters caused by abandoning Li 礼 ritual, and regular rituals were held according to the procedures of the previous dynasties. People in the Jiangnan area changed to ‘adhere to simple and frugal lifestyle. The funeral and marriage gradually obey the rituals system until the Sui united the whole country.’²⁵⁴

From temple to public landscape

Temple with tombs and memorial halls gradually shifted its focus towards family joyful gatherings, in addition to reminiscing about ancestors. The mountainous forest where the tombs and temples were located were beautiful, and deliberate construction and garden planning were undertaken to elevate the status of monks and provide entertainment.²⁵⁵ This practice was in direct contrast to Confucianism and its ritual

Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

253 厚赏诸儒, 中州儒雅之盛, 自汉、魏以来, 一时而已。 ‘Using gorgeous silk to show courtesy to them, setting up tasty wine to honor them’, ‘following the rituals of consult, observing the rituals of Shi Dian ceremony’, starting of the imperial examination system, and ‘awarding Confucian scholars’ have led to the recovery of Confucianism that ‘the prosperity of Confucianism in Zhongzhou Province has never like that since the Han and Wei Dynasties’ from Wei Zheng et al., Tang dynasty, *Sui Shu* [History of Sui Dynasty], Vol 75 Confucianist, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

254 ‘自平陈之后, 其人俗颇变, 尚淳质, 好俭约. 丧纪婚姻, 率渐于礼. Since the Chen Dynasty was conquered by The Sui court, the customs of the people have somewhat changed, emphasizing simplicity and sincerity, and valuing frugality and thrift. Practices concerning mourning, marriage, and other ceremonies have gradually adhered more closely to Sui ritual.’ Wei Zheng et al., Tang dynasty, *Sui Shu* [History of Sui Dynasty], Vol 75 Confucianist, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

255 ‘美田庐以崇梵释, 治园圃以盛游观, 岁驾大舟, 引妇子举一觴以酌焉. They beautify their fields and dwellings to honour Buddhism, cultivate gardens to enhance recreational views, and annually sail grand boats, where women raise a cup to pour to show respect’. Zhao, Fang, *Dong Shan Cun Gao* [Remains of Dongshan], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

system. The emperors of the Tang specifically annotated the Classic of Filial Piety and included it in 13 Confucian classics to endorse the rituals system. Disregarding the deceased could potentially undermine the fundamental ethical principle of governance, filial piety. As a result, the practice of using amusement as a pretext for remembrance faced disapproval from the upper class and was eventually prohibited.²⁵⁶

After the end of Tang, tombs in Mount Hui began to increase, and tomb trees were planted. (Referring to the 14th century), the spirits of the mountain died off due to deforestation and reclamation, and the Second Spring became contaminated with the increased excrement. You 尤, a native, recorded that once he drank from the springs between 1100 and 1127, they smelled like corpses'.²⁵⁷

The continuous southward migration of the population exacerbated this process and may have prompted increased efforts in the governance of Mount Hui. Records from scholars in the Jiangnan region reveal that this practice persisted with little change until the Ming Dynasty, especially in southern China. Southerners use the cemetery as a place for outings and games. The paper money has not been burned to ashes, and they have

256 ‘禁止临丧嫁娶及上墓欢乐诏:如闻父母初亡, 临丧嫁娶, 积习日久, 遂以为恒。亦有送葬之时, 共为燕饮, 递相酬劝, 酣醉始归。或寒食上墓, 复为欢乐, 坐对松?贾, 曾无戚容。既点风猷, 并宜禁断。仍令州县捉搦, 勿使更然。A decree forbids weddings near funerals and joyful gatherings at funerals and tomb. Upon hearing of the initial death of parents, these customs of marrying with mourning, having become long-standing habits, are now considered customary. Also during funerals, there are occasions when people gather to drink together, encourage each other in succession, and only return home after becoming intoxicated. Similarly, during the Cold Food Festival when visiting tombs, there are still joyful celebrations, sitting beside pine trees and laughing without sorrow. Since these customs have been established and continue, it is appropriate to ban them. Therefore, provinces and counties are instructed to strictly enforce these prohibitions and prevent any further occurrences.’ Dong, Hao, *Quan Tang Wen* [Collection of Articles in the Tang], vol 12, Prohibition of Holding Weddings near Funerals and Rejoicing beside Graves, (Yangzhou: Quan Tang Wen Press, collected in Wuying Hall, 1814.)

257 惠山旧无坟垄自唐末以来渐加封树至今日益众于是山之精灵颇弊于垦凿而第二泉亦败于潴秽矣 邑人尤氏所记云宋徽宗时尝取泉饮之挥去曰是水有尸气不足之味也理或然耳 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

already started to have fun. At night, the host and guests between the tombs are all drunk.²⁵⁸

This combination of worship and amusement may have directly influenced the formation of public landscapes based on temples. Poets in the Tang focused on Huishan temples and springs, but poets of the Song almost exclusively focused on springs, including the Huishan Spring beside Huishan Temple, Douru Spring in the Jiaoshan Temple, and the Taihu water used the Huazang Temple.²⁵⁹ Although there is no record of gatherings in family temples, the only three temples which have left tourist records were all family temples, which is not likely to be a coincidence. Later, the locations of these three temples, Mount Hui, Mount Jiao, and the north shore of Taihu Lake, were the most concentrated areas of Wuxi private gardens. Based on it The gathering and construction of family temples due to the requirements of sacrifice ritual and folklore activities based on rituals were important for gathering people to form a public landscape.

At the same time, in the process of becoming a family temple, the temples surrendered to the imperial power and lost their independence. Huang pointed out that officials, especially, would be granted famous temples. The family was supported by the temple and its land with rice, salt, and charcoal. The management rights and ownership of the temple was gradually embezzled, which bred corruption. There was endless trouble for

258北人重墓祭。余在山东，每遇寒食，郊外哭声相望，至不忍闻。...南人借祭墓为踏青游戏之具，纸钱未灰，履相错，日暮，坟间主客无不颓然醉倒。Northerners pay more attention to cemetery sacrifices. When I was in Shandong Province, there was constant crying in the suburbs in the Cold Food Festival, it was too miserable to hear. ...Southerners use the cemetery as a place for outings and games. The paper money has not been burned to ashes, and they have already started to have fun. At night, the host and guests between the tombs are all drunk. Xie, Zhaozhi, *Wu Za Zu*[Miscellaneous Notes] vol 2,(Deju Hall Press, Ming dynasty) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

259 Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

the temple, forming a breeding ground for the great weakening of temple power and Buddhist malpractice in the later period.²⁶⁰

As sacrificial places (Family Tome and Temple), pine and cypress trees continued to be the predominant species during this period. Trees planted in graveyards are also considered protective deities that safeguard the burial site in Feng Shui practice. Pine is widely used in tomb garden (Figure 35) and as the earth god in sacrificial space attached to the tall straight and evergreen tree with the significance of monument that beyond death.²⁶¹ Then, temples become managers of nearby non-Buddist sacrificial places. The relationship between temple, conifers, and family sacrifices gradually became close, and the same metaphor was formed.

260 Huang Minzhi, Relationship between Shi's Family in Siming and the the Buddhism in the Southern Song, Collection of Research Papers on Song History—International Symposium on Song History and the Ninth Annual Conference of China Song History Research Association. Baoding: Hebei University Press, 2000, pp554-583.

261 Ding, Jie, 'On the Custom about Planting Pines and Cypresses in Cemeteries in Ancient China and Its Cultural Connotation of Funeral,] *Journal of Beijing Forestry University (Social Sciences)*, 2(2021): 39-46, DOI: 10.13931/j.cnki.bjfuss.2021066

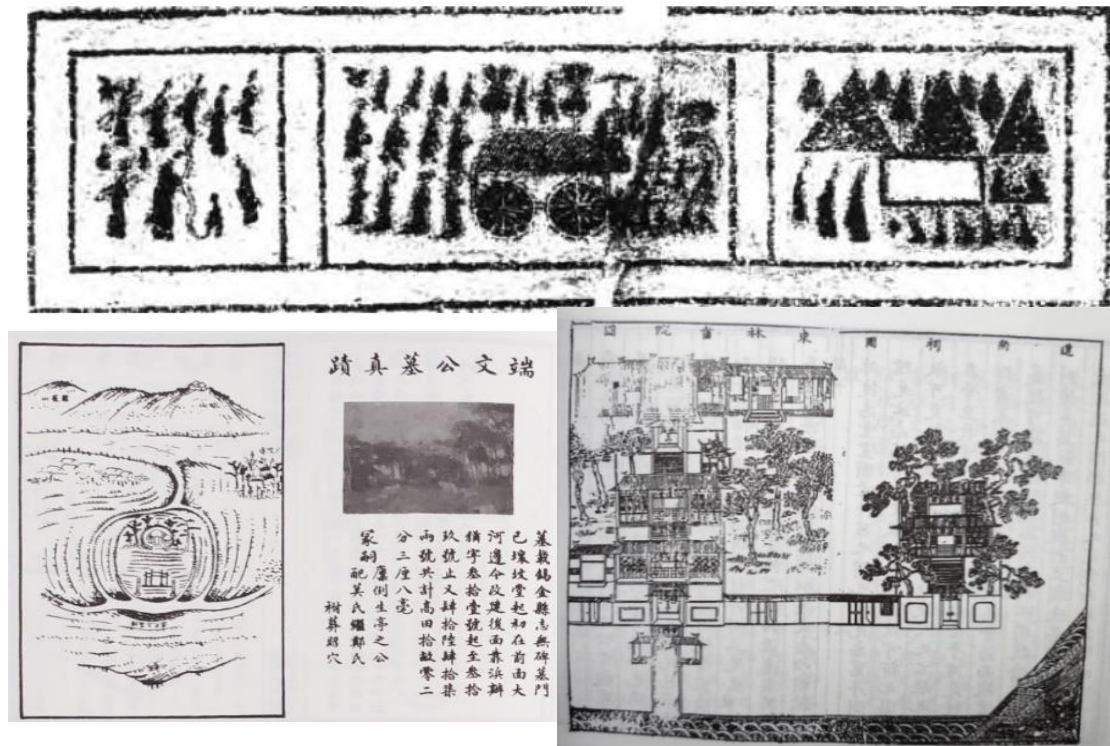


Figure 35: Conifer used in memorial areas:

Top: Burial scene in figurines bricks in the Han dynasty (found in Shandong Museum)

Bottom left: The map and photo of the tomb of Gu Xiancheng, the builder of Donglin academy from the Branch Genealogy of Gu's Family in Jingli Town, Wuxi²⁶²

Bottom right: The map of Donglin academy in 1733 from the Chorography of Donglin Academy

Imperial system and the development of Confucian

The emphasis of the imperial examination system of the Tang court influenced the educational gardens and the garden culture of scholars as the primary builders of

²⁶² Gu, Baojie, and Gu Baochen, *Gu Shi Fen Bian Jing Li Zhi Pu* [Branch Genealogy of Gu's Family in Jingli Town, Wuxi]. Wang, Liren, et al, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi library], (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-12)

gardens.

Confucianism can straighten rulers and ministers, distinguish hierarchy and order, improve education and customs, like no others system. Therefore, the virtuous monarchs of the previous generation all employed Confucians. ... More than 8,000 Confucian scholars from all over the world gathered in the capital.²⁶³

From April 1st (lunar calendar), 621, students in all provinces, including scholars who already attained academic levels and commoners who were esteemed or praised by local residents, could sign up for the exam. Those who passed the exam would go to the central court with tributes every October. This marked the beginning of Gongshi 贡士 (contribute scholars) of our Tang.²⁶⁴ And it is unlimited, everyone can sign up and recommend themselves.²⁶⁵

These two records illustrate the status of Confucian scholarship and its association with the implementation of the imperial examination system. Local official schools in the Tang had a rapid development.²⁶⁶ It is said that an official school was established in

263 古称儒学家者流，本出于司徒之官，正君臣，明贵贱，美教化，移风俗，莫若于此焉。故前古哲王，咸用儒术之士。。。义宁三年五月，。。上县学并四十员，中县三十员，下县二十员。。。贞观二年，停以周公为先圣，始立孔子庙堂于国学，以宣父为先圣，颜子为先师。大征天下儒士，以为学官。。。是时四方儒士，云会京师。俄而高丽及百济、新罗、高昌、吐蕃等诸国酋长，亦遣子弟请入于国学之内。鼓篋而升讲筵者，八千余人。济济洋洋焉，儒学之盛，古昔未之有也。Liu Xu (887-946), *Jiu Tang Shu* [Old Book of the Tang] vol.189 Confucianism, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

264 始自武德辛巳岁四月一日 621 年，敕诸州学士及早有明经及秀才、俊士、进士，明于理体，为乡里所称者，委本县考试，州长重覆，取其合格，每年十月随物入贡。斯我唐贡士之始也。Wang, Dingbao, *Tang Zhi Yan* [Abstract of Tang], vol.1, imperial examination, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

265 洁已登朝，无嫌自进 from ‘Order of selection to officials in capital and local’ Song, Minqiu, *Tang Da Zhao Ling Ji* [Imperial Order of The Tang], vol 102 politics, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

266 上县学(儒生)并四十员，中县三十员，下县二十员 Liu Xu (887-946), *Jiu Tang Shu* [Old Book of the Tang]

Wuxi during the Tang Dynasty, but there are no reliable records of it.

The Song dynasty stands out in Chinese history for its cultural achievements and the high status of literati.²⁶⁷ Traditional Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism underwent transformations into neo-Confucianism, localized Chan Buddhism, and intelligentsia Taoism.²⁶⁸ The existing official school site is recorded as first built in 1058, corresponding with the policies of emperor Renzong of Song 宋仁宗.²⁶⁹ In terms of quantity, scale, or scope of distribution, it far exceeded any previous policies regarding official school establishment.



Figure 36: Official school of Wuxi during 12th–19th century (photo by author in May, 2020. The ritual gate, Minglun Hall, and the lecture Hall were rebuilt in 1874)

vol.189, Confucianism, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Ge, Jinwei, 'Rituals in Official Schools Since the Han Dynasty to Tang Dynasty' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, East China Normal University, 2007)

267 Chen, yinque, *Jin Mig Guan Cong Gao* [the Second Compile of Chen], (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 1980)

268 Zhou Weiquan, *Zhongguo Gudian Yuanlin Shi (3rd edition)* [History of the Chinese Classical Gardens], (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2008)

269 (仁宗四年), 诏天下州县立学, 更定科举法。诏诸路州、军、监各令立学, 学者二百人以上, 许更置县学。自是州郡无不有学。(In 1044), the order issued that province and county in the country need to build official schools. The Law of imperial examination system was improved. All administrative area were ordered to set up schools. And county built official schools if there were more than 200 scholars from Tuo Tuo, Yuan dynasty, *Song Shi* [The History of the Song], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

The official school of Wuxi was located 300 steps south of the Wuxi Yamen based on Zhou Dynasty (Figure 36).²⁷⁰ According to Zheng Xuan (127-200), a great Confucian in the Eastern Han, the south is the land of bright and sun.²⁷¹ The emperor seated in the northern position could effectively oversee the situation in the south, symbolizing that the school was built to serve the emperor. Pan demonstrated that the idea of the east, south, and southeast being the places of civilization, popular in the site selection of local official schools in the Song, is an interpretation system that the natives combined and borrowed from the 'Book of Change' in pursuit of meaningful symbolism.²⁷²

Zhang Xian initiated the construction. His heir, Yuandu, who was the next magistrate, enlarged the school. Living areas and decorations were completed by Hu Shunju in the 12th century. Then, the ritual building, known as the archery gate, was renewed in 1217. Since the construction in the middle of the 13th century, the Memorial Hall of local Confucian sages has been added. The construction followed the layout of temple-school system (Figure 37).²⁷³

270王制曰 小學在公宮南 Ban, Gu, *Bai Hu Tong*, vol 2, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Shi, Nengzhi, *Xian Chun Piling Zhi* [The Chorography of Piling in Xianchun Period], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu*, 422, (Taiwan: Chen Wen Publishing Co., Ltd. 1947-76)

271 南是明陽之地 Li, Longji (emperor Taizong of the Tang), *Xiao Jing Zhu Shu*[True Meaning of Filial], vol9, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

272 Pan, Sheng, *Knowledge, Etiquette, and Politics: An Exploration of the Knowledge Society History of Geography in the Song Dynasty*, (Nanjing: Jiangsu Renmin Publishing House, 2018) pp.377.

273 Zhou, Yinghe, Song dynasty, *Jingding Jiankang Zhi* [Chorography of Jiankang, Jingding edition], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

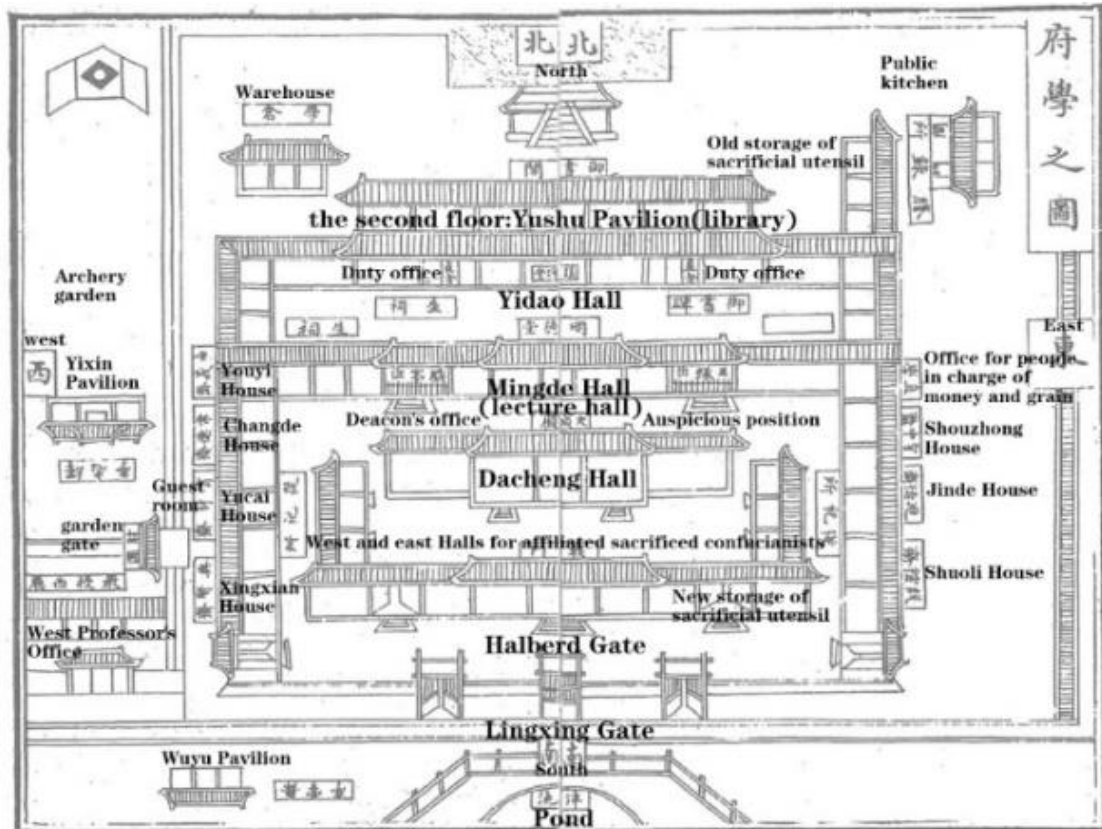


Figure 37: Map of official school of Jiankang 建康 in 1261 which is similar to the description of the Wuxi official school from the Chorography of Jiankang, Jingding edition

The strong ruling power of the autocratic centralized system manifested in economic life and ideology.²⁷⁴ Gardens, especially the development of schools and academies are heavily affected. Huang Yizhou (1828-99) believed that in essence, schools had evolved from official ceremonial architecture, Piyong 辟雍 (Figure 38), which is called Pangong 泮宮 in the local area), and it was the development of sacrificial rituals promoted the independence of school buildings from the ritual building.²⁷⁵

274 Ning, Ke, 'The Autocratic Centralized System of Feudal Society in China, Journal of Literature', *History and Philosophy*, 1(2009): 89-100.

275 '古之大学学礼重而祀礼轻，曰释采，曰释奠，礼至简也。后世学礼与祀礼并重，故汉分辟雍大学为二处。In ancient times, education emphasized ceremonial rites while sacrifices were considered less significant, known



Figure 38: The evolution of 'Yong' from the Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

The sketch map of Piyong

The sketch map of jade: 'Pi 璧/辟' and 'Huang 璜'

The sketch map of Pangong from Shi Lin Guang Ji²⁷⁶

The ring water was represented the popularity of morality. It was half available on the south side in Pangong due to lower hierarchy, which was the prototype of Panchi 泮池 'pond' in front of later local schools as a leading ceremonial signal.²⁷⁷ The water created

as Shi Cai and Shi Dian, with rites being simplified. In later generations, ceremonial education and sacrificial rites gained equal importance. Thus, during the Han Dynasty, the imperial school was divided into two locations: one for ceremonial education and the other for sacrificial rites.' Huang, Yizhou, *Jing Ji Ji Zhu*, Wuxi: Jiangsu Nanjing Jiangshe Press, 1894. book 5, vol 3, p5-7. Collected in Tianjin Library, Chinese National eBook.

276 Chen, Yuanliang, *Shi Lin Guang Ji*, (Xi Yuan Jing She Press, Yuan Dynasty,) vol 6, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

277 天子曰辟雍諸侯曰泮宮外圓者欲使觀之平均也...訓曰水圓如璧諸侯曰泮宮者半於天子宫也明尊卑有差所化少也半者象璜也獨南面禮儀之方有水耳其餘壅之言垣宮名之別尊卑也明不得化四方也不曰泮雍何嫌但半天子制度也, The Emperor's was called Piyong, while the vassal lords' was called Pangong(half water). The round outer view was intended for observing and maintaining balance. It was said that the round water was like a jade. The vassal lords' Pangong was half size of the Emperor's palace, showing a slight difference in hierarchy and a lesser degree of transformation. The half-size resembled a jade ring. Only the southern part had water, while the rest spoke of a barrier or palace name difference, respecting the difference in rank, but not clearly indicating the transformation of the four directions. Why simply call it Pangong? It just means half the Emperor's system. Ban, Gu, *Bai Hu Tong*, vol 2, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

a sense of unreachability to maintain order in rituals and distinguish status. Official or official-like buildings, including temples, schools, and academies, often had a sacrificial pool, known as a ‘panchi,’ at the beginning of their architectural sequences, which was considered a remnant of the significance of ‘Ring Water’. There are many examples in the gardens in the Jiangnan area where geometric pools were once regarded as a way of appreciation for ‘pursuit the truth of Nature’ based on Zhu Xi’s understanding of ‘Way of heaven’ before the Ming dynasty.²⁷⁸ In addition to official school, the Mirror pond in Jichang garden and Panchi in Donglin Academy are retained square ponds in Wuxi gardens built before the 17th century.

The temple-school system which combined the Confucian temple with the official schools, was clarified during the Tang. It essentially manifested the orthodox status of Confucianism and the importance of the ceremony of offering sacrifices to Confucius. When the Han Dynasty established the ritual and music system supported by Confucianism as the guiding ideology of governing, the ritual system was combined with Confucianism, and Confucius’ status also gradually improved. As a site for entrenched rituals, housing for scholars, a means of improving local customs, and a sanctuary for post-imperial examination relief, emperors issued decrees in 619 and 630, shaping the ‘Temple-School Layout’ for official schools.²⁷⁹ It subsequently became the

278 Gu, Kai, ‘Square Pond Appreciate of Chinese Historical Garden—Using Jiangnan Gardens in the Ming Dynasty as an Example’, *Architect*, 3(2010), 44-51

Ge, Zhaoguang, *Zhongguo Sixiang Shi*[Chinese Ideological History](Shanghai: Fudan University Press,2000),Volume 2, p429.

279 Ge, Jinwei, ‘A Research on public college in Official School in Han-Tang Period’, (Unpublished doctoral thesis, East China Normal University, 2007)

Huang, Jinxing, *Saints and Their Apprentice*, (Beijing: Peking University Press,2005), p29,35

Gao, Mingshi, *the Formation History of East Asian Educational Circle*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press.) p51, 78.

Liang, Shuming, *the Collection of Liang Shuming*, (Jinan: Shandong Renmin Press, 2005)

Liu Xu (late Jin Dynasty), *Jiu Tang Shu* [The History of the Tang Dynasty (Old Edition)]

Ouyang Xiu (Song Dynasty), *Xin Tang Shu* [The History of the Tang Dynasty (New Edition)]

norm and influenced private schools as well(Figure 39).²⁸⁰ In private gardens, they were often imitated, serving as displays of scholarly status. Confucian worship often included Confucius' disciples, local sages, and other figures of lower rank in comparison to official deities.

The layout is still evolving based on the Quadrangle Courtyard. The core building (or courtyard) is the Dacheng Hall for offering sacrifices to Confucius and the lecture hall for teaching. The two are combined with one or more axes based on respect orientation (Table 8) and Feng Shui factors.²⁸¹ In front of each axis, there are ceremonial buildings, behind and on both sides are the library and living assistance buildings, forming a spatial hierarchy that focuses on the middle.

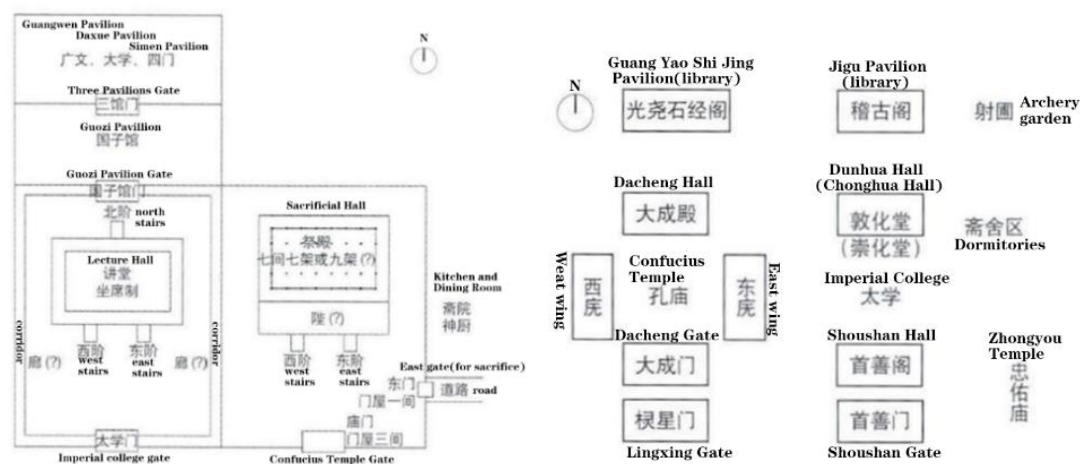


Figure 39: The conjectural layout of Confucius temples and Imperial colleges in the Tang and South Song dynasties redrawn by author based on Shen Yang, 'An Indoctrinating Emblem of Imperial

280 Shen, Yang, 'An Indoctrinating Emblem of Imperial Capital Cities: Evolution of Confucian Temples in Imperial Capitals', *Architectural Journal*,1 (2016), 40-47.

Ma Duanlin (Song Dynasty), *Wen Xian Tong Kao*, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

281 Feng Gang, et al, 'College-Temple System: The Spatial Organization of Chinese Classical Institution of Higher Education,' *New Architecture*, 1(2019), 130-134

Shen, Yang, 'An Indoctrinating Emblem of Imperial Capital Cities: Evolution of Confucian Temples in Imperial Capitals', *Architectural Journal*,1 (2016), 40-47.

Table 8: Change of the respect orientation in the history

Time	(475BC—221 BC)	221 BC -195AD	195-1279	1279-1368	1368-1644
respect	Civilian officers respect the left and military officers right	right	left	right	left

Figure 37 showed the general combination in the Song, which is also the most possible first layout of Wuxi official Schools.²⁸² Confucius temples had a higher status and with a shortage of land for buildings beside temples and along the streets due to the rapid development of the cities, school parts could only be built at the back.²⁸³ The school part was experienced expansion to the west and re-planning of the west central line in the early 14th century (Figure 40), which roughly remained in later dynasties.²⁸⁴

282 Zhou, Yinghe, Song dynasty, *Jingding Jiankang Zhi* [Chorography of Jiankang, Jingding edition], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

283 Shen, Yang, ‘An Indoctrinating Emblem of Imperial Capital Cities: Evolution of Confucian Temples in Imperial Capitals’, *Architectural Journal*,1 (2016), 40-47.

284 Tan Xiu (Ming dynasty), *Wuxi Xianxue Bijì* [Records of the Official School in Wuxi], *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

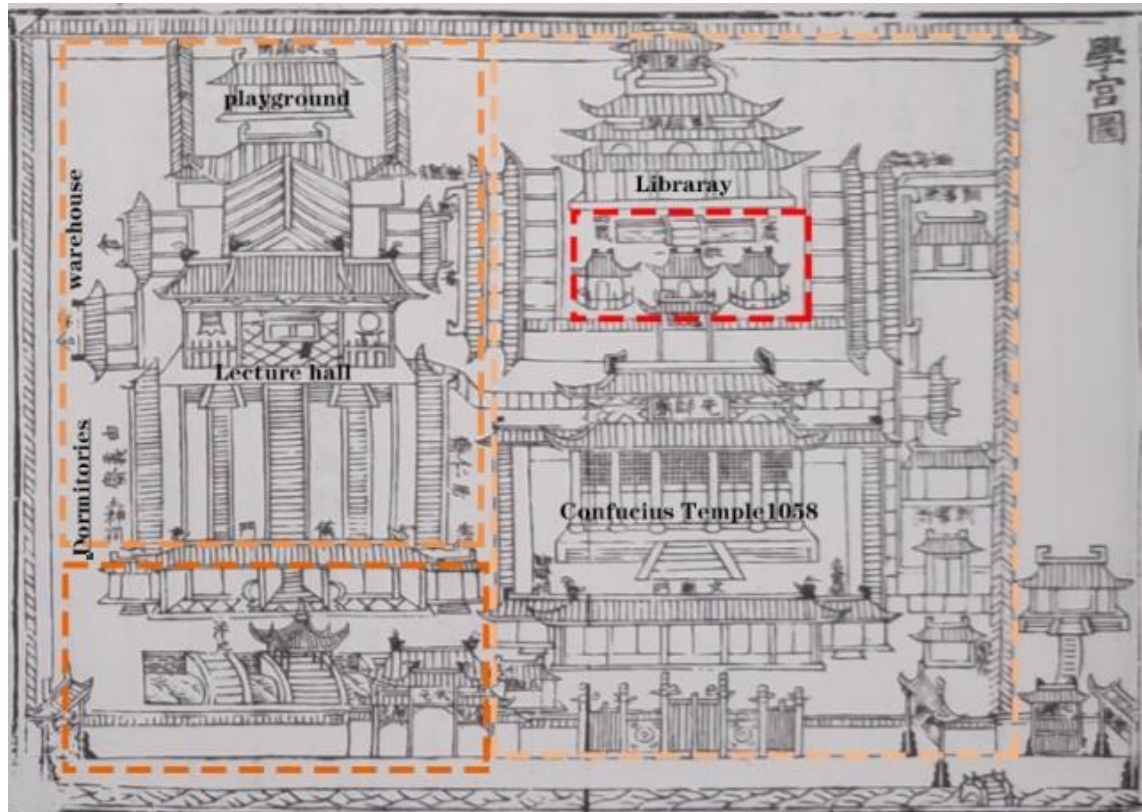


Figure 40: Map of official school of Wuxi in 1574 (The darker the color, the later they were built)

The Huai (*Sophora japonica* Linn.) market 槐市 was an open space (Figure 41) with hundreds of rows of trees planted without walls or houses.²⁸⁵ Since then, the tree had another name, the Chinese scholar tree, which mean ‘invitation’ and expresses the highest expectation for those excellent scholars.²⁸⁶ It is not simply a place for exchanging books, but for cultural and ideas exchange with a strong academic atmosphere where individuals represent the school and a tradition of discussing under the trees.²⁸⁷ The trees in academies might serve as a revival for future generations.

285 Hu Shi: ‘To Wang Zhongmin’ (April 8, 1943), *The Complete Works of Hu Shi*, (Hefei: Anhui Education Press, 2003), Vol 24, pp.589

286 Yang, Xiujuan, ‘the Huai Market in Chang’an in the Han Dynasty’, *Cultural Relic*, 5(2017), 58-61, 101

287 Wang, Zijin, ‘The Public Place in Chang’an in the West Han Dynasty’, *Journal of Chinese Historical Geography*, 1 (2012) 72-83

Yang Yi (Song Dynasty), *Collection of Wuyi* (the author), Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial

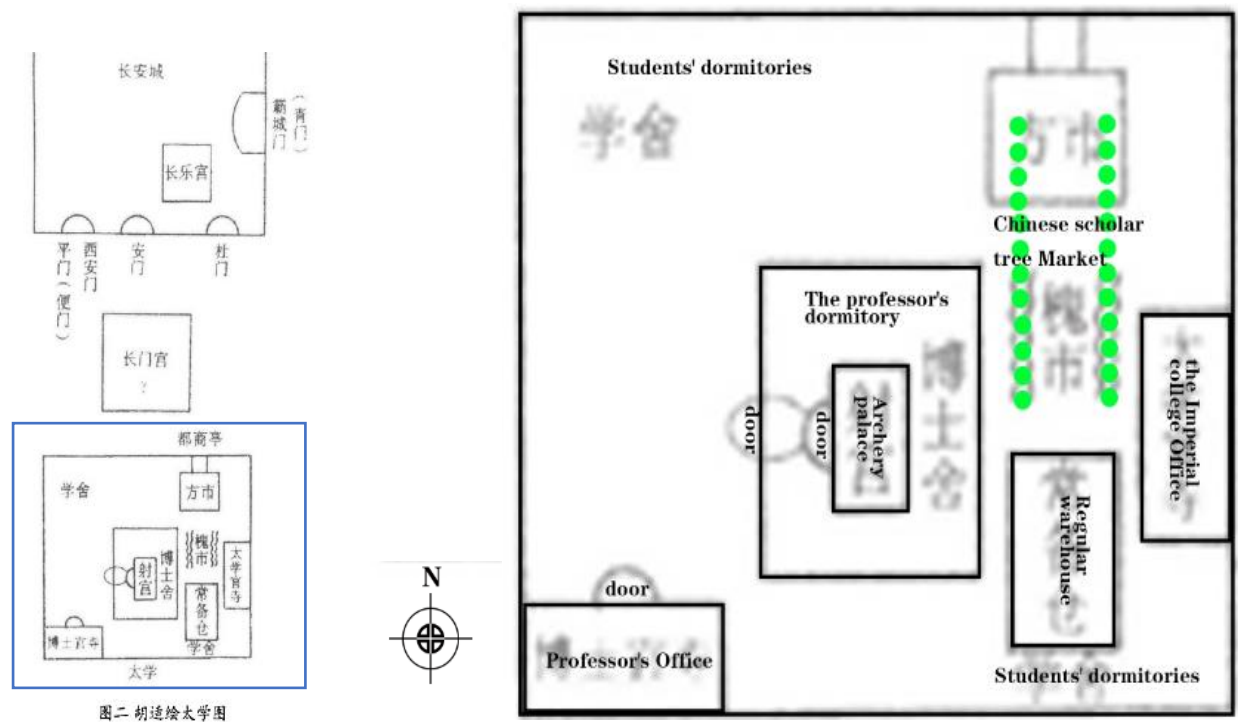


Figure 41: The conjectural map of Wang Mang's Imperial college made by Hu Shi 胡适(collage in blue rectangle) and the redraw map by author (without corridors)

Ouyang Xiu once mentioned that the school is the foundation of the country. The rise and fall of ancient dynasties and government depended on the rise and fall of their education systems.²⁸⁸ Confucianism was selected by the government and its status was confirmed. The talents selected by the school are also inevitably in line with the requirements of Confucianism. Confucian classics are one of the main teaching contents of official studies.²⁸⁹ Ta Weihong concludes that the general enrollment age is

Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

288 ‘学校,王政之本也。古者致治之盛衰, 视其学之兴废 Schools are the foundation of royal governance. In ancient times, the prosperity or decline of governance was judged by the flourishing or decline of education’ Ouyang Xiu, *Ouyang Wenzhong Gongwen Ji*[collection of Ouyang Xiu], vol 39 notes, *Constnction of official school in Jizhou*, *Qinding Siku Quanshu*, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.)Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

289‘咸平四年(1001) 六月, 诏:‘诸路郡县有学校聚徒讲诵之所, 赐《九经》书一部。 In the fourth year of Xianping (1001), in June, an edict was issued: provinces, prefectures, and counties where there are schools gathering

from ten to twenty years old and beyond, mainly local students.

Although the background of the students was more frequently that they were descendants of Confucian officials or scholars, poor students are also allowed to enroll.²⁹⁰ After passing the examination and entering the official school, students could get a certain fixed subsidy. There were funds set up specifically for poor students in Wuxi and they were also one of the sources of college staff.²⁹¹ It shows the support of government and schools for local education in Wuxi and promote the chance to upgrade their status for all local scholars. Jiang Chongzhen, the first No.1 Scholar of Wuxi, said his family had been in decline for about half a century when he had the ability to rebuild his ancestral home and gardens. Before the official school was established, local students in lower administrative counties could only rely on private schools. Li Shen, the only official included in the official history of the Tang, studied in the temple school of Huishan Temple when he was young. His father, Li Wu, was once the county magistrate of Jintan and Jinling near Wuxi. The early death of his father led to Li Shen having a sorrowful life in his youth. The monks beat him up and insulted him for stealing sutra to write his article and he had to transfer to another temple school.²⁹² The

students for lectures and recitations, are to be granted one set of the Nine Classics.’ The Book of Changes, The Book of Documents, The Book of Songs (or The Classic of Poetry), The Rites of Zhou, The Book of Rites, The Record of Rites, The Commentary of Zuo, The Gongyang Commentary, and The Guliang Commentary. Based on different commentaries, there are different Confucian viewpoints, such as the Wang School represented by Wang Anshi. These viewpoints may change with political shifts but do not deviate from the scope of Confucianism.

290 Ta, Weihong, ‘A research on the local public schools and the local society in Song Dynasty’, (Unpublished Doctoral thesis, Shandong University, 2022)

291 Tan, Xiu, *Record of Wuxi Official School*, (Wuxi, Ming), Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

292 ‘绅六岁而孤，读书惠山少苦贫每有著述潜取寺中佛经窃识其后为主藏者所知致被欧辱后徙刻川天宫精舍 At the age of six, Shen became an orphan. He studied diligently at Huishan temple. Despite his young age and impoverished circumstances, he wrote secretly and stole Buddhist scriptures from the temple, unbeknownst to others. When this was discovered by the monastery's head monk, he suffered humiliation and was later relocated to Tiangong Monastery in Qianchuan.’ Liu Xu, *Jiu Tang Shu* [Old Book of Tang, vol 173, Biography of Li Shen, Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration

establishment of official schools has reduced these unexpected situations to a certain extent.

The establishment of the educational system and the amalgamation of ancestral halls with Buddhist temples underscored the ascent of Confucian philosophical influence within garden culture. The implementation of ritual ceremonies further enhanced the influence of Confucianism.

Rituals were considered the basis in order to establish social order for the largest number of common people to achieve harmony. Yang Fu showed rites in the form of pictures, as well as the compilation of family rites, which made the holding and operation of rites easier and gained wider acceptance. In addition to holding sacrificial rite to worship Confucius (Shi Dian 释奠) in Confucius Temple, the county school also used rituals as demonstration to educate the local people and specific student. These including Xiang Yin Jiu Li 乡饮酒礼 ‘Township drinking ritual’ and Shu-xiu 束修 ‘Meeting Teacher Ritual’.

The holding of the ceremony heralds the first appearance of public educational spaces, characterized as universal education, in Wuxi. Prior to this, such garden spaces were limited to the palace gatherings of the nobility and regional political centers. It tied to the development of transportation and the mutual relationship with urbanization. It also signifies the expansion of power within the authoritarian system against the backdrop of increased productivity.

Dai believes that the host should greet and bow three times to the guests outside the school gate, and show comity three times before entering the house, which signifies

humility. Washing hands before toasting indicates cleanliness. Every step should be preceded by saluting each other, which symbolizes respect. This is how communication between Junzi ‘gentlemen’ should be. Everyone is educated, refrains from fighting, does not neglect their duties, and avoids riots. When citizens are educated in filial piety and fraternal duty, the country will be stable. This is why gentlemen keep themselves far away from man-made disasters, and the sage regards ritual as the ruling way.²⁹³ The brief steps are as follows:²⁹⁴

The host and the teacher discuss candidates for guests and inform them

Setting the seats for all guests and their use in county school

Welcoming the guests

The host toasts the main guest; The main guest toasts the host; The host toasts the main guest with another cup

The host toasts the second level guest; The second level guest toasts the host

The host toasts the other guests; The representative of guests toasts the others

Singing songs, toasting to the singers; Playing musician, toasting to the player

293 主人拜迎賓于庠門之外，入三揖而后至階，三讓而后升，所以致尊讓也。盥洗揚觶，所以致絜也。拜至，拜洗，拜受，拜送，拜既，所以致敬也。拜至，謂始升時拜，拜賓至。尊讓、絜、敬也者，君子之所以相接也。君子尊讓則不爭，絜、敬則不慢。不慢不爭，則遠於斗、辨矣。不斗、辨，則無暴亂之禍矣。斯君子所以免於人禍也。故聖人制之以道。道，謂此禮。Dai De, *Li Ji*[Records of Ritual], vol 45 Xiang Yin Jiu Li, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

294 Xiao, Song, *Da Tang Kai Yuan Li*[Ritual Book in the Kaiyuan Period of the Tang], vol 72, Shi Dian in the county, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

The process staff toasts

Two officials toast

Feasting

Seeing the guests out and thanking the staff

The seating arrangement reflects the difference in age and hierarchy. The main people of the rite sit in the Minglun Hall (明伦堂 main lecture hall in official schools), while other guests sit outside in the courtyard (Figure 42).²⁹⁵

295 Yang, Fu, Song dynasty, Yi Li Tu [Map of Rites], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

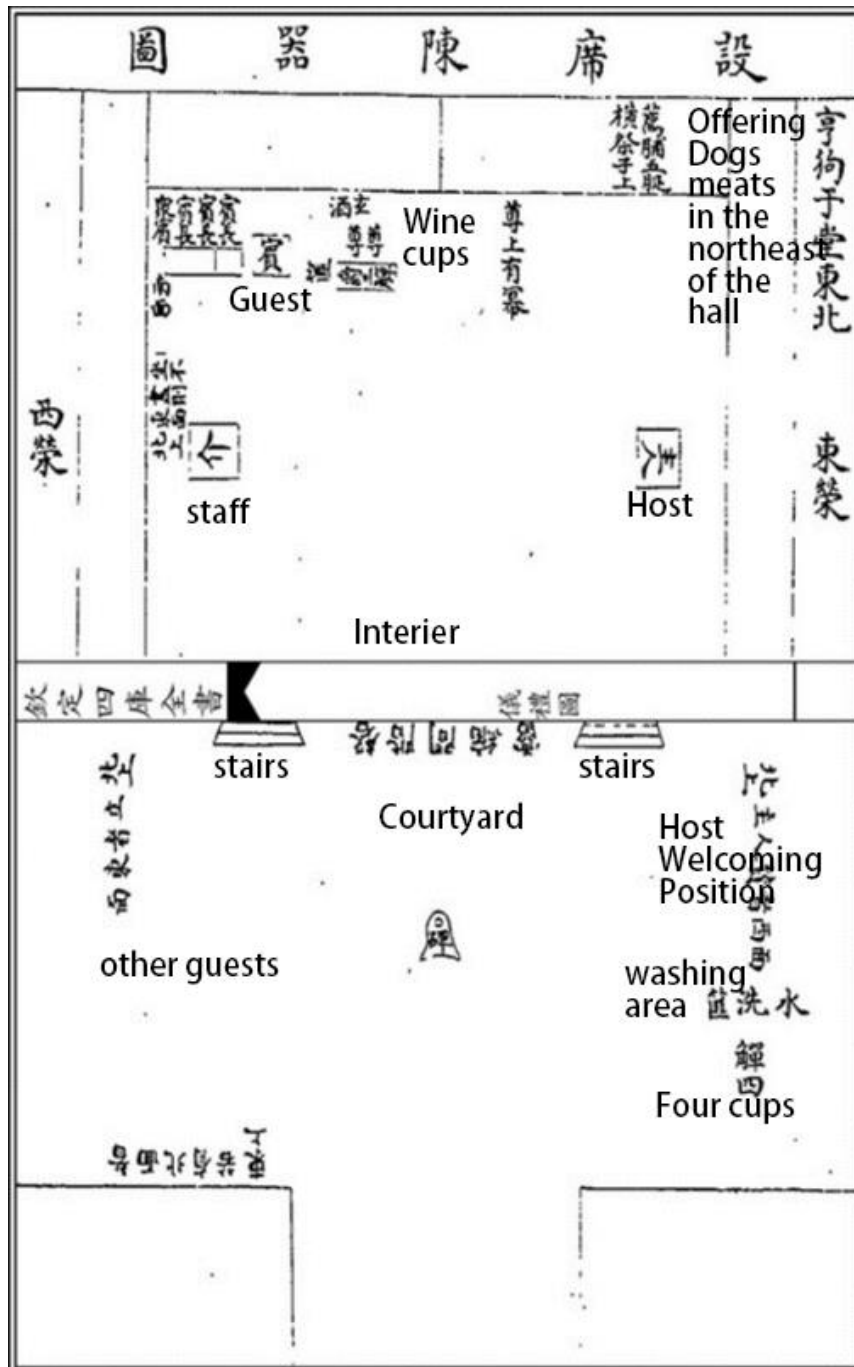


Figure 42: The display of township drinking rite from Yang Fu, *Map of Rites*

The arrangement of seating, the number of dishes served, and the polite process at every step are designed to establish hierarchy and show respect for elders. Understanding these customs enables people to be filial to their parents and kind to their siblings,

thereby fostering stability in the country.²⁹⁶ The recipients of enlightenment in local township drinking rituals are outstanding students. The holding of this ceremony signifies that they have accepted enlightenment and are poised to enter a higher level of authority.

These rituals mainly take place in the courtyard and the Main Hall. Through the exchange between the higher inner space and the lower outer space in the ritual process, strict hierarchy and procedures are defined, representing the process of receiving enlightenment.

In the western part of the Minglun Hall, official school began to perform sacrificial rituals for local Confucian scholars in the late Song.²⁹⁷ Memorial temples of monarchs were only established in the early period and held spiritual significance. In contrast, memorializing Confucian scholars held greater practical significance as model for educating local students and promoting local fame. This may be related to the significant development of Neo-Confucianism during the Song Dynasty.

Legitimation is one of the powerful function of ritual.²⁹⁸ As the Confucius Temple

296 乡饮酒之礼，六十者坐，五十者立侍，以听政役，所以明尊长也。六十者三豆，七十者四豆，八十者五豆，九十者六豆，所以明养老也。民知尊长养老，而后乃能入孝弟。。成教而后国可安也。Interpreted by Zheng, Xuan, *Yi Li Zhu Shu*[The Meaning of 'Book of Rituals'], vol 8, Xiang Yin Jiu Li, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

297 宝佑间四明袁从为邑宰即明伦堂之西为堂三楹以祀,,为九先生祠元前至元间九先生祠久废,更为五先生祠以祀焉 In the Baoyou era, Yuan Cong served as the magistrate of Siming, located west of the Minglun Hall, he built a three-room hall for worship, called Memorial hall of Nine Sages...later, as it abandoned for a long time, the rebuilt one was call the memorial hall of Five sages.Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

将自躬而達之天下自朝廷而达于庶民, Zheng, Juzhong et al, *Zhenghe Wu Li Xin Yi*[New Rituals of Five Rites in the Zhenghe Period], preface, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986), Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

298 Hall, Dennis, 'A Garden of One's Own: The Ritual Consolations of the Backyard Garden', *Journal of American Culture*, 19.3 (1996), 9–13

becomes a space for schools and even certain private gardens later on, it represents the emphasis on Confucian thought and the acknowledgment of political governance policies related to the ritual and music systems. In the ‘Record of Rites’ 礼记, rituals were not accessible to commoners and were long regarded as a domain monopolized by the upper class, distinguishing early Chinese aristocrats and scholar-officials from commoners.²⁹⁹ With the decline of the noble class, ‘Rituals of the Kaiyuan Period’ 大唐开元礼 (713–741) provided brief descriptions of family rituals for commoners.³⁰⁰ This was interpreted by Liu as a means to increase the competitiveness of commoners against the declining nobility and to suppress the nobles.³⁰¹

Confucianism places the greatest emphasis on the role of rituals in human culture. These practices are considered essential for promoting moral behaviour, cultivating personal virtue, and fostering social harmony, serving as guides to reality.³⁰² After entering civilian society, there is no universally acknowledged method better than holding rites to instill etiquette, hierarchy, and order. The annotations of Neo-Confucianism to the Confucian canon and the compilation of Family Rituals are powerful practices for extending this hierarchical order to people throughout society.³⁰³

Confucian thought gradually permeated the hearts and minds of the populace through

299 礼不下庶人 Sun Xidan, *Liji Jishuo* 禮記集說[Collected Expositions of the Book of Rites], (Taipei: Wenshizhe press house, 1990)

Liu Yonghua. ‘Confucian Rituals and Chinese Villagers: Ritual Change and Social Transformation in a Southeastern Chinese Community, 1368-1949’, *BRILL*, 2013. ProQuest Ebook Central

300 Rituals of Han was not published and the first ritual book about commoners’ family rituals are promulgated by Emperor Xuanzong

301 Liu Yonghua. ‘Confucian Rituals and Chinese Villagers: Ritual Change and Social Transformation in a Southeastern Chinese Community, 1368-1949’, *BRILL*, 2013. ProQuest Ebook Central

302 不知礼，无以立也 Confucius, *The Analects* (New York: Open Road Media, 2016), vol20 chapter 3.1.

303 治家皆无法度，是不得立于礼也。Cheng, Hao, and Cheng Yi, edit by Zhu Xi, *Henan Cheng Shi Yi Shu*[Book of Chen in Henan Province], vol 18. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

the use of official authority, transitioning from being primarily the domain of nobility and scholars. In the dichotomy of respecting teachers and venerating the founder, the former holds greater practical significance, while reverence for Confucius has evolved into a symbol of veneration due to its deification. This perspective aligns with the establishment of local Confucian temples, where local Confucian scholars need closer role models for their own emulation, obtaining recognition from their fellow locals becomes a relatively straightforward goal. The inclusion of more scholars in Confucius temples and the construction of shrines for local Confucian scholars, while not significantly altering the ceremonial procedures, involved relatively fewer offerings and simpler rituals, particularly when compared to Confucius temples associated with local official academies. Generally, the rituals for local Confucian scholars took place on the same day after the veneration of Confucius.(Chapter 4 a place for social education)

The establishment of Temple-school system provide an official layout for scholar gardens. The significance of rituals in affirming Confucian identity prompted local scholars to actively seek inclusion in the list of those to be honored, either by affiliating with Confucius temples or by independently establishing local memorial temple. The expansion of garden culture extended to the ranks of local elites, obviating the necessity for them to become officials at the central government or fostering close connections with it. The identity of practitioners of garden culture shifted from the aristocracy towards the commoners, and they could enhance their social status through the imperial examinations system and the built of memorial temples.

Gardens shaped by Neo-Confucianism-External Manifestation of the Inner Self

The private gardens in Wuxi were usually built after the 12th century. Jiang and Xu's gardens were located in the north shore of the Taihu Lake with their house. Others were built in the Mount Hui area or along the Liangxi river between the Mount Hui and the

city centre. These private gardens are all abandoned before the 16th century.³⁰⁴ Some abandoned sites were rebuilt memorial temples by other owners, such as Memorial temple of Mencius, Li Gang, and Zhang Xun.

The establishment of private gardens in early times were closely intertwined with the development of Neo-Confucianism. The governance by literati officials was a distinctive feature of the political landscape in the Song dynasty, and they participated in garden design.³⁰⁵ Their efforts to promote the new Neo-Confucian philosophy within the educational system were prominent, particularly those of Zhu Xi 朱熹. The owners of the garden in this period, Jiang Chongzhen 蒋重珍 and You Mao 尤袤, both had a close relationship with Zhu Xi.

The private property gardens show a very strong consciousness of Confucian scholarship. According to Neo-Confucianism, all principles, rules, and rituals of feudal morality are manifestations of the Li 理 ‘principle’ in the human realm, which exists prior to social moral relationships. Individuals are required to restrain their desires, especially in the pursuit of hedonistic pleasures. They prided themselves on being educated to show that they are different from the common people or from people with other thoughts.

You Mao 尤袤 entered the Imperial School at the age of 20 and associated with Master Yu Yuquan 喻玉泉. Yu was a disciple of Yang Shi 杨时, who in turn was a disciple of Cheng Yi 程颐 and Cheng Hao 程颢. Yang Shi played a pivotal role in spreading the Luoyang branch of Neo-Confucianism represented by Chen’s Brother, particularly in the southeast, and was revered as the ‘founder of Min School’ 闽学鼻祖. He built the

304 Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

305 Zhou Weiquan, *Zhongguo Gudian Yuanlin Shi* [History of the Chinese Classical Gardens](third edition), (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2008)

linkage between the Cheng's brother and Zhu Xi served as a the bridge past and the future of Neo-Confucianism. Donglin Academy in Wuxi, during the Ming, was bestowed with a plaque that read 'Luo-min Zhongshu 洛閔中枢', indicating both that it was a connection between Luoyang and Fujian, and signifying the important figure of Yang Shi as the founder of the academy, thus connecting the lineage between Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism. The lineage of illustrates the orthodoxy of the You Mao's academic tradition.

You Mao experienced the southern relocation of the Song government and the establishment of the new dynasty. With his extensive knowledge spanning ancient and contemporary works, earning him the title of 'bookcase' (Master of All Books), he became the Minister of Rites.³⁰⁶

The garden served as a place for him to converse with his close friends. He named his pavilion Laizhu 来朱 'Zhu Xi 朱熹 comes here', which shows his communication with Zhu Xi, and his room Eryou 二友 'two friends' in his Yuexi 乐溪 House which represents Chen Liang 陈亮 and Yang Wanli 杨万里. Given the reverence for their social and academic status, they pursued fulfillment in their spiritual lives. In his correspondence to You Mao 尤袤, Zhu Xi said:

Life was difficult and my body was weak and sick. It was difficult to experience the pleasure of sightseeing even in the beautiful and tranquil mountains and forests. When I talk about the ancients with friend. I am so happy that I forget to

306 谏经订古悉有根据平生博极羣书同贯古今时人号曰尤书厨当世推为 人物之宗为内外制及内禅典册悉服其雅正官至礼部尚书 Consulting ancient scriptures and adhering to tradition, he comprehensively grounded himself in a vast array of books spanning antiquity to the present. Renowned as the 'Supreme Master of Books,' he was acclaimed for his understanding of human character, influencing both domestic and foreign policies. His authoritative command over inner meditations and texts earned universal respect for their elegance and correctness. Eventually, he rose to the esteemed position of Minister of Rites.' Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

eat.³⁰⁷

You may not necessarily ignore plants elements. He planted one hundred plum trees and one hundred crabapple trees along the stream, although only two poems mention these scenes. Considering that a single crabapple was worth a hundred Liang of silver (4kg silver) and was rare to see in the Jiangnan area during the Song, Clunas believes that the orchards in the gardens may have been profitable.³⁰⁸ This may be a reason for the emergence of gardens like the Youye Garden, but the appearance of catalogs of cultivated flowers during the Song should not entirely overlook their metaphorical ‘nobility,’ akin to the role of Neo-Confucian scholars in relation to ordinary people.

The pursuit of profound moral principles underlying all things is a characteristic of Song Neo-Confucianist. They focused on the intrinsic principles and its representation in the landscape rather than the superficial appearance of scenery, which is also evident in the gardens of Jiang.

The wind is clear and the moon is bright, expressing a sense of freedom and delight; the rain is obscure and clouds is darkness, concealing a mysterious domain. The ever-changing scenery around us awakens thoughts and reflects our destiny. The thatched house and square pond are full of happiness.³⁰⁹

The regular square pond symbolizes the rationality and restraint advocated by

307 Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012

308 Chen Zhi, *Hai Tang Pu* [Treatise of Crabapple] Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Clunas, Craig, *Fruitful Sites: garden culture in Ming dynasty China* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996) pp.91-103

309 风清月明发挥高爽雨阴雾暗韬晦蒙密景物常变皆启人意余时命...茅斋方池，饱足幽趣 Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, *Wuxi Wenku*, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

Confucian scholars. In 1223, Jiang became the Top scholar in the imperial exam. Shortly after entering officialdom, he experienced the loss of his mother and observed a three-year period of mourning. Later, due to disagreements with his subordinates, he temporarily returned home to pay respects to his mother. His residential garden was reconstructed in 1228.³¹⁰

(I) rebuild the abandoned house ... In front of the hall, there is a luxuriant plum tree (like respected old men). ‘Yi Mei (one plum tree)’ is the hall’s name, and I do not want to change the old scenery. ... Behind the hall, there is a garden. Following the path through the woods, a pavilion is located in the east named ‘Wan Zhu (万竹 ten thousand bamboo)’. There is a square pool with plum trees around it. Outside the plum trees, bamboos are standing straightly like gentlemen facing the pavilion.³¹¹

His garden prominently featured the cultivation of plum blossoms and bamboo, common elements in the landscapes of Jiangnan gardens. These plants have long been attributed with qualities similar to those of a noble person ‘Jun Zi’, such as resilience and humility. He gained the emperor’s recognition by advising him on the importance of personally holding power and not entrusting it to others. Jiang recommended prominent figures such as Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 and Wei Liaoweng 魏了翁, who were representatives of Neo-Confucianism.³¹² They were disciples of Zhu Xi, and Wei

310 嘉定十六年进士第一，签判建康军，丁母忧，改昭庆军，寻以公事与部使者异议，请祠 Tuo Tuo, *Song Shi* [The History of the Song], biography of Jiang Chongzhen, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

311 得败屋一区扫洒扶持而居之。。。堂之前有梅一株清圆茂密因以名堂无所取义示不改其旧也。。。复为后圃，开林为径，缚亭东偏，匾曰万竹亭。有池，池上有梅。梅之外琅玕森然向亭而立。Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

312 盖欲陛下亲揽大柄，不退托于人，尽破恩私，求无愧于己...上读之感动，授宝章阁，主管云台观，则告吏部，不受贴职禄，不愿贴职恩。The desire is for Your Majesty to personally handle significant

combined their teachings with the philosophy of mind-heart developed by Lu Jiuyuan 陆九渊. Their ultimate goal was to comprehend the truths of the world. With the truth, they could consolidate their rule, implement education, and strive for the ideal of social harmony. Their garden notes also embody the meaning of preaching all the time.

The body is given by parents and should be respected. Therefore, building a house is a way to honor this body and repay our parents. Otherwise, there would be no halls or gardens. Since the courtyard was established, it has become a place where older, virtuous, respected, filial, and knowledgeable individuals can be sought as mentors. Although the body may be sick, the mind remains healthy. This hall can be used to gather and educate family members, nurturing their individual talents. Even though my body may be sick, the family stayed well. The hall can also be used to make friends who share similar ideals, for while the body may be sick, the pursuit of the Confucian Way remains strong.³¹³

As for the pleasure of a garden, he said,

The construction of a garden naturally arises from the flourishing plum blossoms

responsibilities without relying on others, completely breaking away from personal favors, and seeking to be free from self-reproach... Upon reading this, the emperor was deeply moved and appointed him to the Baozhang Pavilion to oversee the Yuntai Observatory. Jiang informed the Ministry of Personnel that I would not accept the official salary and did not desire the favor of official appointment. Tuo Tuo, *Song Shi* [The History of the Song], biography of Jiang Chongzhen, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

313 此身父母之遗体也可不敬乎筑斯室也敬斯体也乃所以报亲也不然则安宅何在广居何在而顾区区于此堂哉,自斯堂而成而可以求师也凡齿德俱尊者孝可及人者义理精熟者克忠克孝者博通经史者深识时务者吾于此下一风而问焉则身虽病而心不病矣;自斯堂而成而可以合族也凡姿禀可教者好礼知耻者迁善远罪者小廉曲谨者贵不简傲者贫不卑屈者文艺自将者多识事物者吾于此因材而笃焉则身虽病而家不病矣;自斯堂而成而可取友也凡能修而通者能言而践者卓犖之重者淳静而立者已知大体者能勤小物者虚心无我者善如己出者恶如无隐者相观为善者吾于此久交而敬焉则身虽病而道不病矣; Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

and dense bamboo groves. Although gardens bring joy and contentment, Confucian scholars often say that those who find solace in gardens are usually individuals lacking in strength and talent. Even though I am ill and cannot exert myself excessively, I still surround myself with books as a constant reminder.³¹⁴

His views are very similar to those of Zhu Xi. Zhu emphasized the rapid construction of the spiritual realm, as if it were the work of a deity, symbolizing the king being adored by all the people. He used the health and beauty of the animals in the garden to represent the prosperity and peace of the country achieved through the king's wisdom, with happy citizens and a harmonious society. Enjoyment is interpreted as the emperor's grace.³¹⁵

They coexist with nature under a common celestial order, endowing the natural world with a sense of humanity. In the context of schools, particularly those associated with Neo-Confucian, most plants are imbued with special symbolic significance, often representing nobility and restraint. Ponds maintain regular shapes, simple forms, and economical costs to signify a sense of restraint towards desires. However, the presence of precious crabapple and the large amount of plum still demonstrates that they regard gardens as objects of appreciation, with the potential for economic benefits.

During this era, the discussion of Confucian connotations elevated to a higher principle

314 亭之营本非求合而梅老竹茂浑然天成时异事殊心感情怆见先训遗风使余一刻之不能忘也 是余之一游一息洞洞属属然如将见之也可不谨哉虽然园林之乐一也 而其所以乐此者则有间焉盖先君诸公之乐此也安于贫而予之乐此也厄于病贫者循其理分之当然病者出于形体之偶然律之以原宪之言则大有媿矣 先儒亦曰人多言安于贫贱皆是力屈才短不能营画若稍动得恐未肯安余之病废抑近是欤书置壁间因以自警 Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

315 王在灵沼, 于刃鱼跃, 国之有台, 所以望氛祲、察灾祥、时观游、节劳佚也。。。其倏然而成, 如神灵之所为也。文王之台, 方其经度营表之际而庶民已来作之, 所以不终日而成也, 虽文王心恐烦民, 戒令勿亟, 而民... 不召自来也。Zhu Xi, *Shi Jing Ji Zhuan* (Sao Ye Shan Fang Cang Ben) [the Classic of Poetry annotate by Zhu Xi], vol 6, pp10, National Library (of China) electronic edition.

of heaven and nature, and the power of enlightenment extended from the nobles to the commoners. Confucians viewed their thought, which had absorbed speculative philosophy, as the most fundamental principle of all things, to be accepted by all levels of society.

Berthrong identified this period as ‘the second golden age of Confucianism.’³¹⁶ During this era, the discussion of the Confucian connotation elevated to a higher principle of heaven and nature, and the power of enlightenment extended from the nobles to the commoners, Confucians viewed their thought, which had absorbed speculative philosophy, as the most fundamental principle of all things, to be accepted by all levels of society. This approach focused on enlightenment through individual scholars rather than implementation solely through the emperor.

Zhang Zai (1020-1077) put forward the famous motto of life:

Scholars ought to understand the principles of the creation of all things and make the way to manifest the Way of Heaven; to provide material and spiritual necessities so that the people can live and work in happiness; to help the ancients sages continue and develop the immortal theory; and to create a great foundation for eternal peace for generations to come.³¹⁷

Compared with the progressive Xiu-Qi-Zhi-Ping 修齐治平 of Mencius, the self-confidence of Confucianism had significantly increased. Berthrong posits that they even hoped the government would serve the new Confucian culture.³¹⁸ For instance,

316 Berthrong, John H., *Transformations of the Confucian Way* (Boulder, Colo.; Oxford: Westview Press, 1998) pp86

317 Zhang Zai, 为生民立命，为天地立心，为往圣继绝学，为万世开太平 from Zhou, Yinghe, Song dynasty, *Jingding Jiankang Zhi* [Chorography of Jiankang, Jingding edition], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

318 Berthrong, John H., *Transformations of the Confucian Way* (Boulder, Colo.; Oxford: Westview Press, 1998) pp82-85, 88.

Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086) recognized the universal contradictions and oppositions that caused changes and challenged the concept of ‘the Tao remains unchanged.’ He proposed that ‘the rules of the ancestors are no longer suitable to be followed’, and carried out reforms to restrain the expansion of power at the top level.³¹⁹

This period also promoted the development of the Neo-Confucianism and increase the status and power of Confucian scholars after the Song Dynasty. They were no longer satisfied with simply using themselves and their thought as a tool to guide the social order, but taking themselves as the core of enlightenment, rather than implementing it through the emperor. This self-confidence, though later suppressed by more dominant centralizing policies, is still vividly reflected in their private gardens, which later disappeared. For Wuxi, one significant manifestations of its gardens during the later periods was the embodiment of Confucian thought in practice.

Due to scarce records, early gardens seem to reflect an iterative process of integrating primitive religion, filial piety(political confucianism), Buddhism, and Confucianism (Neo-Confucianism). In reality, the development and integration of religious thoughts were not simply a matter of replacement. The 7th to 13th centuries represent a significant period of convergence for the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism.

In Wuxi, the interaction between Confucianism and Buddhism was evident, as Confucianism leveraged imperial power to promote Buddhist temples and integrate Confucian influences into their rituals and usage. However, on a broader national scale, the fusion of the two thoughts was continuous and mutual. This regional study unavoidably reflects inaccuracies due to discrepancies in local records.

319 Wang Anshi, *Lao Zi Zhu*[Interpretation of Lao Zi] from Zhang Qizhi, et. al, *Zhongguo Sixiang Shi* [History of Chinese Thought], (Xi'an, Northwest University Press,2001), pp309-310

In the early period, only officials had the authority to record archives, making it difficult for civilian activities to be documented. The deceptive nature of records lies in Wuxi's low political status and different dissemination channels of different religions. Early Confucianism expanded top-down with the political system, resulting in Wuxi's relatively less Confucian and Buddhist influence from the political system. Whereas Buddhism developed bottom-up, leading to faster development of Buddhism among the populace. By the Tang dynasty, Buddhism had reached its peak. Qian Mu posited that the core of institutional operations—Chinese intellectuals—resided within Buddhist temples during the Tang period.³²⁰ Thus, in Wuxi, the early Buddhist temple constructions, concentrated in records, were a combination of both bottom-up and top-down processes. As Confucianism spread downwards through the sacrificial system, it first integrated with Buddhist temples. It wasn't until the 13th century, when Neo-Confucianism achieved intellectual breakthroughs, that clear establishments of Confucianism official schools and Neo-Confucian gardens appeared in Wuxi.

With the establishment of local official schools and the personal educational practices of Neo-Confucianism (family rituals), knowledge was no longer the exclusive domain of the upper class. This led to an increase in civilian records, and the variety of perspectives contributed to the relative objectivity of the content.

Summary

This chapter illustrates the inception phase of Wuxi garden culture, highlighting the evolution of garden culture under two social contexts and four different religious contexts. Attitudes towards nature transitioned from fear and submission to transformation and appreciation. The primary garden types, layouts and elements, and use (rituals) of gardens was predominantly within an official context. The sourcing of

³²⁰ Qian, Mu, *Guo Shi Xin Lun* [New Theory of National History], (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 2005)

plants and stones was primarily local, often carrying numerous religious legends that reflected their cosmological significance. Sometimes, they held utilitarian value, and their aesthetic significance was not always apparent.

The construction of early memorial temples highlighted local residents' desire for a better life. Primitive religion's reverence for nature and early Buddhist legends indicate how people sought spiritual fulfillment through memorial rituals to counteract material insufficiency during times of low productivity. Although no folk temples from the Buddhist fervor of the 4th to 6th centuries have survived, these temples and natural figures like springs, primarily served as tourist attractions. Guided by officials, they eventually formed the Huishan Public Scenic Area, including Huishan Spring.

The architectural styles of Chan Buddhist temples and the records of national Chan rituals were gradually formed and perfected after the 9th century, and have largely continued to the present day. After the 10th century, the integration of Chan Buddhist temples with the political system and Confucian rites led to the emergence of merit-based temples. The combination of ancestral halls, tombs, and temples influenced the practice of worship and outings in the Jiangnan region, further promoting the development of temples and their surroundings as public landscape areas. Buddhism's influence on Confucian academies in Wuxi emerged later, during the Flourishing Period.

A societal shift from aristocracy to a more egalitarian civil society structure based on imperial exam system spurred the development of nationwide official schools and temple-school layout. The implementation of school and family rituals for commoners broke the upper-class monopoly on rituals, laying the foundation for rituals in private gardens. Discussions on the Confucian doctrine, integrating Buddhist and Daoist dialectical thought, expanded to encompass higher cosmology principles. This philosophical depth imbued garden culture with instructional meaning, making gardens exclusive and evoking a sense of exclusion towards lower-status individuals and non-Confucian adherents.

The first phase of Wuxi's garden culture This phase provided the foundation for the development of garden culture in the subsequent three phases, encompassing economic growth, urban development, transportation network, the integration of Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist thought, rituals, humanistic values, and spatial construction.

Yuan and early Ming Garden

This chapter (Transitional Phase) is considered by the author to be a turning point in Wuxi's garden culture. It covers a brief period characterized by political conflicts and economic development as the main social contexts. From this point on, the developmental focus of Wuxi shifted towards economic growth rather than political progress. Local documentation of Wuxi gardens began to increase, gradually reducing the cultural discontinuity and data errors caused by the scarcity of records in the first phase.

This chapter addresses three research questions related to the 14th century.

In the early part of this phase, represented by Ni Zan's Yunlin Garden, the decline of political avenues and the adoption of favorable economic policies led to a reduction in ritualistic and institutional aspects of garden culture. Concurrently, the commercialization of artworks facilitated artistic exchange and appreciation. Since then, garden activities increasingly involved both aesthetic appreciation and commercial transactions, integrating gardens as the art market.

The later part of this phase is characterized by literati records of reclusive lifestyles, such as those of Meng Tong in Mount Hui and the Hua family in the eastern suburbs. Their gardens possibly represent the closest semblance of ordinary life during peaceful times in the feudal era. Due to the turmoil caused by dynastic changes, garden lands reverted to agricultural use to sustain livelihoods, reflecting the original function of gardens. As scholars sought refuge from the chaos, this also promoted the extension of garden culture in Wuxi from Mount Hui and the city center to the eastern suburbs.

Social political context

Contrary to the backdrop of cultural and economic prosperity, the Song Dynasty

experienced significant military vulnerabilities. The ongoing conflicts with various northern ethnic regimes, including the Jin (Jurchen 1115-1234), Liao (Khitan 907-1125), Western Xia (Tangut 1038-1227), and Mongols (1206-1635), led to the Song Dynasty's loss of control over northern territories and eventually the entire realm.

Despite the relatively brief rule of the Yuan Dynasty, lasting approximately 90 years, its status as a foreign ruling power from the northern regions naturally gave rise to inherent mistrust among the Han populace. This mistrust subsequently led to policies unfavourable towards the selection of officials from the southern regions. Under Mongol rule in the northern part, the imperial examination system was suspended for a lengthy period of eighty years. While it was reinstated in 1315, measures were introduced to safeguard the privileged status of Mongols and other non-Han ethnic groups. Consequently, the examination papers became more challenging for Han candidates and those from the southern regions, resulting in a decline in the number of successful candidates. This situation led to a diminishing avenue for Han Confucian scholars to achieve social status and gain the trust of the ruling elite, forcing them to seek alternative paths.³²¹ The same applies to the gardens in Wuxi, where construction heavily influenced by the prevailing system was no longer the mainstream during this phase. This trend had been evident since the emergence of private gardens in Wuxi during the Song Dynasty. Wuxi gardens in the Yuan and the extensive exchange activities within them showcased a pursuit of art that had never been seen before from the perspective of garden culture.

Art exchange and Art trading space

Feng Guifen 冯桂芬 once stated Gengyu House 耕渔轩, built by Xu Dazuo 徐达佐 (1333-1395), stood alongside Ni Zan's 倪瓒 Qingbi Pavilion 清閼阁 (Yunlin garden

³²¹ Jin, Zheng, *The Imperial Examination System and Chinese Culture*, (Shanghai: People's Publishing House, 1990) p160

云林故居) and Gu Zhongying's 顾仲英 Yushan Garden 玉山佳处 as the top three distinguished places during the Yuan and Ming periods.³²² In alignment with Clunas' assessment, the reputation of these three gardens primarily derived from the interactions among the prominent literati of the era, resulting in an abundance of poetry and gathering records.³²³

Ni Zan (1301-1374) was born into a wealthy family in Wuxi, attracting celebrities from all directions.³²⁴ His wealth came from his grandfather, a wealthy landowner. His social status originated from his elder brother, Ni Zhaokui 倪昭奎, who presided over the Qingwei Taoist temple north of Mount Xi and held an elevated status within Taoism's upper echelons. Taoists were exempt from labour, taxation, and bureaucratic conflicts.

While Wuxi did not have a hereditary aristocracy in a civilian society, prominent local families still managed to maintain economic and cultural advantages over time, often protected and upheld by their ancestral legacies. When political status could not be elevated, members of influential local clans with social standing had an advantage compared to ordinary scholars. The focus on 'political status' in garden culture was replaced by 'social status.' During this stage, the social status of literati was mainly reflected in literary activities and included a certain economic status. The proprietors of gardens were exclusively drawn from the descendants of influential families, a pattern that mostly persisted.

322 Refer to Guo, Mingyou, 'History of Suzhou Gardens in the Ming Dynasty,' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Soochow, 2011)

323 Clunas, Craig, *Fruitful Sites: garden culture in Ming dynasty China* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996)

Guo, Mingyou, 'History of Suzhou Gardens in the Ming Dynasty,' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Soochow, 2011)

324 时与二三好友啸咏其间 At that time, I and two or three close friends would sing and recite poetry together there. Gu, Sili, Yuan Shi Xuan [Collection of Poem in the Yuan], Qinding Siku Quanshu (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

These circumstances heightened the emphasis on familial cohesion, including reverence for ancestors, preservation of legacies, passing down traditions, educating offspring, and enhancing the family's reputation. During the relatively brief yet tumultuous periods of the 14th century, the concept of heritage had not yet manifested itself very prominently; this will be the theme of the next chapter.

The absence of these special obligations, such as serving the emperor and engaging in official works, coupled with the changing socio-political landscape, gradually eroded Confucian orthodoxy, values, and the sense of national duty among the literati. Unlike garden owners in earlier periods who often ascended to positions of power through success in the imperial examination system, those during this era were primarily individuals outside the realm of officialdom. Scholars from the southern regions became less interested in serving the state, with some diversifying into alternative fields such as Taoism or medicine.³²⁵ For example, the Ni brothers were Taoists, and Pan Renzhong 潘仁仲 pursued a career in medicine. Others opted for reclusive lifestyles as a means of preserving their scholarly traditions and cultural identity. For instance, Meng Tong 孟潼, a descendant of Mencius and the fifth-generation progeny of Meng Zhonghou 孟忠厚 (?-1157), maintained his ancestor's temple and chose to live a reclusive life at Mount Hui. Hua Ying 华瑛 of the Hua family held a nominal position as a civil servant without real responsibilities, building gardens for feasting and painting.

Before the Yuan Dynasty was succeeded by the Ming, a period of turmoil led to a prevalence of village gardens owned by local clans, as documented in genealogy during this time.³²⁶

325Guo, Mingyou, 'History of Suzhou Gardens in the Ming Dynasty,' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Soochow, 2011)

326 Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1

Ni's garden can be seen as a gallery of art:

Outside the window, there are towering cliffs and bizarre rocks, all of which are the marvels of Taihu Stone and Lingbi Stone, rising higher than the parapets of the building. Pine and bamboo, orchids and chrysanthemums, densely green and lush, their branches swaying and casting cool shade, covering the mossy ground. Within the pavilion, there are thousands of volumes of books, personally curated and verified, with ancient bronze vessels from three generations, renowned ancient musical instruments, and antique jades arranged meticulously on both sides.³²⁷

A more detailed list of artworks in the garden mentioned includes sacrificial vessels such as Zun, Yi (wine vessel), Le (a type of food container), and Ding (tripod vessel), renowned calligraphy and paintings, utensils such as a well, fence, mortar, food cabinet, water tank, bell, cauldron, basin, long table, and round desk.³²⁸ The previous gardens did not mention any information about the artworks, which, however, determined the value of the garden when artworks could be commercialized. Their presence relied on the commercial circulation of craftwork and communication between other literati.

Although an official career was restricted, the policy of promoting the economy was obviously efficient. Taxes were low; and handicrafts including calligraphy, painting, and antiques were commercialized; non-officials could still accumulate enough

[Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

327窗外巉岩怪石，皆太湖灵壁之奇，高于楼堞。松篁兰菊，茏葱交翠，风枝摇曳，凉阴满苔。阁中藏书数千卷，手自勘定，三代鼎彝，名琴古玉，分列左右。Gu Sili, Yuan Shi Xuan[Collection of Peom in the Yuan], Qinding Siku Quanshu(Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

328 布列碧梧奇石，尊壘彝鼎，法书名画。什器如井栏药臼，食柜水槽，铛釜盆盎，长几圆案，皆出名斤奇斧之手。Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

wealth.³²⁹ During the Yuan, Wuxi saw the establishment of a folk custom of paying equal attention to business and reading.³³⁰ Ni's paintings and calligraphies were requested by many people. He sits in Qingbi Pavilion(Yunlin Garden) every day and did not get involved in the worldly affairs. The small mountain scenes he painted allow him to amass huge wealth.³³¹ His gardens served not only as his living quarters but also functioned as venues for artistic creation and trade. The existence of these gardens can also be viewed as a physical showcase of his work.

In line with the prevailing sentiments of ancient Chinese literati, Ni was averse to directly or solely equating artworks with commodities. It is believed that he had an obsession with cleanliness and ordered his servants to clean the stones daily and pick up any fallen leaves.³³² This may have stemmed from him valuing his own work, as he rejected those who sought to acquire his paintings with huge sums of money. This stance earned him the epithet 'Ni Yu' 倪迂, meaning 'pedantic' or 'narrow-minded.' Ni was selective about who he allowed into his garden. On one occasion, a foreigner offered a gift of one hundred catties of agarwood in an attempt to gain entry. Despite the generous offering, the foreigner was only granted permission to access the outer

329 '士君子不乐仕，而法网宽，田赋三十税一，故野处者得以货雄，Scholars and gentlemen are not fond of official positions, with land taxes at a rate of one-thirtieth. Hence, those in rural areas prosper' Li, Rihua, *Zi Tao Xuan Za Chuo*, from Chen Tian, *Ming Shi Ji Shi* [Poetry in the Ming Dynasty] 1899, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

330 '商贾之繁集冠盖之骈臻 merchants gather in abundance under canopies and carriages' Wang Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

331 '(倪瓒)雅趣吟兴，每发挥于缣素间，苍劲妍润，尤得清致，奉币赞求之者无虚日。(Ni Zan) enjoys elegant leisure and poetic inspiration, often expressing himself amidst plain silks and linens, characterized by subtlety and elegance, greatly cherished for their clarity and refinement, sought after by those offering praise and seeking his artworks without disappointment.' Epitaph of Ni Zan Written by Zhou Nanlao, from Ni Zan, Yuan dynasty. *Qing Bi Ge Ji*[The Complete Works of Qingbi Pavilion], vol 11, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

332 Wang Yongji (Ming Dynasty), *A berif record of Scenery in Wuxi*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

courtyard of Ni's garden.³³³ The art displays were probably the result of mutual gifting or exchanges among them. In the eyes of the literati of that time, they served as acceptable substitutes for 'large amounts of money' as recognition of their status and character. Wealth itself does not appear to be their pursuit; their confidence in securing life's necessities stems from their social background. They do not require any additional emphasis at all, especially aligning with the Confucian emphasis on 'restraint of desires.' Later, as the late Yuan Dynasty approached, it became increasingly evident that individuals with fame chose to distance themselves from wealth and politics for greater safety.

In the absence of an official career, interactions among reclusive and refuge-seeking literati gradually proliferated.³³⁴ Unlike the gardens of Confucian scholars, they consciously began to treat gardens as a form of art and engaged in specialized design. Among the hundreds of literati who lived in the Yuan and early Ming periods, many had some form of connection with Ni Zan, with the majority of them born in the Jiangnan region. Sharing a common passion for painting or religious backgrounds akin to Ni Zan's, they frequently visited each other's gardens, exchanged their artworks as gifts, or collaborated on painting and garden design projects. For instance, Ni Zan, alongside Zhu Derun 朱德润, Zhao Shanchang 赵善长, and Xu Youwen 徐幼文, was invited by Monk Tianruweize 天如维泽 to contribute to the initial design of the Lion

333 '日坐清閤阁 不涉世故间 作溪山小景 人得之如拱璧 家故饶费...张士诚弟士信闻元镇善画使人持绢缣侑以币求其笔元镇怒曰予生不能为王门画师即裂其绢而却其币 During the day, Ni seated in the secluded Qingbi Pavilion, not involved in the affairs of the world, and created small scenes of rivers and mountains. Those who obtain his work treasure it like an archaic jade bi disc, then his family thus thrives with wealth...Zhang Shicheng's younger brother Zhang Shixin heard that Yuan Zhen was skilled in painting. He sent someone with silk and fine fabric, along with money, to request his painting. Ni became angry and said, 'I was born not to be a painter for the palace!' He immediately tore apart the silk and rejected the money.' Ni Zan, Yuan dynasty, *Qing Bi Ge Ji* [The Complete Works of Qingbi Pavilion], vol 11, Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

334 Guo Mingyou, 'History of Suzhou Gardens in the Ming Dynasty' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Soochow, 2011)

Forest, a Buddhist Garden located in Suzhou. (Figure 45 top).³³⁵ Ke Jiusi 柯九思 drew an ink painting of Bamboo in Ni's Garden, and Zhang Yu 张雨, a Daoist, wrote calligraphy on Ni's work. Gu Zhongying's Yushan Garden was as popular as Ni's Yunlin garden, and Gu was interested in holding a feast in his garden, attracting many literati to gather. The complex links among them led to frequent gatherings in different gardens and landscapes, depicted in their paintings, showcasing their tight relationships (Figure 43).³³⁶ Ni's experience connects all the gardens in that period in the Jiangnan area.



335 僧天如维则延朱德润、赵善长、倪元镇、徐幼文共商叠成，而元镇为之图 Qian, Yong, *Ly Yuan Cong Hua*, (Yushan, Qianshi Publishing Press, 1823), vol 20 gardens, collected in Jiaotong University of Xi'an, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

336 Ke, Jiusi, *Qing Bi Ge Mo Zhu Tu* [The Ink Bamboo in the Qingbi Pavilion] paper, 132.8×58.5cm The Palace Museum in Beijing

Wang, Yi and Ni Zan, 1363, *Yang Zhuxi Xiao Xiang* [Small Portrait of Yang Zhuxi] paper, 27.7×86.8cm The Palace Museum in Beijing

Zhang, Yu, *Ni Zan Xiang* [portrait of Ni Zan].paper, 28.2× 60.9cm Taipei National Palace Museum

Figure 43: left: The Ink Bamboo in the Qingbi Pavilion (Yunlin House) was drawn by Ke Jiusi. Collected in the Palace Museum in Beijing

Top right: Small Portrait of Yang Zhuxi was drawn by Wang Yi and Ni Zan added pine and stones in 1363. The explanation and the inscription were written by Zheng Yuanyou and Yang Weizhen. Collected by the Palace Museum in Beijing

Bottom right: Portrait of Ni Zan. Zhang Yu, Ni Zan, and Huang Gongwang were all Taoist friends, with Zhang also once inscribing a small portrait of Huang Gongwang. Collected in Taipei National Palace Museum

This close-knit socializing circle is much broader than the Neo-Confucian scholars of the past and was not limited to Ni's gardens. Almost every garden in Wuxi became a repository of poetic compositions and verses produced during feasts and gatherings. Sadly, many of these sites have since disappeared. In Hua's Gardens, tall structures were erected to provide a vantage point for admiring the mountainous scenery along the Liangxi River.

From the splendid halls and pavilions of the Hua family estate, one can behold picturesque mountains and rivers, with wisps of mist and water, where the scenery gracefully intertwines with the sweet melodies of songs. The fertile land, dotted with lotus ponds, yields bountiful harvests year after year.³³⁷

They no longer view natural landscapes, including agricultural scenes, as merely indifferent displays of the rules of Heaven as Neo-Confucians did, but rather as

337 ‘华家楼阁好山川，风光流转酣歌里，烟水微茫屣倚前。地足蒲荷连夏沼，年丰黍稷满秋田。The splendid mansion of the Hua family overlooks beautiful mountains and rivers, where the scenery changes continuously amid joyous songs, with misty waters faintly visible as one leans against the railing. The land is rich with lotus and reeds, connecting summer marshes, abundant years leave surplus millet filling the autumn fields.’ Written by Chen Zishan, Hua Shoufang et al, *Hua Shi Chuan Fang Lu*[Genealogy of Hua in the Ming Jiangning Regin], Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] Volume 3. (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011) pp38

objects of aesthetic appreciation. This transformation stems from a shift in the literati's inner perspectives, where adherence to and emphasis on rules are no longer the primary concerns of those not pursuing official careers.

Extensive social interactions during this period are a primary reason why gardens from this era are meticulously documented. The influence and presence of Ni can be discerned in many of these gardens, underscoring the extensive social networks within the literary and artistic circles of the time.³³⁸ Such extensive and close connections immediately elevate the gardens of Wuxi and reduce the time lag of Wuxi Garden construction and concept in the first stage.

The exceptional painting skills of this group undoubtedly had an influence on the artistic expression within the design of gardens. Ni gained prominence for his exceptional skill in ink painting, particularly in the depiction of landscapes and bamboo. Ni was collectively acclaimed as one of the 'Four Masters of the Yuan', alongside Huang Gongwang 黄公望, Wang Meng 王蒙, and Wu Zhen 吴镇. Ni's residence often played host to visits from scholars and literati. It can be said that he influenced how later generations perceived the gardens of that era.

Pan Renzhong, a physician who resided in the city, possessed a garden adorned with solitary rocks and beautiful bamboo.³³⁹ Descriptions of this garden from the Ming Dynasty portray a relatively simple and unadorned design, aligning with the image of the literati's pursuit of purity and self-sufficiency. Ni once visited Pan Renzhong's garden and left behind a painting (Figure 44) that closely corresponds to the written descriptions and large proportion of natural landscape.³⁴⁰

338 Guo, Mingyou, 'Garden History of Suzhou in the Ming Dynasty'(unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Suzhou, 2011)

339 Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

340 Ni, Zan, 1372, *Rong Xi Zhai Tu* [Rongxi Hall], paper, 74.7×35.5cm, Taipei National Palace Museum



Figure 44: Rongxi Hall, Drawn by Ni Zan in 1372, collected in National Palace Museum in Taipei

Comparing his depiction of the Lion Forest painting (Figure 45) to his impressions of Wuxi gardens, the imagery of natural landscapes far surpasses that of Suzhou, despite both gardens being situated in urban centers. The architectural density in both gardens is lower than one would expect to find in the period after the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). When Emperor Qianlong (1711-1799) made a southern tour during the Qing Dynasty, the appearance of gardens had already undergone changes. He focused on mountain and water landscapes in gardens, where the scenery was mostly ancient and tranquil, filled with the charm of natural wilderness, and had relatively fewer artificial structures. Suzhou's Cheng Garden faced criticism from Emperor Qianlong because it

did not align with these characteristics.³⁴¹

During the construction of the Mountain Resort in Chengde, the Lion Forest painting drawn by Ni Zan was specifically used as a template. Although, in retrospect, the ‘Lion Forest’ in Suzhou and Chengde may seem quite similar, they differ significantly from Ni Zan’s original painting.³⁴² The excessive use of piled rocks in these gardens completely deviated from the intended spacious and clear aesthetic present in Ni Zan’s artwork, thus underscoring the influence of societal context on garden design.

During this period, the expression of social status is achieved through the pursuit of art and a longing for nature, and the connection with celebrities, with gardens serving as one of the symbols in this regard. This pattern tends to emerge during every era when Confucian systems falter, as exemplified in the case of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove during the Wei and Jin Dynasties, who were celebrities among Chinese recluses.

341 The record ‘Account of My Visit to Cheng Garden’ by Aisin Gioro Hongli from Li, Mingwan, edited by Tan Junpei, compiled by Feng Guifen, *The Chogrography of Suzhou*. Tongzhi era (Nanjing: Jiangsu Ancient Books Publishing House, 1991) pp415.

342 Part of Lion Forest by Ni Zan, from Digital Museum of Forbbiden Palace, <<https://digicol.dpm.org.cn/cultural/details?id=78750>> [accessed 06 September 2021]



Figure 45: Top Painting of Lion Forest, drawn by Ni Zan, collected in Palace Museum of China in Beijing

Bottom left: Lion Forest in Suzhou (photo by author in 2020)

Bottom right: Lion Forest in Chengde, The Summer Resort (photo by author in 2011)

These gardens were established by prominent local families who benefited from the economic and social standing they supported, and passed them down through generations. They exemplified a serene and unpretentious way of life, devoid of the pursuit of fame and fortune. This is commonly referred to as ‘unadorned simplicity’ by the Chinese: observe the thatched roofs and unadorned houses which stand in stark contrast to the opulence typically associated with the Ming and Qing dynasties. The artistic arrangements within Ni Zan’s garden can by no means be considered simple. With a certain degree of literati aloofness, the most common application of plants in literati gardens naturally involves local plants such as pine, bamboo, orchids, and Chinese parasol trees. They do not excessively emphasize the rarity or scarcity of

species, nor do they demonstrate a strong emphasis on their practical or economic value. However, they still emphasize their connection with ancient virtues to enhance their social status.

The choice of stone materials reflects Ni Zan's economic strength and his control over mainstream aesthetics. Two renowned types of stones were present in his garden. The Taihu stones originated from Dongting Lake (so these are not stones found close to the production area of Lake Tai, which would have been more typical during the Ming and Qing dynasties). It was evaluated by Du Wan as particularly suitable for use beside big constructions in a garden.³⁴³ The other one, Lingbi stones, characterized by smaller dimensions and an absence of explicitly recorded extraction locations, were more suitable for playing in hand and ornamentation. They gained renown during the Song and Yuan dynasties but fell out of favour after the Ming period.³⁴⁴ Perhaps because stones can better enhance the intended significance of references to mountains and, stones of two different sizes were used together. This exceptional garden, including its

343 ‘平江府太湖石产洞庭水中，石性坚而润有嵌空穿眼宛转嶮怪势...惟宜植立轩槛装治假山或罗列园林广榭中颇多伟观鲜有小巧可置几案间者 In Pingjiang Prefecture, Taihu stones are found in Dongting's waters. These stones are sturdy yet smooth, often featuring embedded hollows and perforations, presenting varied and fantastical forms...They are best suited for creating artificial hills in gardens, or arranged in parks and spacious pavilions, showcasing grandeur. Few are compact enough for placement on small tables or in study rooms.’ Schafer, Edward H., *Tu Wan's Stone Catalogue of Cloudy Forest*, 1st Floating World ed. (Warren, CT): [Easthampton, Mass.]: Floating World Editions ; Distributed by Antique Collectors' Club, 2005)

344 ‘石之堪作玩者吾灵璧石称最谓其峰峦洞穴浑然天成骨古色黝扣之有声...万石万局于深山中掘之乃得不知的系何时发坑第考之载籍宋以前未闻有。。。宋元旧物流传人间者矣国朝垂二百六十余年寥寥无闻即问之土著者亦竟不知灵璧石为何物迨 Regarding stones fit for admiration, the Lingbi stone is renowned. It is called "Lingbi" for its peaks, caves, and natural formations resembling ancient bones, with a deep and mottled color that emits sound... Numerous stones and varieties are excavated from deep mountains, their origins unknown and not recorded before the Song dynasty. They have been passed down since the Song and Yuan periods, lasting over two hundred and sixty years into the present dynasty. However, there is little information about them. Even when asked, local inhabitants are often unaware of what the Lingbi stone actually is.’ from Zhao, Tian'en, Qing dynasty, *Jiang Nan Tong Zhi*[Chorography of Jiangnan Province] Vol 17, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

furnishings and ambiance, showcases Ni Zan's craftsmanship, likely providing him with advantages in his art-related business endeavors.

Refuge and estate

Mo Tianyou 莫天佑 defended Zhu Yuanzhang's (朱元璋 1328-1398, the first emperor of the Ming dynasty) army in Wuxi for a duration of twelve years.³⁴⁵ Serving as the frontline of the conflict, Wuxi bore the brunt of wartime devastation.³⁴⁶

Influenced by the turmoil caused by the transition from the Yuan to the Ming, Ni Zan chose to retreat and live in seclusion on the shores of Lake Taihu. The wars and conflicts disrupted the lives of everyone, including Xie Yingfang 谢应芳 (1295~1392), a famous poet at the time. In the chaos, Xie resided on the border between Suzhou and Wuxi and witnessed people being forcibly conscripted outside the city of Wuxi. Buddhist temples were full of soldiers. He is fortunate that, as a region known for its agricultural production, the price of rice along the shores of Lake Taihu remained somewhat affordable.³⁴⁷ Occasionally, this period brought scholars and farmers closer together. Meng Tong cultivated vegetables in his secluded courtyard, while Mount Hui was the place where he chopped firewood. In Figure 46, drawn by Meng Tong, we can see the lush pine and bamboo surrounded house and the neat vegetable garden behind the house.

345 Historical texts: Wang Shizhen (Ming dyansty). Yan Zhou Xu Gao [Yanzhou Continuation]. The Si Ku Quan Shu [Complete Works of Chinese Classics] (electronic book)

346 the Difficult and Dangerous Deeds of Yunyi, the Founder of Dongchang in Genealogy of the Wang Clan in Sansha.<<https://tieba.baidu.com/p/6843672376>>[accessed 07 May 2022]

347 ‘朝家方用武，僧寺总屯兵。犹喜湖田熟，街头米价平。居城仅期月，区区避兵马。狂奴称老虎，啞人空四野。里胥俄促人，负郭一网打。监官驱上船，寸步不少假。The court is currently employing military force. Monasteries are also garrisoning troops. We are still pleased with the ripening fields by the lake because the grain prices on the streets are stable. Living in the city is only a matter of months to avoid soldiers and horses. Rebels are likened to tigers that devouring people throughout the land. Local officials hastily gather people in the city, and drive them onto boats without an inch of respite.’ Xie Yingfang, 14th century, *Gui Chao Gao*[Collection of Xie], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

His studio is built by the water, and the spring in the mountains supplies irrigation. In his painting, the houses and the people inside them are placed at the visual centre but occupy relatively little space. A substantial portion of the composition is devoted to depicting the nearby mountains and rocks, the lake and distant mountains on the right side, and the trees. Perhaps such paintings allowed him to experience a sense of security amid turbulent times. He was sheltered by dense vegetation, creating a refuge with access to food and water sources. The architectural features thatched roofs, which were seamlessly integrated with the natural landscape making it difficult to associate them with royal descendants. Avoiding being perceived as affluent similarly enhanced security in times of turmoil.



Figure 46: Huilu seclusion garden 惠麓小隐 built by Meng Tong 孟潼 in the Yuan dynasty (drawn by Wang Meng in 14th century, collected in Indianapolis Museum of Arts)

When Xie took temporary residence in the countryside, he authored a substantial body of poetry and prose centred on rural life and landscapes. His poems vividly depicted a quintessential rural courtyard scene, where the land consistently underscored agricultural production efficiency. In his rural retreat's courtyard, orchids, possibly a type of indigenous vegetation, adorned the doorstep, while a small bamboo grove and a vegetable garden were nestled within the yard, enclosed by wooden fences. Behind

the house, cereal crops were cultivated.³⁴⁸

The practice of intensively harnessing agricultural land to enhance production efficiency had already been advocated during the Pre-Qin period:

In the winter, certain areas can serve as drying grounds, while in other seasons, the square can be employed as vegetable gardens, facilitating intensive land utilization. Along the walls, mulberry trees may be cultivated.³⁴⁹

The continuity of this agricultural philosophy extended into the late Yuan and early Ming dynasties. The depiction of orchids distinguished his garden from those of his neighbours. As described by Tao Yuanming 陶渊明, a renowned poet who opted for a reclusive lifestyle during the Eastern Jin Dynasty, fruits and wood could serve as fundamental living materials, while pine, chrysanthemum, and orchids were employed to symbolize scholarly pursuits.

The concept of gardens as distinct and productive land in Wuxi endured with little interruption following the Ming Dynasty. Early Ming period gardens held particular prominence. Despite experiencing destruction caused by war, Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang acknowledged the official status of scholars. As an emperor of humble origins, the policies during the early Ming maintained respect for the peasantry and land.³⁵⁰ Government officials were restrained from constructing gardens to minimize the

348 ‘数朝天色冷，高卧掩柴关，竹径柴扉掩寂寥。舍后薄田堪种秫，雨馀春韭绿，生意满东园。For several mornings, the sky has been cold, I lie and close the wooden gate. The bamboo path is quiet and lonely. Behind the house, thin fields only suitable for millet. After the rain, spring chives are green that I feel happiness in the eastern garden.’ Xie Yingfang, *Gui Chao Gao*[Collection of Xie], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

349九月筑场圃，十月纳禾稼...疆场有瓜 from *Shi Jing* [The Book of Songs] and 树墙下以桑 from Mencius, *Meng Zi*[Analects of Mencius], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

350 Wang, Shizhen, Ming dyansty. *Yan Zhou Xu Gao* [Yanzhou Continuation]. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

encroachment on arable land.³⁵¹ Notably, only one garden owned by an official is documented in the county chorography.

Wansong Garden built by Zhang Chou in 1380.

Zhang's father successfully persuaded Mo Tianyou to surrender to Zhu Yuanzhang, thereby preventing the wholesale massacre of the entire city of Wuxi. Owing to his expertise in ritual and legal matters, Zhang himself assumed an official position within the Ministry of Rites and actively contributed to the development of ceremonial protocols for the emerging dynasty.³⁵² His garden was meticulously constructed around pre-existing natural ponds, skilfully bypassing the prohibition on excavating new ponds by exploiting regulatory loopholes. Within the natural pool, lotus plants were cultivated, and weeping willows graced the embankments. The land behind the mansion always belonged to the officials based on policy. The size of the land was normally ten Zhang 丈 (32 meters × width of the mansion). Rows of pine and juniper trees were planted by Zhang. The possibility of possessing productive land was prioritized in this garden. He could obtain timber from this piece of land.

351 功臣宅舍之后，留空地十丈，左右皆五丈。不许那移军民居止，更不许于宅前后左右多占地，构亭馆，开池塘，以资游眺。After the residence of the meritorious official, there is an empty space of ten zhang behind, with five zhang on each side. It is forbidden to relocate military or civilian dwellings there, and furthermore, no additional land may be occupied in front, behind, or on either side of the residence to construct pavilions, halls, or to dig ponds, all for the purpose of leisure and enjoyment. Zhang Tingyu, Qing Dynasty, *Ming Shi* [The History of the Ming Dynasty], Vol. 68 Yu Fu Zhi, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

352 张筹，字惟中，无锡人。父翼，尝劝张士诚将莫天佑降，复请于平章胡美勿僇降人，城中人得完。以詹同荐，授翰林应奉，改礼部主事。Zhang Chou, styled Weizhong, was a native of Wuxi. His father, Yi, once urged Zhang Shicheng to surrender to Mo Tianyou and later petitioned Prime Minister Hu Mei not to persecute the surrendered, ensuring the city's residents remained unharmed. Through the recommendation of Zhān Tóng, he was appointed to the Hanlin Academy as a Gentleman Attendant, and later transferred to the Ministry of Rites as an official. Zhang Tingyu, Qing Dynasty, *Ming Shi* [The History of the Ming Dynasty], Vol 136, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

The life of the Hua family, who originally lived in the outer suburbs of the city, was more stable. Their genealogy shows people whose surname is *Hua* in Jiangnan area are all believed to have come from Wuxi.³⁵³ Hua Bao, who was commemorated in the Memorial temple of Filial Piety, is the ancestor of this renowned family.

As previously mentioned, the Hua Family Garden gained renown for its extensive social gatherings, especially banquets. However, even within influential households, the experience of chaos compelled a shift in perspective. Hua Jing'an 华景安, as documented in Wang Dashan's records, resided in the countryside, devoting himself to the study and preservation of his life. He regarded 'worldly pleasures as insignificant, and treasures and beautiful attire as trivial matters.' His uncle cultivated a garden in which chives were grown, naming it Jianjiu '剪韭轩 Cutting Chives Hall', and his brother built the Lenong Hall 乐农堂 'Joyful Farmhouse', exemplifying the refuge lifestyle of small landlords during these turbulent times.

Chives have a distinct spicy flavour, and thrifty people often consume them. They are delicious and easy to cultivate. Recorders avoided mentioning poverty and instead emphasized that enlightened individuals eat them as a sincere expression (without despising the food of the poor due to their high status).³⁵⁴

Indeed, as landlords from a prominent local family, their modest descriptions of their family circumstances only stood in contrast to the high-ranking officials and large landlords portrayed in official historical narratives. Nevertheless, their lives remained superior to those of ordinary farmers.

The Jiangnan region has long been renowned for its stable economic development and

353 Xu, Tongshen, *Hua Shi Pu Lue* [Brief Genealogy of Family Hua], *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

354 Hua, Shoufang et al, *Hua Shi Chuan Fang Lu* [Genealogy of Hua in the Ming Jiangjing Regin], vol 6-8, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Resources] Volume 3. (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011) pp80-112

social tranquillity, rendering it an attractive destination for population migration. The Yuan and early Ming periods marked one of the widespread periods of turmoil in Wuxi, especially in the changes of dynasties. During this period, gardens transitioned to venues for artistic exchange, serving as tangible expressions of the art of painting while also emphasizing the fundamental significance of ‘gardens,’ especially the cultivation of practical and utilitarian plants. Within their gardens, they continued to emphasize the moral virtues of literati, albeit in a more introspective manner, departing from the didactic approach of Neo-Confucian scholars.

Summary

This chapter illustrates the transformation of Wuxi’s garden culture during the 14th century under political pressures. Early pressures stemmed from the rule of foreign ethnic groups, which, due to favourable economic policies, led to the development of the artistic and commercial attributes of garden culture. Since then, garden design gave rise to new forms of usage as spaces for gathering, appreciation, and trade, and began to emerge as a new profession. Conflicts during dynastic transitions arose from warfare and the control of the affluent class during economic recoveries of new dynasties, thereby showcasing gardens as valuable agricultural land. This represents the closest examples in the whole research period under study to ordinary garden culture among ordinary people.

Gardens from Mid-Ming to Early Qing

This chapter discusses the changes in Garden Culture of Wuxi during the period of economic and cultural prosperity. These changes include the boost of garden culture, the enlargement of the realm of garden owners, alterations in design and plant elements, evolving concepts, and the insights revealed by the usage of gardens by different owners, including women.

During this stage, the Jiangnan region entered a period of flourishing garden culture. Due to Wuxi's geographical advantages—being adjacent to Suzhou and located along the North-South Canal—it maintained close connections with the core areas of garden culture, namely Suzhou and Beijing, in terms of cultural, political, economic, and aesthetic aspects. Although Wuxi's garden culture developed more slowly and to a lesser degree of prosperity compared to these core areas, it still exhibited a trend of overall prosperity, with private garden culture being the hallmark of this period.

This chapter covers approximately 400 years, from the mid-Ming to the mid-late Qing dynasties, generally following a chronological order of events and developments. The main social context of this period was characterized by the rapid development of the canal economy and the further mixing of various social classes. Over the course of about four centuries of agricultural economic accumulation, families that had migrated during the Song Dynasty gradually prospered and became gentry. The religious attributes of Buddhist garden spaces further diminished due to the integration of gentry influences. After the turning point in the 14th century, the construction of private gardens gradually surpassed those built under official guidance. Based on this, the cases from this period include different garden owners and different main use of gardens.

Economic development served as a prerequisite for urban development. The gardens of merchant Zou Wang from the early-mid Ming period and artisan Jiang Chunbo from the mid-Ming period will be discussed. They were places for trading and enhancing

social status. The combination of studying and farming as a family development model in the Jiangnan region evolved into the class of Confucian merchants, who formed the main part of the gentry. From the mid-Ming to the early Qing, private gardens built by social gentry became concentrated, with gardens such as Jichang Garden and Yugong Valley being representative examples. These gardens will be analyzed to understand the main part of Wuxi garden culture.

Particularly noteworthy are the academies and ancestral halls influenced by ideological and institutional developments, which will be a focal point of discussion. Educational gardens, spanning from Song Dynasty Neo-Confucianism to late-Ming empirical learning, began to appear in the form of private academies from the mid-Ming period. These academies aimed at private education but were constrained by officialdom. The academy spaces represented the social influence of lower-class intellectuals, exemplified by the Donglin Academy of the late Ming period. During this time, the feudal system remained robust, and the construction of ancestral hall gardens became a means for families without noble political inheritance to preserve their heritage and protect their property in the Qing. Additionally, gardens specifically built to commemorate women, appearing for the first time during this period, will be analyzed to examine the identity, status, and garden usage of women as a special group.

Early garden was continuously influenced by systems, rituals, ideologies, economics, aesthetics, and design, eventually formed a distinct discourse. However, due to internal and external pressures on Qing society, garden construction entered a period of decline, culminating with the end of this stage marked by the war of 1860.

Social political context

Political: The first emperor of the Ming dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang, came from a poor peasant family and was a monk in Huangjue Temple due to the famine in the fourth

year of the Zhizheng era (1344).³⁵⁵ Later, he expelled the foreign rulers and restored the cultural traditions of the Han ethnic group, driven by his national consciousness. The Zhu-Cheng school of Neo-Confucianism, which was more conducive to good governance, was once again valued by the Ming after being somewhat subdued during the Yuan dynasty.³⁵⁶ Zhu believed that merging the three teachings (Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism) into a unified ethical doctrine would be beneficial. He also deemed it necessary to have checks and balances against imperial power and sought to limit the influence of Confucian scholars. This policy quickly elevated the status of Buddhism and Daoism, leading to a trend of reconstruction and reorganization of Buddhist temples in the early Ming period.³⁵⁷ A direct result of Zhu's policy was the reconstruction of temples in Wuxi. Apart from Huishan temple, of the 24 large Buddhist temples recorded in Wuxi, 16 were rebuilt during the Hongwu period.³⁵⁸ The current buildings now along the central axis of Huishan Temple were restored based on the foundations laid in the early Ming.

The economist Ji Chaoding points out that the problem of China's unification and centralization can be seen as a problem of controlling a basic economic zone. Its agricultural production conditions and transportation facilities are more important than

³⁵⁵ 至正四年，旱蝗，大饥疫。太祖时年十七，父母兄相继歿，贫不克葬。里人刘继祖与之地，乃克葬，即凤阳陵也。太祖孤无所依，乃入皇觉寺为僧。 In the fourth year of the Zhizheng era (1344), there was drought, locusts, and severe famine and epidemic. At the age of seventeen, Zhu Yuanzhang's parents and elder brothers successively passed away, and he was too poor to bury them. A local man named Liu Jizu offered him land, where he managed to bury them, which became Fengyang Mausoleum. With no family to rely on, Emperor Taizu then entered the Huangjue Temple to become a monk. Zhang Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty], vol 1, *Qinding Siku Quanshu*, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

³⁵⁶ Zhang, Qizhi, et. al, *Zhongguo Sixiang Shi* [History of Chinese Thought], (Xi'an, Northwest University Press, 2001), pp 381

³⁵⁷ Frederick, W. Mote, and Twitchett, Denis, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 7 Part 1 The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) pp114-115 pp. 147

³⁵⁸ Wu, Chong and Li Shu, Ming dynasty,]. *Wuxi Chong Xiu Xian Zhi* [Reconstruction of Wuxi County Annals] 1494 edition. *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Resources] Volume 1. Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011

those of other regions in terms of providing tribute grains. This region is so superior that whichever group controls it may conquer and unify the whole of China.³⁵⁹ This highlights the significance of the Jiangnan area. The Beijing-Hangzhou-Canal strengthened control over the Jiangnan economic zone, which was conducive to maintaining the unity of the country.³⁶⁰

Comprehensive control over Jiangnan has persisted for a long time, including the gradual strengthening of ideological control. Zheng points out that there were always unstable political factors in the Jiangnan area and that the literati and officials in feudal China in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces had been repressed by an invisible ceiling due to their past support for Zhang Shicheng, the political opponent of the Ming dynasty's founding emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang.³⁶¹ They were killed by emperors, taxed more heavily than in previous dynasties, and forced to move to poorer areas, among other repressions.³⁶² During the Ming dynasty, nearly 13% of the rice taxes were levied from

³⁵⁹ Ji, Chaoding, *The basic economic zone on the Internet and the development of water conservancy in Chinese History*, (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1981). pp.10

³⁶⁰ Ji, Guohuang, *Chinese Canal in 3000 Years*, (Beijing: Encyclopedia of China Publishing House, 2008)

³⁶¹ Zheng, Kesheng, 'Scholars in Jiangnan Area and Members of the Donglin Party in the Ming', Internal information in Wuxi library

Jiangsu Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) for Cultural and Historical Documentation, *Documents of Symposium of the Donglin Party Academic and Xue Fucheng*, Wuxi, internal press, 1998, pp22-37

³⁶² 太祖尝下诏蠲江南诸郡税，秋复税之，右正言周衡进曰：陛下诏蠲租税，天下幸甚，今复税之，是示天下以不信也。上曰然。未几，衡告归省假。衡乃无锡人，去京畿不远，帝刻期六日复朝。其后衡七日失期，帝怒曰：朕不信于天下，尔不信于天子。遂命弃市。Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang once issued an edict to exempt taxes for various counties in Jiangnan. However, when taxes were reimposed in autumn, Right Chief Councillor Zhou Heng stepped forward and said, 'Your Majesty, issuing an edict to exempt taxes brought great joy to the realm. Now reinstating them signifies a lack of trust to the people.' The Emperor responded, 'Indeed.' Shortly after, Heng requested leave to return to his hometown for personal reasons. Heng was from Wuxi, not far from the capital. The emperor set a deadline of six days for his return to court. However, Heng failed to return on the seventh day. The Emperor, angered, declared, 'If I am not trusted by the realm, you do not trust the Son of Heaven.' Consequently, he ordered Heng to be executed. Lv, Bi, 17th century, *Ming Chao Xiao Shi* [Brief History of the Ming] vol 2, Harvard-Yenching Library eBook

晉隆和畝收二升五季錢氏以兩浙畝三升宋王方贊均兩浙田畝一斗元耶律楚材定天下田稅上田畝三升中田二

Pursuing a political career was not the only choice available to members of the elite groups after the Yuan. Due to their relatively lower political positions, they did not hold significant advantages in the ranks of officialdom, and the number of high-ranking officials whose achievements could be recorded was limited.

In Wuxi, where the landscape is predominantly flat, water from Taihu Lake could flow towards the Six-arrow River within the city.³⁶⁴ Local inhabitants in Wuxi perceived this natural phenomenon as if the returning water yearned for those who had left home.³⁶⁵ This observation reflected the community's tendency to stay close to their hometown, seldom venturing far, and desiring a swift return when they did. These interpretations of nature's perspective were deeply rooted in personal choices and inner feelings.

升五合下二升水田五升我朝天下田租畝三升五升三合五合蘇松後因籍沒依私租額起稅有四五斗七八斗至一石者蘇在元糧三十六萬張氏百萬今二百七十餘萬矣。During the Jin Dynasty's Longhe era, the tax on one mu of land was 2 Sheng and 5 Ji. In the Southern Song Dynasty, the tax was uniform at 3 Sheng per mu. Under the Yuan Dynasty, the land tax varied: 3 Sheng for upper fields, 2 Sheng 5 He for middle fields, and 2 Sheng for lower fields. Waterlogged fields were taxed at 5 Sheng per mu. In our dynasty, the land tax is 3 Sheng and 5 He. In the regions of Suzhou and Songjiang, due to local records being lost, taxes were imposed privately, ranging from 4 to 5 Sheng to 7 to 10. The Su's tax grain during the Yuan, there were 360,000 Shi. The Zhang family had a million Shi. Now there are more than two million Shi. Ye, Sheng, *Shui Dong Ri Ji* [Dairy of Ye], vol 4, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

徙蘇松嘉湖杭民無業者田臨濠 凡四千餘戶給牛種車糧資遣之三年不徵稅 終洪武之世徙民最多。During the relocation of unemployed people from Suzhou, Songjiang, Jiaxing, Lake Tai, and Hangzhou to Linhao, fields near the moat were allotted to more than four thousand households. They were provided with oxen, seeds, carts, and provisions for sustenance without tax for three years. This relocation was the most extensive during the Hongwu era. Fu Heng et al, *Yu Pi Li Dai Tong Jian Ji Lan* [Collection of emperor documents], 1768, vol 100, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

³⁶³ Zhu, Yuanzhang, *Zhu Si Zhi Zhang* [Manuals of State Departments], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

³⁶⁴ Wang Furen Yuan Dynasty, *Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn*, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

³⁶⁵ Wuxi Chorography Office, *Chorography of Mount Hui, Wuxi*. (Beijing: Chorography Press, 2010), pp.38

Contrary to their strong attachment to their hometown, the 'native-place avoidance' policy required officials to avoid serving in their hometowns and nearby areas, except for education officials.³⁶⁶ The purpose of this policy was to prevent officials from engaging in nepotism and safeguarding clan interests. However, it is evident that the presence of education officials and the relaxation of later policies did not effectively restrain local practices emphasizing and building clan power. Gardens of Wuxi's gentry were mainly constructed by scholars and retired officials, with a significant proportion being education officials. The influence of Confucian practices is evident in their gardens.

Ideological: The dominant thought during the Ming, Confucianism, experienced a turning point. The independent thinking proposed by Chen Xianzhang (1428-1500) led scholars to realize that individuals are independent rather than merely members of society.³⁶⁷ Regarding the gains and losses of money and fame, and promotion and relegation, these became even more unimportant.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁶ 洪武间，定南北更调之制，南人官北，北人官南。其后官制渐定，自学官外，不得官本省，亦不限南北也。During the Hongwu period, a system of transferring officials between the north and south was established. Officials from the south were appointed to positions in the north, and vice versa. As the system gradually stabilized, officials were prohibited from serving in their home provinces and were not restricted by geographical origin either. Zhang Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty], vol 71, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

³⁶⁷ 前辈谓学贵知疑，小疑则小进，大疑则大进，疑者，觉悟之机也 The most important thing in learning is questioning. Small doubts lead to small progress, and big doubts lead to great progress. Questioning is the moment of enlightenment. Chen, Xianzhang, *Bai Sha Zi Ji* [Collection of Chen Xianzhang], vol 2, p49, Harvard-Yenching Library eBook

³⁶⁸ 士从事于学，功深力到，华落实存，乃浩然自得，则不知天地之为大，死生之为变，而况于富贵贫贱，功利得丧，詘信予夺之间哉 A scholar dedicated to learning, with profound effort and deep commitment, will attain a substantial and genuine understanding. This brings about a state of serene self-satisfaction, where he becomes indifferent to the vastness of the universe and the changes between life and death. Consequently, matters such as wealth and poverty, honor and disgrace, success and failure, and the fluctuations of trust and betrayal become insignificant to him. Chen, Xianzhang, *Bai Sha Zi Ji* [Collection of Chen Xianzhang], vol 1, p10, Harvard-Yenching Library eBook

The difference between Zhuang Zi and Mencius was exactly that between Chen's ideas and Confucianism: expressing a desire to get rid of the shackles of society, which is close to Chan Buddhism in contrast to Confucianism's active enterprising spirit as expressed by Xiu-Qi-Zhi-Ping. This marked the beginning of the awakening of the individual consciousness of the scholar-bureaucrats. This development influenced literati to deviate from the conventional path, thus leading to the expansion of garden culture.

Economic: In contrast to the political ideological control over the Jiangnan area, there was a resurgence in the economic development of Jiangnan as the Beijing-Hangzhou-Canal became a major artery from southern China to the capital, Beijing from the 16th century. Wuxi gradually established docks for rice and the cloth trade, supplying distinctive agricultural and aquatic products to Suzhou, while the bricks and tiles produced in kilns located outside the South Gate of city were also exported to other regions.³⁶⁹

The land area of Suzhou, Songjiang (Shanghai), and Changzhou of South Zhili province, along with Hangzhou, Jiaxing, and Huzhou of Zhejiang province, is not as large as one province, yet the taxes of these areas accounted for more than half the total county tax revenue.³⁷⁰

Another factor that stimulated the economy was the reform of the tax policy during the

369 Pei, Dazhong et.al, 1881, Wuxi Jinkui Xian Zhi [Chorography of Wuxi and Jinkui in Guangxu Period], Zhongguo Difang Zhi Jicheng [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 1991)

370 直隶之苏松常、浙江之杭嘉湖，约其土地，虽无一省之多，计其赋税，实当天下之半。In the regions of Suzhou and Changzhou in Zhili (直隶), and Hangzhou and Jiaxing in Zhejiang (浙江), including Lake Tai (嘉湖), when measuring their land, although they do not have as much land as a single province, their taxation amounts to half of the entire country's. Ye, Shen, from Xu, Guangqi (Ming dynasty), *Nong Zheng Quan Shu* [Complete Agriculture Book], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Ming. Intolerably high grain taxes and the shift from grain to money for tax payment led higher-value economic crops, such as cotton and mulberry, to gradually replace the food crops in the Taihu lake area. This shift occurred because the profit from cash crops was still more than twice that of food crops, even in bad years.³⁷¹ Even large clans had to set up clan farmlands or group farmland, such as the Hua clan in Ehu Town 鹅湖镇 in Wuxi, to pay taxes in the later period.³⁷² A booming population with limited farmland and a decrease in the proportion of grain cultivation made the lack of grain in the Jiangnan area a serious problem.³⁷³ Research has shown that although Wuxi retained around 85% of its rice fields during the Ming dynasty, due to the pressure of increasing population, food was still insufficient and had to be exchanged for cloth in the late Qing period.³⁷⁴

The yield of farmland in Wuxi was not enough to feed the resident...villagers rely on rice from other places exchanged for cotton cloth every year.³⁷⁵

The material used for the textile industry in Wuxi came from the surrounding higher farmlands, which had shifted to cotton from wheat and mulberry trees as these crops used less water.³⁷⁶ Reflecting this change, rice and cotton exchange markets were

³⁷¹ Zhang, Lvxiang Ming Dynasty, *Bu Nong Shu* [Supplement to Agriculture Book], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

³⁷² Chang, Jianhua and Clan Fields, 'Charity Fields, and Kinship in Ming Dynasty Southern Jiangnan'. *Nankai Journal (Philosophy, Social Sciences Edition)*, 2(2022): 115-125.

³⁷³ Wu, Yingqi, Lou Shan Tang Ji[Collection of Loushan Hall],vol 10, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

³⁷⁴ Wang, Shejiao. 'Grain Production and Shortage in Taihu Basin of the Ming Dynasty'. *Chinese Historical Geography Collection*. 3 (1998):117-131

Huang Ang (Qing Dynasty), *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

³⁷⁵ Huang Ang (Qing Dynasty),*Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

³⁷⁶ Wang, Jing. 'Change of Planting Structure in Taihu Lake Area during the Ming and Qing Dynasties'.(unpublished master dissertation, Nanjing Normal University,2007).

established, using canals since the mid-Ming period.³⁷⁷ Commercial trans-shipment terminals replaced the export of agricultural products as the main means of wealth accumulation.

Annually, nearly 4 million Shi 石 (about 372,000 tons) of grain were transported to the capital via canals.³⁷⁸ Transporters took advantage of this, selling local specialty products alongside official grain for profit.³⁷⁹ This promoted the flourishing of agricultural specialties and cultural exchange along canal routes. Cities along the Canal gradually emerged, presenting a prosperous scene by day and night.³⁸⁰ Relying on the canal and the early accumulation of agriculture, Wuxi is known as the Wharf of Rice, Cloth, and Silk.³⁸¹ The canal passes through Wuxi city, and the Chong'an Temple in the city centre has become a bustling market.

³⁷⁷ Huang Ang (Qing Dynasty), *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

³⁷⁸ Zhang Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Wu Hui, *Production of Grain in Chinese History*, (Beijing: Agriculture Press, 1985)

³⁷⁹ Liu, Rongsi, Ming Dynasty) Jian Zhai Wen Ji [Jianzhai collection]. From Si Ku Jin Hui Shu Cong Kan[banned and destroyed Books not in the Si Ku Quan Shu], (Beijing: Beijing Press, 1997)

³⁸⁰ Wang, Yujian, and Wang Siming. 'Flowing Economy and Trade: The Grand Canal of Ming and Qing Dynasties and the Exchange of the North and South Agricultural Specialties'. *Ancient and Modern Agriculture*, 1(2022):91-102.

³⁸¹ Huang, Ang, Qing Dynasty), *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

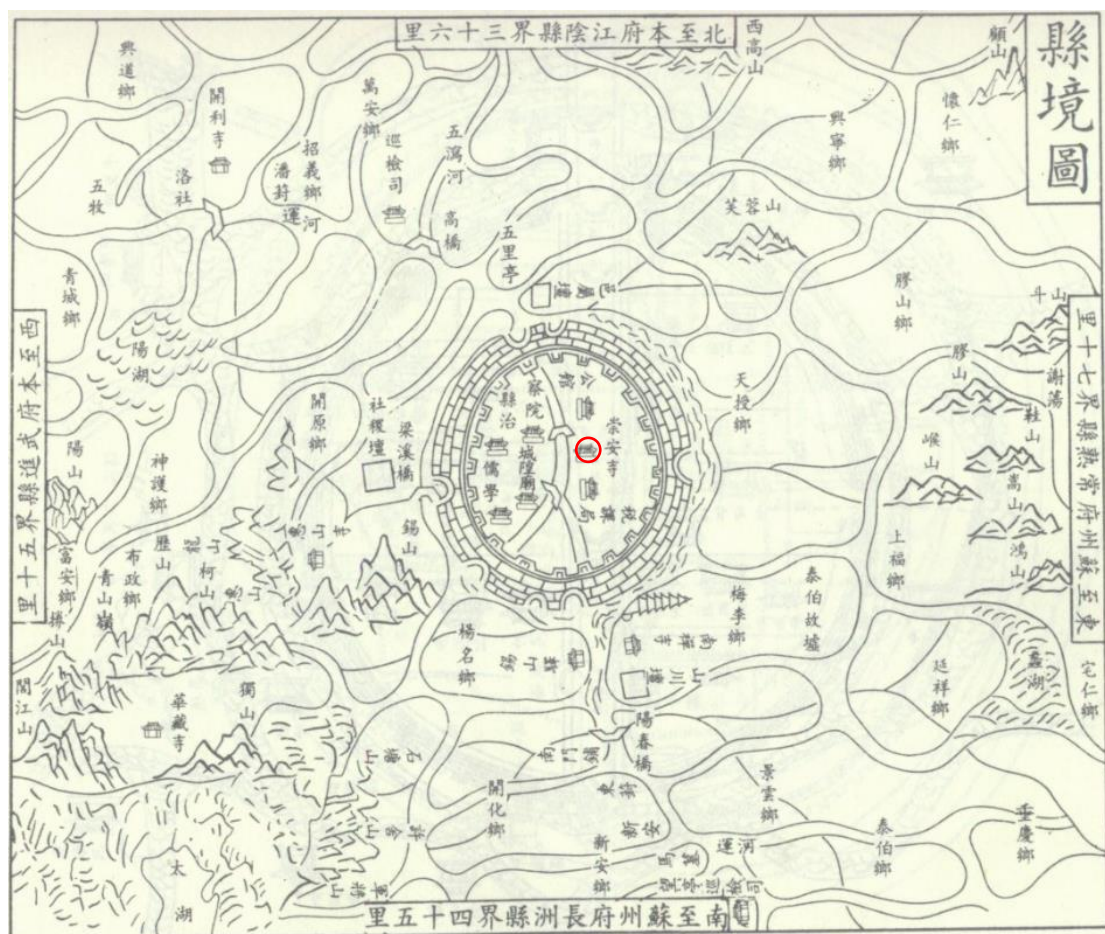


Figure 47: Map of Wuxi in 1494 (restored by Wuxi Planning Bureau). The red circle is the location of Chong'an Temple.

There was a market in the Chong'an Temple, held in the corridors on both sides of the courtyard every year on the 19th of June (lunar calendar). All the local merchants would park their carts in the corridors, offering a wide range of goods. This market gained fame among outsiders. Merchants from Jiangsu, Fujian, and Zhejiang provinces brought treasures, antiques, and daily necessities. Wealthy families sought rare and precious items, while commoners prepared wedding and household items. Children played flutes, tooted horns, waved golden fans, carried lanterns, wore ghost masks, and held dozens of goldfish, creating a lively atmosphere. The market lasted for several tens of days, extending towards the end of the Chongzhen period (1628-1644). Unless there were strong winds and heavy

rains, the authorities would not prohibit these activities.³⁸²

The transactional nature of garden spaces, compared to Ni Zan's private trading markets, is more public and larger. The public nature of the main hall and its courtyard spaces is more prominent, with the functional space of temples as Buddhist monasteries gradually being reduced, and more space becoming public areas for folk customs exhibitions.

The bustling scene is depicted just as in the Ming Dynasty's peddler painting. (Figure 48)



Figure 48: Knickknack peddler in the Ming dynasty (without painters' names), collected in the Palace

³⁸² Wang Yongji, *Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue* [A brief record of Scenery of Wuxi], (Wuxi, Jiale Hall Press, late Ming) vol 2, Temple, from editorial board, *Siku Quanshu Cunmu*, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part

Settled families thrived and wealth was gathered quickly, for example the Hua 华, An 安, and Zou 邹 Clans, each produced talents and merchants.³⁸³ (p156)

The richest city in the Jiangnan area, and west to Zhejiang province, must be Gusu (Suzhou), followed by Wuxi. There are abundant fields and substantial wealth gathered. The rich and powerful families are scattered throughout the area, which cannot be compared to other cities.³⁸⁴

Wealth itself was seen as a means. There was a folk rhyme that went, ‘An Guo 安国, Zou Wang 邹望, Hua Linxiang 华麟祥, daily carrying loads of gold and silver.’ The early experiences of these three individuals were closely related to business or commerce. Among them, Zou Wang was the wealthiest man in Wuxi during the Jiajing Reign (1522-1566).³⁸⁵ He kept over 600 account books, counted rice and grain in millions of kilos, and used warehouses to store copper coins; there was so much silver that it couldn't fit in boxes and was directly stored in rooms. It is said that he owned 300,000 Mu 亩 (18.432km²) of land, had 3,000 servants, and possessed dozens of villas and gardens in his hometown..³⁸⁶

The significant presence of merchants had a profound impact on social morality and cultural changes, playing a crucial role in driving consumption and leading to excessive indulgence. Wuxi's customs shifted from a focus on scholarly pursuits, poetry, literature,

³⁸³ Yao Shuran, ‘Diachronic growth of Ancient Gardens in the Western Suburbs of Wuxi’, (unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Southeast, 2020).

³⁸⁴ Wang Lizhong, 1532, *Hua Shi Chuan Fang Ji Xu* [the Collection of Hua's Family], *Wuxi Wenku*, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011). Album 61

³⁸⁵ Wang, Shizhen, *Guo Chao Cong Ji* [Record of the Ming] Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

³⁸⁶ Hua Cun Kan Xing Shi Zhe, Qing, *Hua Cun Tan Wang* [History Record by Hua Cun] Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

and Confucian arts and culture, with a gathering of merchants, to a trend towards luxurious consumerism and a competitive atmosphere.³⁸⁷

Social: Merchants were originally non-producers and held the lowest social status in agrarian societies. It is believed that those who are vagrants and did not engage in farming, focusing solely on non-agricultural pursuits, were subject to arrest.³⁸⁸ However, as the economy prospered during the Ming dynasty, active and strengthened commercial activities became an inevitable trend. When the government licensed merchants participated in the imperial examinations, their socio-political status greatly improved.³⁸⁹ The estrangement between scholar-officials and merchants was broken, a phenomenon described as the Shi Shang He Liu 士商合流 ‘convergence of scholar-officials and merchants’, where the four different classes in ancient times--scholar-officials, farmers, workers, and merchants--mixed.³⁹⁰

In the context of the imperial examination system, high social status was no longer monopolized by scholarly families; merchant households also gained access to the upper class of society. Evaluation criteria became more diverse, and the accumulation of wealth became an effective means of elevating one’s social standing. Consequently, the identities of garden owners were no longer confined to literati and officials.

³⁸⁷ Zhou, Bangjie, and Qin Liang, *Wuxi Xian Zhi* [Chronicle of Wuxi in Wanli reign], 1574 edition, *Wuxi Wenku*, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

³⁸⁸ 若有不务耕种，专事末作者，是为游民，则逮捕之。 *Ming Tai Zu Shi Lu* [Event Record of the Zhu Yuanzhang], vol208 Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

³⁸⁹ Zhang, Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty],, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Wu, Jianhua. ‘Thoughts on the Career Changes of population in Jiangnan’(Unpublished doctoral thesis, Soochow University, 2000).

³⁹⁰ Yu, Yingshi, *Review and Prospect of Modern Confucianism*. (Beijing: Life Reading Knowledge Sanlian Bookstore, 2004.)

Gu Qiyuan ,Ming Dynasty, *Ke Zuo Zhui Yu* [Miscellany of Informal Essay], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Huang Xingzeng 黄省曾(1490-1540) pointed out that after the establishment of Su Hang Ying Feng Ju³⁹¹ in the 12th century, based on the Beijing-Hangzhou-Canal, the aesthetic direction on artwork appreciation and garden construction in the Wu cultural area changed.³⁹² Officials from all over the country sought to imitate it to gain favour with the emperor, and the trend swept across the entire country.³⁹³ Wealthy families in the Wu area competitively created magnificent rockworks with high peaks and deep holes using Taihu stone. Gardens are filled with precious flowers and trees, and even commoners became addicted to creating small bonsais.³⁹⁴

Based on the economic foundation that had developed since the mid-Ming, garden culture in Wuxi experienced explosive growth, with private gardens becoming the fastest-developing type. Gardens were concentrated in two areas: Mount Hui-urban area and the eastern family settlements, both belonging to owners with multiple identities.

Wealth: market and status

The most straightforward example of this flaunting of wealth culture in Wuxi is the Zhongxiang Hall(众香堂 Myriad Fragrances), founded by Zou Wang.

With heavy eaves and balustrades on all four sides, eight windows in different directions, and could arrange forty-eight desks. Throughout the seasons, over a hundred varieties of fresh flowers were displayed, creating a beautiful scene. In deep autumn, threads of yellow silk were used to hang a thousand kumquat on

³⁹¹ 苏杭应奉局 Service Bureau in Suzhou and Hangzhou area for special imperial artifacts. It called Hua Shi Gang

³⁹² He, Daming, 'Hua Shi Gang and Suzhou Style Bonsai', *Jiangsu Local Chronicles*, (2017),36-38.

³⁹³ Li, Xiao, 'Zhu Mian and Hua Shi Gang, Chinese Literature and History', (1990), 69-72

³⁹⁴ 至今吴中富家竞以湖石筑峙奇峰阴洞，至诸贵占据名岛以凿，凿而嵌空妙绝，珍花异木，错映阑圃，虽闾阎下户，亦饰小小盆岛为玩 Huang, Xingzeng ,Ming Dynasty, *Wu Feng Lu* [Custom of Wu], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

the beams, naturally emitting a fragrant and refreshing aroma.³⁹⁵

His house could accommodate 48 banquet tables. Despite being over a hundred years old, the ancient ginkgo tree in front of the rebuilt Huishan Temple's main hall could only cover around 10 banquet tables.³⁹⁶ As the wealthiest individual in Wuxi, Zou wielded extensive commercial influence that spanned various businesses in the city. He had the capacity to lead businessmen in strikes and boycotts, and he even dared to contest property disputes with the high-ranking officials of the imperial bureaucracy.³⁹⁷ The descriptions of his gardens are also replete with a sense of lavish expenditure. The banquet garden was utilized to establish close ties with local merchants and institutions, employing the essential daily influence to counterbalance the political power held by officials.

There is no recorded information about his other gardens, possibly because such ostentatious displays and designs overflowing with flowers and fruits did not align with the aesthetic sensibilities of the chroniclers.

For some garden owners in Wuxi, the construction of their gardens was facilitated by the financial support derived from their business ventures. Despite diminishing social class distinctions attributed to their professional backgrounds, their garden practices represented an investment directed towards a more elevated literati or societal sphere, since 'the literary productions of brush and ink are more lasting than are gardens.'³⁹⁸ The social status of merchants was recognized by literati, and literati's writing skills and reputation could be exchanged for money by merchants. Their garden culture

³⁹⁵ Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp.260

³⁹⁶ Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

³⁹⁷ Hua Cun Kan Xing Shi Zhe, Qing, *Hua Cun Tan Wang*[History Record by Hua Cun] Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

³⁹⁸ Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

manifested in a different approach to investment, serving as a market for the exchange of handicrafts or favours, or as an investment for acquiring higher social status.

During the early Ming Dynasty, the standards for constructing private residences were very strict and dare not be exceeded. However, by the middle of the dynasty, the laws became more lenient, resulting in the proliferation of large mansions.

The concept of Geng Du Chuan Jia 耕读传家 ‘inheriting the family with ploughing and reading’ is often regarded as emblematic of the production and lifestyle within the feudal society of Jiangnan. The common practice in various societies of regarding productive labour as servile and shameful led to its avoidance.³⁹⁹ However, the statement Si Ti Bu Qin, Wu Gu Bu Fen 四体不勤五谷不分 ‘limbs are not industrious, and cannot distinguish different grains’ is a sarcastic remark in Chinese.⁴⁰⁰ It implies that physical idleness and an inability to discern various grains are undesirable traits. In ancient agricultural rituals, it was customary for the emperor to personally engage in ploughing to underscore the significance of agriculture and serve as a role model for his subjects across successive dynasties. Liang believes it underscores the interdependence of two groups of people: scholars and farmers, and two essential activities: ploughing and reading, emphasizing the need for collaboration between intellectual and agricultural endeavours.⁴⁰¹

For instance, in the case of the establishment of the Donglin Academy by its founder, Gu Xiancheng, his father was unable to financially support the education of all four

³⁹⁹ T. Veblen (1899), translated by Hui Hanmo, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: an economic study of institutions*, (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2019) pp. 29-37.

⁴⁰⁰ Confucius, (Spring and Autumn Period), *Lun Yu* [The Analects of Confucius], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁴⁰¹ Liang, Shuming, *the Collection of Liang Shuming*, (Jinan: Shandong Renmin Press, 2005) revised by Chengdu Luming Bookstore edition in 1949 and Shanghai Xuelin Bookstore edition in 1987. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

sons. To address this challenge, the family adopted a division of labour strategy where the two elder sons engaged in farming and commerce alongside their father, while the two younger sons pursued academic studies. This not only eased the financial burden on the family but also provided them with the opportunity to enhance their social status through success in the imperial examinations, a common aspiration in many large families. The Confucian-merchant model in this chapter is an advanced version of the agrarian-education model, evolving after the commercialization.

In this example, although agricultural labour was not necessarily highly esteemed and was primarily served as a form of passive accumulation, it nonetheless provided an effective model for the family's socioeconomic advancement that remained significant for many years. Beyond agriculture, light industries were available, such as copper movable type printing, which was well-known throughout the country. An's Guipo Hall and Hua's Huitong Hall were two of the famous printing houses in Wuxi.

The garden owners in the concentrated area of the prominent eastern clans in Wuxi engaged in commercial activities associated with literati pursuits and placed significant emphasis on education. It was common for their descendants to achieve social mobility through success in the imperial examination system.

The garden practices of large families encompass a broad spectrum of forms, involving dual investment in both literati pursuits and society to achieve higher social status. Gardens are not merely considered spaces for interaction with literati and artwork transaction, as former stage, that another form of transaction related to literati reputation. Some public garden constructions were dedicated to enhancing their prominence through the transformation of the community or hometown.

During the period, the opportunity to have one's name recorded in tomb inscriptions and receive a place in the annals of history was primarily achievable through the establishment of meritorious deeds and limited pathways such as success in the imperial

examinations; wealth alone was insufficient for such recognition. This is why records of the wealthiest individual, Zou Wang, only appear in private notes.

The Hua family has a history spanning centuries in Wuxi, and their identity as a local clan and collectors earned them entry into the literary circles of Jiangnan. With their pre-existing cultural accumulation, they were adept at establishing connections with literati, such as the creators of gardens during the Yuan dynasty, Hua Ying 华瑛 and Hua Gui 华圭. Hua Xia 华夏 extended invitations to the renowned artist Wen Zhengming 文征明 to visit his home and appreciate the collections. In response, Wen created two paintings for Hua Xia's 'Zhenshang Hall 真赏斋' (Figure 49). The scenes depicted in these paintings showcase the Hua family's modest architecture set against a backdrop of bamboo groves, with pine trees and stones around the house. The interior of the house is filled with a vast collection of books. The precise birth and death dates of Hua Xia remain obscure. Without these paintings, it would have been challenging for anyone to gain insights into his garden.



Figure 49: Zhenshang Hall drawn by Wen Zhengming in 1525, collected in Shanghai Museum

His garden was used to collect calligraphy, paintings, and antiques.⁴⁰² Wen's painting focuses on the scenery of the garden, where natural scenery occupies about one-third of the painting. The garden space is divided by a river, with overlapping mountain

⁴⁰² Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp260

forests in the distance, embodying a concept of not excluding natural scenery and avoiding imitation of nature within the garden. In the transitional zone, bamboo forests serve as the background, with pine and stones in the foreground. The selection of plants adheres to native species from the literati and Jiangnan region. The abundant Taihu stones and pine trees reflects a focus on the longevity and the pride in family possessions meant to be passed down through generations. The garden appears conventional and does not deviate from the inherent literati aesthetic of the time from a design perspective.

The pine trees within the wall are at their best when they are ancient in age. The bamboo at the base is somewhat peculiar. At the end of the bamboo grove, there is a house, which will make it even more tranquil atmosphere.⁴⁰³

This setup creates a quiet atmosphere with a hermit-like feel, and in the lower left corner, there may be Wen Zhengming himself, portraying the image of a hermits seeker, undoubtedly elevating the status of both individuals.

The aesthetic aspect within garden culture serves as a manifestation of the fusion between literati and merchants. The underlying motivation behind this lies in the merchants' desire to elevate society, making it more akin to the attributes associated with literati. Local wealthy merchant families donated land to support local education, culture, and provide relief to disaster victims. For instance, all the famous literati in Jiangnan, such as Zhu Zhishan 祝枝山 and Wen Zhengming, received support from the Hua family. As a student of Shao Bao 邵宝 and Wang Yangming 王阳明, Hua Yun 华云 donated his land outside the south gate of Wuxi for Shao Bao to build an academy.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰³ 墙内有松，松欲古。松底有石，石欲怪。竹尽有室，室欲幽。Cheng, Yuwen, Ming Dynasty, *Bai Hua Li* [Calendar of flowers], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁴⁰⁴ Hua, Ziheng (1676-1744), *Hua Shi Chuan Fang Lu* [Genealogy of the Hua], *Wuxi Wenku*, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing:

The reconstruction of Beichen Temple relied on a donation from the believer Hua Fengweng 华丰翁.⁴⁰⁵

An Guo developed connections with officials through the avenue of printing. The Minister of Personnel, Liao Ji 廖纪, entrusted him to print his own six-volume work, 'Dongguang County Annals 东光县志.' An's deeds are mainly derived from Liao's evaluation and praise of him.⁴⁰⁶ Xilin Garden 西林 began as a response to disaster relief in the early 16th century. An's town suffered from severe water shortages and drought at that time. To provide relief to those affected, An excavated a canal at the southern foot of Mount Jiao, recruited a thousand workers to dig ponds, and distributed food as compensation based on their work. Within a few months, they excavated several hundred acres of water pools, with two stone islands in the middle. The workers received rations, which were vital for their survival. After completing the large pool, the following year it was used for irrigation, fish farming, and the profitable cultivation of aquatic plants. The earnings from this pond were considered quite lucrative. Based on this foundation, An Guo planted trees around the pools and along the river embankment, gradually initiating the construction of the landscape.⁴⁰⁷

An's contribution to the development of his hometown went beyond constructing a pond. He supported the renovation and expansion of the main hall of Jiaoshan Temple, and built a memorial temple for Li Gang, donating 13 Mu of fertile land for spring and autumn sacrifice rites, and holding rites. The temple has served as the ancestral temple

Phenix Press, 2012). Album 61 Wang Yongji,

⁴⁰⁵ 凤陵华封翁首施地施屋，诸檀信继之。At Fengling, Hua Fengweng is generous in distributing land and houses, and all the monks and believers followed. Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp71

⁴⁰⁶ Jiangnan Newspaper, <http://szb.wxrb.com/jnwb/pc/content/202009/11/content_56376.html> [accessed 09 December 2021]

⁴⁰⁷ Wang, Yongji, (Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

of his family since the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279), honouring a general posthumously titled Zhongding 忠定 ‘Loyalty and Determination’, who fought against Jin invaders and defended his homeland.⁴⁰⁸

Both the An Family and Hua Family are situated in the eastern plains of Wuxi, benefiting from the canal and agricultural economy. This marks the initiation of garden culture in the eastern part of Wuxi. The next section will delve into the subsequent prosperity of literati and the region.

Jiang Chunbo 江春波 is a particularly unique example among the owners of gardens in Wuxi. He was a master craftsman and a merchant. Around 1600, he was expelled by his stepmother and taken in by a carver in Suzhou who taught him the art of sculpture. Over the next 20 years, he traveled extensively, earning a living by carving Buddha statues and engaging in the trade of medicinal herbs, stones, and wood between different regions, until he built a thatched cottage on Mount Wulang 五浪山.⁴⁰⁹

Jiang continued to dedicate himself to his carving work and his exceptional skills in vegetarian cuisine. His garden served as a market for art pieces, displaying a Buddha statue in the centre and the handicrafts he had collected over the years around it, and offered private dining experiences, facilitating interactions with literati.⁴¹⁰ Much like Ni Zan, it is highly likely that his garden emphasized the display of items available for sale, essentially transforming his garden into a commercial space. Eminent literary figures of the time, such as Tang Bohu 唐伯虎, Zhu Zhishan, and the father-son duo of Wen Zhengming, frequently visited to admire his craftsmanship and often found

⁴⁰⁸ Qian Jiandong, ‘An Overview of the Historical Sites in Mount Jiaoshan, Wuxi’, *Wuxi Library*, 1(2007), 40-42

⁴⁰⁹ Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁴¹⁰ Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty). *Xishan Jingwu Lue* [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

themselves extending their stays beyond their initial intentions.

The gardens constructed by merchants have left few discernible design intricacies. Instead, they manifest as venues where merchants sought to exchange wealth and social status. Merchants often had extensive travel routes due to the demands of their businesses, and any garden culture along their routes, for example, along the Beijing-hangzhou Canal to northern Hebei province, could potentially have an impact. However, a greater body of evidence regarding interactions with literati suggests that their garden culture, especially in terms of design, was more likely influenced by literati from Suzhou, including figures like Wen Zhengming. Records and paintings indicate the general aesthetics of literati. This situation ultimately constrained the status and influence of non-scholar gardens in Wuxi, confining their significance primarily to the local context.

In local business families, the arrangement of gardens still adheres to the aesthetic principles shared by literati. This indirectly illustrates the expansion of literati garden culture into other social professions, broadening the scope of garden culture—a consequence of the increased complexity in the occupational roles of garden owners.

A more effective means of establishing connections with literati is through one's own social status or, alternatively, through the social status of one's direct descendants, having undergone the transition from being merchants to literati

Rise of garden culture in Mid and late Ming: agronomy and aesthetics, Responsibility and entertainment in literati gardens

For a large group of garden owners in Wuxi, they had passed the imperial examinations, thereby attained official positions or at least held the status of literati. Their social standing was among the highest in Wuxi. The involvement of literati in commercial activities further increased their economic advantages, enabling the construction of

more gardens. With the increasing difficulty of the imperial examinations, the conventional aspirations of literati to engage in official careers weakened further. The cultural significance of gardens as spaces for leisure and recreation became increasingly prominent, while activities related to leisure within gardens continued to grow.

Given the re-emphasized hierarchy under the centralized system and the challenges posed by additional economic and regional influences in Jiangnan, the maintenance and advancement of their social status became an important concern. For garden owners primarily identified as literati, their gardens served as spaces of familial responsibility, extending to the local (Wuxi) context. This encompassed extensive social interactions and the development of local public scenic areas, among other activities.

Buddhism Folkization and gatherings in artificially modified nature landscape

When Zhu gradually adjusted his Buddhist policies from support to suppression, the regulation of monks became strict. Practitioners had to choose a location at least fifteen li (around 8.64 Kilometres) away from urban areas. Chan and preaching monks were required to remain in their temples and strictly adhere to their rules.⁴¹¹ Buddhism in daily life appeared in the form of folk customs and temples as tourist destination.⁴¹²

Local people regarded the Huishan Chan Temple, with Erquan spring and the garden, as a recreational destination (with restrictions during the Hongzhi period) since the mountain was too high to climb. On good days in spring, young men and women dressed in splendid attire would flock to the temple, where Buddhist flags fluttered and the fragrance of incense wafted through the air. In autumn, under the melancholic moonlight, guests and friends would set up food and

⁴¹¹ Ge Yinliang, *Jin Ling Fan Cha Zhi*[Chronicle of Buddhist Temples in Jinling] vol 2, emperor decree in 1394 Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁴¹² Zhao, Yifeng, 'A Discussion on the Religious Policy of the Ming Dynasty', *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 1.2(2007)2: 68-85

drinks everywhere, enjoying drinking and playing music. The front of the main hall was adorned with lush ginkgo trees that had been there for over a hundred years, capable of accommodating ten banquet tables. Only in the inner courtyard of the temple could one hear the chanting of scriptures and the sound of wooden fish and clappers during the monks' practice sessions.⁴¹³

Commerce and entertainment in Wuxi at that time were quite developed. Even famous temples like Huishan Temple could not avoid the situation of becoming an empty temple with no monks after the passing of Zou Diguang 邹迪光, and being used as a place for entertainment (likely implying a brothel) rather than a place of religious significance.⁴¹⁴ The literati did not hold Buddhism in high regard, and one can glean some insight into this by observing An Guo's 安国 desire to separate Li Gang's 李纲 memorial temple from Jiaoshan Temple 胶山.⁴¹⁵ Abandoned courtyards located on both sides of the central axis were bought by citizens to establish gardens. (Figure 50 the yellow-colour area).⁴¹⁶ The change in land ownership shows the gradual decline of

⁴¹³ Wang Yongji, *Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue [A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery]*, (Wuxi, Jiale Hall Press, late Ming) vol 2, Temple, from editorial board, *Siku Quanshu Cunmu*, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part

⁴¹⁴ 自邹学宪歿后，檀越无人，亦成空谷，直谓之笙歌院风月场可也。Wang Yongji, *Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue [A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery]*, (Wuxi, Jiale Hall Press, late Ming) vol 2, Temple, from editorial board, *Siku Quanshu Cunmu*, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part

⁴¹⁵ Qian, Jiandong, 'An Overview of the Historical Sites in Mount Jiaoshan, Wuxi', *Wuxi Library*, 1(2007), 40-42

⁴¹⁶ 凭礼部出批，着落僧录司差僧人将榜文去，清理天下僧寺。凡僧人不许与民间杂处，务要三十人以上聚成一寺，二十人以下者听令归并成寺。其原非寺额，创立庵堂寺院名色并行革去。According to the Ministry of Rites' decree, orders were issued to the Bureau of Monastic Records to dispatch monks to post official notices, undertaking the cleaning of all monasteries throughout the realm. Monks were strictly prohibited from mingling with the general populace. It was mandated that groups of thirty or more monks should form a monastery, while groups of fewer than twenty monks were to be merged into existing monasteries. Any original designations of temples, halls, or monastic institutions were abolished, and their names and titles were unified and removed. Respect this decree. Ge, Yinliang, *Jin Ling Fan Cha Zhi*[Chronicle of Buddhist Temples in Jinling] vol 2, emperor decree in 1391, Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

“以洪武年间天下寺院皆已归并，近有不务祖风者仍于僻处私建庵院，僧尼混处，屡犯宪章，乃命礼部榜示天下”，“禁僧尼私建庵院”，“俾守法规，违者必诛”。During the Hongwu period, all monasteries nationwide were already consolidated. Recently, there have been instances of neglecting ancestral customs where private

Wuxi's Buddhism temples. As a land source for private gardens, the site selection in Wuxi is still concentrated in Mount Hui area with high overlap. The advantage lies in the thickness of history and humanity, which also means the flourishing development of garden culture in Wuxi and certain site selection restrictions.

construction of hermitages and monastic institutions in remote areas has occurred, with monks and nuns cohabiting, repeatedly violating laws and regulations. Therefore, the Ministry of Rites has been ordered to post notices throughout the realm." "Monks and nuns are prohibited from privately constructing hermitages and monastic institutions." "They must abide by the laws and regulations, and those who violate them will be punished with execution. Yang, Shiqi, *Ming Tai Zong Shi Lu* [Records of Ming Tai Zong] vol189, edit and print by History of Academia Sinica Proof of the Language Institute, Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

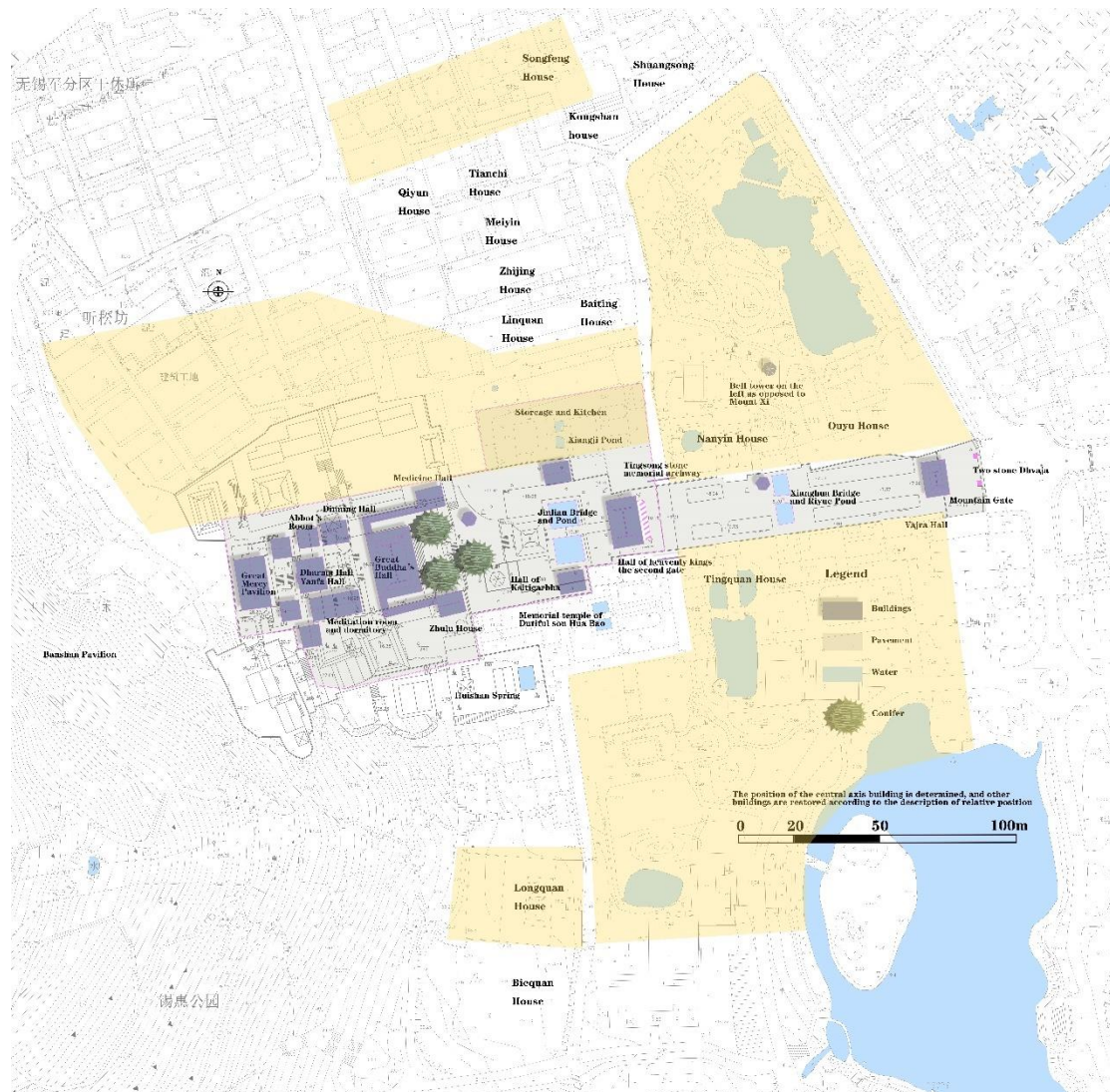


Figure 50: Conjectural map of Huishan Temple during 13-15th century. The yellow part are the main gardens built based on Buddhist courtyards

(Draw from Cad map using the document in the late 17th century and the archaeological reports)

The leisure activities in Wuxi gardens can be traced back to the Song Dynasty, where the combination of tomb-sweeping and recreation is evident (Chapter 2). During the Yuan Dynasty, interactions among literati led to the development of private garden culture. Elites in Suzhou played a pivotal role in the revival of imperial gardens in the

16th century.⁴¹⁷ As the Jiangnan region began emulating their practices, the garden culture that had declined at the end of the Yuan Dynasty gradually spread throughout the entire empire.⁴¹⁸ The Poetry Gathering played an indispensable role in the process of emulating and expanding garden culture in Jiangnan. Wen Zhengming's painting 'Tea Gathering at Mount Hui' depicts a gathering that took place at Mount Hui in 1518, showcasing the vibrant atmosphere of the poetry gathering (Figure 51). Tracing back to the old story that happened at Fragrant Hill 香山 served as an important factor in the flourishing of poetry societies during the Ming. (Figure 52)⁴¹⁹ Similarities in composition can also be observed in the two paintings.

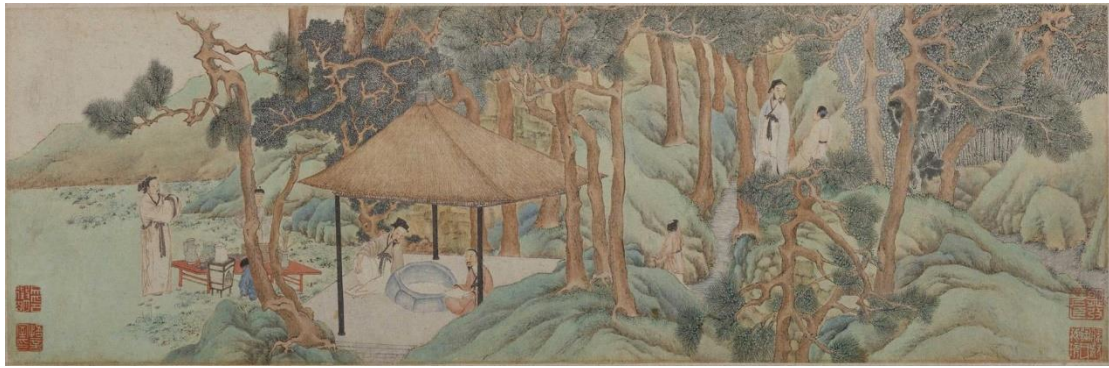


Figure 51: Tea gathering in Mount Hui drawn by Wen Zhengming, in the painting was Wen Zhengming 文征明 and his friend, Cai Yu 蔡羽, Wang Shou 王守、Wang Chong 王宠、Tang Zhen 汤珍, etc. collected in the Palace Museum of China in Beijing

⁴¹⁷ Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

⁴¹⁸ Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

⁴¹⁹ 尝与胡杲、吉皎、郑据、刘真、卢真、张浑、狄兼谟、卢贞燕集,皆高年不事者,人慕之,绘为九老图。Once gathered with Hu Dai, Ji Yao, Zheng Ju, Liu Zhen, Lu Zhen, Zhang Hun, Di Jianmo, and Lu Zhenyan, all elderly individuals who were no longer involved in official duties, they were honored and depicted in a painting titled "Portrait of the Nine Elders." Ouyang, Xiu (Song Dynasty), *Xin Tang Shu* [The History of the Tang Dynasty (New Edition)], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. Vol 109



Figure 52: The nine elders of fragrant Hill drawn by Ma Xingzu, Freer gallery of Asian art , mid-12th century

Just as Wen frequently visited Mount Hui to participate in tea gatherings, regional restrictions during this period became even less relevant in the interactions among literati in Wuxi and Suzhou. Xinghai 性海 had invited renowned scholars and monks from Suzhou and Changzhou to hold poetry gatherings with themes revolving around tea stoves, springs, and tea tasting. These gatherings, aimed at composing poetry, continued from the late 14th century to the 18th century and involved literati from Wuxi, Suzhou, and Beijing. (Figure 53).⁴²⁰

⁴²⁰ Edit by Wu, Yue. *Hui shan Zhu Lu Tu Yong* [Poems and Paintings of Bamboo Stove Chant]. Photocopy of the original engraved edition in the 27th year of Qianlong. Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Library], Volume 27. (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011). 竹炉之名，不独传一方，而遂以闻天下 The fame of the bamboo stove not only spread within a region but eventually became known throughout the world. Paintings by Shen Zhen, Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007).



Figure 53: Left: Maps of four gathering of literates-Bamboo stove and tea gathering- in the early 15th century, 1476, 1483(the first three are re-drawn in the 18th century) and in the 18th century. (from Wu Yue. Hui shan Zhu Lu Tu Yong [Poems and Paintings of Bamboo Stove Chant]. Photocopy of the original engraved edition in the 27th year of Qianlong. Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Library], Volume 27. Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011.)

Right: Bamboo stove and tea gathering drew by Shen Zhen in 1471 collected in Liaoning Museum

It has become difficult to discern whether the fashion of poetry gatherings was influenced by Suzhou or Beijing. The Bishan Club 碧山吟社 was built on the abandoned land of Huishan Temple in 1482, in the Longquan Courtyard 龙泉房. The organizer of the club and the landowner of the site, Qin Xu 秦修 (1410-1494), chose to care for his mother instead of pursuing an official position, which was a gift from the emperor to his son. The other nine members were all gentry who had opted out of official duties and agricultural labour. They held gatherings regularly to promote peace and prosperity, maintaining their social ideology and preserving the cultural and

customs beauty of their times for people and future generations to appreciate.⁴²¹



Figure 54: Top: Current situation of Bishan garden (photo by author in May, 2021)

Bottom: gathering at Bishan garden (partial) drawn by Shen Zhou, and the notes written by Xu Wenzhen and Shao Bao⁴²² from the Palace Museum of China in Beijing

Lu Mian (age 82) was writing on the cliff and his retinue was holding ink stone for him. Chen Lv (age 83) and Chen Gongmao (age 69) were in appreciation with hand place on another one's shoulder which shows an intimate relationship. Under the pine trees, the two were Huang Lu (age 73) and Shi Liang (age 61). They were sitting side by side observing the crane. In the hall, Qin Xu (age 85) was writing poems on the painting, and Yang Tingli (age 72) and Li Shu (age 86) looking at him. Beside the bamboo, Pan Xu (under 60) was holding iron pencil to inscribe the bamboos. Facing to

⁴²¹ 每月择良日觴咏其中，惟歌咏太平，以形容国家之盛，固分内事哉。今而后务以德义相劝，过失相规，言毋忘诞，行毋诡随，期不愧于古人，无惭于后进，幸矣。Every month on an auspicious day, we gather to sing praises among ourselves, singing only of peace and prosperity, describing the flourishing state of the country, which indeed pertains to internal affairs. From now on, we must encourage each other with virtue and righteousness, correcting each other's faults, ensuring our words are sincere and our actions straightforward, so that we may live up to the standards of the ancients and not be ashamed before future generations. This is our good fortune. Monk Yuanxian, Shao Bao, edit by Shao Hanchu, *Hui Shan Ji, Hui shan Ji Xu Bian* [Record and the Continuation of Mount Hui], (Suzhou, Gu Wu Xuan Publishing House, 2006), pp70

⁴²² Ming, Shen Zhou, gathering of the Bishan garden (part), collected by Palace Museum

the creek, Gao Zhi (age79) was ruminating. Except for scholars, monk Juexing from Huishan temple was on the way to bring tea for them⁴²³

Compared to the garden visiting groups of the Yuan Dynasty, He Zongmei points out that celebrating the prosperous era through poems during the Ming Dynasty was not solely driven by literature itself but rather stemmed from the growing strength of the country and the natural desire and inherent responsibility of participants to sing praises of peace and the emperor's benevolence.⁴²⁴ From the early to the mid-Ming Dynasty, the population of Wuxi County doubled.⁴²⁵ The growth of national power and social harmony served as practical examples to validate the correctness of the emperor's policies. Due to shared core values among local elites and officials, the possibility of mutual imitation arose. Emperors and the upper social class attracted talented individuals and promoted banquet gatherings, which integrated the atmosphere of literati association into official settings.⁴²⁶ Simultaneously, officials who visited Wuxi also attended these banquets, increasing the society's reputation over 300 years. Participants included Wuxi-born literati Chen Mian 陈冕 and Sheng Yan 盛彦, as well as prominent academic figures like Wu Kuan 吴宽, Lu Jian, and Cheng Minzheng.⁴²⁷

It stimulated the construction of more activity venues when the original club site was

⁴²³ Bishan club, Wang Yongji, *Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue [A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery]*, (Wuxi, Jiale Hall Press, late Ming) vol 3, from editorial board, *Siku Quanshu Cunmu*, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part, Li, Cheng, Notes of the Painting of Bishan Club, in Wuxi Garden Bureau, Wuxi History Office, Wuxi City Library, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan [the history garden of Wuxi]*, (Beijing: Fangzhi Chubanshe,2007)

⁴²⁴ He, Zongmei, and Li Bing. 'Taige Elegant Collection and Yilao Poetry Society in Ming Dynasty'. *Journal of Tangshan Normal University* 03 (2001),12-16.

⁴²⁵ Wu, Chong and Li Shu, Ming dynasty. *Wuxi Chong Xiu Xian Zhi [Reconstruction of Wuxi County Annals]* 1494 edition. Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] Volume 1. Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011

⁴²⁶ He, Zongmei, and Li Bing. 'Taige Elegant Collection and Yilao Poetry Society in Ming Dynasty'. *Journal of Tangshan Normal University* 03 (2001),12-16.

⁴²⁷ Zhang, Kai. Ming dynasty, 'Bishan Yinshe Record', from Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan [Gardens in Wuxi]*, (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007),pp.222

taken over by others. They gathered in the villas of various gentlemen and kept the name ‘Bishan Club’, such as the Erquan House built by Shao Bao, Fenggu Xingwo 凤谷行窝 by Qin Jin 秦金 (later Jichang Garden), and Huiyan Xiaozhu 惠岩小麓.⁴²⁸ Garden culture in Wuxi expanded quickly thereafter. The abandoned courtyards of Huishan Temple gradually transferred into private hands and transformed into gardens, forming a scene of ‘gardens surrounding Mount Hui.’ The Ouyu courtyard 沕寓房 became Fenggu Xingwo 凤谷行窝, Biequan courtyard 别泉房 became Yugong Valley 愚公谷 built by Zou Diguang, etc. (Figure 55).⁴²⁹



Figure 55: Landscape in Mount Hui and Xi in the late Ming dynasty, drawn by Wang Yongji in his book Wang, Yongji, Ming dyansty. Xishan Jingwu Lue [A brief introduction to the scenery of Xishan]. Wang Liren, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] Volume 22 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

The culture of gardening in Wuxi during the middle to late Ming period can be primarily characterized by the horticultural practices of local social groups, with the prevailing social atmosphere fostering the formation of social networks and facilitating cultural exchanges. Garden culture was disseminated and expanded through this social network, bringing individuals together more closely and strengthening the stability of the social

⁴²⁸ Chen, Tian, *Ming Shi Ji Shi* [Poetry in the Ming Dynasty] ,1899, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁴²⁹ Wang Yongji, *Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue* [A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery], (Wuxi, Jiale Hall Press, late Ming) from editorial board, *Siku Quanshu Cunmu*, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part,

class.

The Qin family, as proprietors of Jichang Garden, maintained their involvement in garden making in Wuxi throughout this period. The network placed particular focus on Qin. Shi Ce 施策, whose daughter married Qin Yao's son, served as the Minister of the Imperial Household and eventually returned to his hometown. Shi became the owner of East Pond Garden and spent leisurely 30 years there. Tu Long 屠隆 (1542-1605), a composer invited to Jichang Garden to guide the creation of Kunqu Opera, left behind a garden record. Tu's close friend, Zou Diguang 邹迪光, composed a significant number of poems, demonstrating his great interest in gardens. After retiring from his official position, Zou built Yugong Valley across from Jichang Garden, which was even more highly praised than Jichang Garden at that time. Painter Song Maojin 宋懋晋, highly regarded by Tu and Zou, painted a series of fifty scenes of Jichang Garden.⁴³⁰ An Xifan 安希范 (1564-1621) and his brother An Shaofang 安绍芳, descendants of the An family, owned numerous ancestral homes and gardens in the eastern part of Wuxi.⁴³¹ Even in the 1980s, remnants of these gardens could still be observed, reflecting their former grandeur.⁴³² An Xifan married the daughter of Tan Xiu 谈修, who wrote 'History of Mount Hui' and 'History of Wuxi Official School'.⁴³³ Tan's daughter married into the Hua family, who lived adjacent to the An family. One of the members, Hua Cha 华察, owned South Garden 南园 and participated in the restoration of Bishan Club in 1554 together with Qin Han, Gu Kejiu 顾可久 (1482-1561, owner of Luluo Villa 绿萝庄), and Wang Wen 王问 (1497-1576, builder of Baojie Mountain House 宝

⁴³⁰ Qin, Zhihao, *Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2009)

⁴³¹ Wu Xi, 1897, *Taibo Meili Zhi* [Chorography of Meili Wuxi], *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁴³² Zhao, Jianzhong, 'Xilin Garden in Jiaoshan Town', (Beijing: China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing House, 2006)

⁴³³ Tan, Xiu, Ming Dynasty, *Hui Shan Gu Jin Kao* [History of the Mount Hui], *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

界山居, also known as Hushan Cottage 湖山草堂). Another member of the Hua family, Hua Shu 华寿 (1589-1643), exchanged poems about Jichang Garden with Wang Yongji 王永积(residing in Suzhou), who wrote ‘A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery’.⁴³⁴ Apart from marital and friendship ties, An Xifan, Gao Panlong 高攀龙, and Gu Xiancheng 顾宪成 established and taught at Donglin Academy in the early 17th century, sharing common family backgrounds and academic ideals.

There are complicated relationships among in-laws, friends, and mentoring relationships. Their interest in gardens is also an aspect of their connection. Almost all family members who owned gardens were once literati officials. Simultaneously, it can be seen that the scope of their communication is concentrated among local families in Wuxi, and those who make gardens or visit from other places are generally literati who lived in the south of the Yangtze River. There are few people who move and settle down in Wuxi and build gardens from non-Jiangnan areas.

These relationships encompassed almost all the gardens in Wuxi during the middle and late Ming Dynasty. This situation was even more pronounced in small regional cities. Among them was Shao Bao, who was involved in garden construction and poetry societies. His most significant contribution lies in the documentation and promotion of local gardens, which will be discussed in detail later.

While gatherings were indeed important when these gardens were initially established,

⁴³⁴ Wang, Yongji, Ming Dynasty, *A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

Qin, Guozhang, the Republic of China, ‘Articles and Poems of Jichang Garden’. From Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian* [Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin’s Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2009)

Genealogies’ including 1) Qin, Yujun (1928), *Genealogy of the Qin Family in Xishan (Wuxi)*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012) 2) An, Rongguang (1922), *Genealogy of the An and Huang Families in Jiaoshan (Wuxi)*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012). 3) Hua, Ziheng (1743), *Genealogy of the Hua Family*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

carrying a certain sense of delight in affluent living, the primary manifestation of Wuxi's garden culture is by no means limited to spaces for hosting gatherings. This will be discussed in two separate sections, intersecting in time and space.

Preservation of agricultural concept

The Qin family in Wuxi were descendants of Qin Guan 秦观 (1049-1100), Grand Secretary of Longtuge 龙图阁大学士, and were the foremost family in Wuxi. After the Ming Dynasty, Wuxi saw the emergence of two major gathering areas for the Qin family: West Water Gate 西水关 and Xiaolou Alley 小娄巷. Each of them established several gardens in the city and on Mount Hui. Among these, the best known is undoubtedly Jichang Garden.⁴³⁵

By the time Jichang Garden was established, prohibitions regarding the construction of private gardens had already been lifted. A culture of literati gardens disconnected from productive activities had emerged.⁴³⁶ However, even in gardens like Jichang Garden in Wuxi, complete detachment from agricultural meaning was not possible. Instead, it was in the gardens of Zou Wang, the wealthiest individual (as discussed in the previous section), where a complete dependence on aesthetic practices could be achieved.

Fenggu XingWo was built from the Ouyu monk courtyard 沕寓房, most likely during his temporary retirement from 1527 to 1532.⁴³⁷ The first builder was Qin Jin 秦金 (1467-1544), who held the position of Shangshu (尚书 highest ranking of the ministry) in the Ministry of War in Nanjing. His high title and achievements are evident, at least

⁴³⁵ Qin Yujun(1928), *Xishan Qinshi Zongpu*[Genealogy of the Qin Family in Xishan(Wuxi)], Wuxi Wenku[Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012). At least 7 private gardens belong to the Qin family.

⁴³⁶ Craig Clunas, *Fruitful Sites : Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*, Reaktion Books, Limited, 2004. ProQuest Ebook Central, pp67

⁴³⁷ Shao, Hanchu(1868), *Hui Shan Ji Xu Bian*[Continuation of the Record of the Mount Hui] , *Wuxi Wenku*[Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

within the feudal-era rating system. Six archways were erected near his ancestral home in his honour. The only poem left by him about his garden showed a longing for botanical gardens and natural scenery. Despite being such a successful high-ranking official, his garden did not attain the same level of renown as the later reconstructed Jichang Garden, where artistic creations were countless. After Qin Jin's death, the garden was sold to his brother's grandson, Qin Liang 秦梁. This was not in line with the normal succession situation as he had two sons.

The emergence of this phenomenon was accompanied by a sad story for the family. Qin Jin's eldest son, Qin Pan (秦泮), was very intelligent and a role model among the scholars of his time.⁴³⁸ Unfortunately, he died at the age of 41 in 1532, bringing inconsolable grief to his family.⁴³⁹ In his old age, Qin Jin chose to teach at the family school after retiring instead of living in the garden that his son had painstakingly built.⁴⁴⁰ His second son, Qin Bian (秦汧), was addicted to collecting and carving books and was not adept at managing the garden. In order to prevent his father's efforts from going to waste and to keep the garden within the family, before 1560 he sold the garden to his son Qin Bing's (秦柄) friends, Qin Liang and his father Qin Han (秦瀚), who belonged to the same Qin family.⁴⁴¹ Treating gardens as tradable assets, the emphasis on ancestral property values favored selling it to individuals with the same family name.

For this garden, luck may have played a role. Qin Liang (1515-1578), an official and literati, along with Qin Bing, started the Qin family's participation in county annals

⁴³⁸ Gong, Aidong, et al, *Chorography of Literatus in Jiangsu Province*, Volume Wuxi, (Nanjing, Jiangsu People's Press, 1995)

⁴³⁹ Xue Yingqi (Ming dynasty), *Fangshan Xiansheng Wenji* [Collection of Master Fangshan], Volume 31, eBook in National Library of China.

⁴⁴⁰ Qin, Yujun (1928), *Genealogy of the Qin Family in Xishan (Wuxi)*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012)

⁴⁴¹ Qin, Yujun, *Qinshi Xianzheng Lu* [Chronicles of Celebrities in the Qin Family], Handwriting, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

editing, significantly elevating the status of the Qin family and its garden.⁴⁴² Qin Han became the new organizer of the Bishan Club in 1560.⁴⁴³ The social interactions of the second-generation garden owners boosted the reputation of Jichang Garden. Qin Han imitated Bai Juyi's (白居易) poem from the Tang Dynasty and wrote a poem to record his work.

The garden remained a small, secluded place, featuring a spring pool, bamboo forest, old trees, halls, rooms, bridges, boats, pavilions, flower-filled paths, vegetable gardens, water chestnuts, and lotus ponds. Here, one could read books, drink wine, listen to string music and songs, pick a basket full of fruit, and easily catch fish with a net.⁴⁴⁴

From his description, even though the garden underwent certain rearrangements, the vegetable gardens, fruits, and aquatic products still retained a connection to agricultural output. However, being a small garden, it could not be used for large financial gain.

The third owner, Qin Yao, added pear, peaches, dates, and other fruit trees. Although he owned at least 10,000 mu of farmland (the total farmland belonging to officials and residents in Wuxi County was about 1,500,000 mu during the same period), he still cared about the output of his garden.⁴⁴⁵ He never completely withdrew from land production and profit. He employed workers, stewards, and possibly other laborers to help him manage this artificially piece of land. This is quite different from the

⁴⁴² Zhou, Bangjie, and Qin Liang, *Wuxi Xian Zhi* [Chronicle of Wuxi in Wanli reign], 1574 edition, *Wuxi Wenku*, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁴⁴³ Qin Zhihao, 'Rethinking about Feng Gu Xing Wo', *Memorial Temple Expo*, 2004 (7). Internal information

⁴⁴⁴ Qin, Han, Peom of the Garden, from Qin Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)

⁴⁴⁵ Qin Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)

avoidance of agricultural crops seen in the flourishing gardens of Suzhou during the late Ming period, highlighting that the garden culture of Wuxi has always retained a commercial approach to agricultural products.

The level of economic prosperity in Wuxi was somewhat inferior to that of Suzhou. The literati gardens in Wuxi were often situated on the outskirts of cities following the gathering fashion, or in rural settlements based on their family's residence. This positioning is believed to have roots in the agricultural production-oriented perspective that persisted throughout the period among most literati garden creators in Wuxi. The Xilin Garden of the An family, following renovations by a descendant of An Guo, was renowned for its suitability for eyes (sightseeing), feet (walking), body (physical well-being), and mouth (culinary enjoyment).⁴⁴⁶ The practice of raising animals and cultivating vegetables and fruits within the garden is for consumption.

There are many such examples in Wuxi gardens, where most gardens retain fruit trees, vegetable gardens, and even rice paddies which are closely connected with daily life (Appendix 8: Plants in the records of Wuxi from 9th century Appendix 9: Species in garden space in different centuries.)

This secluded and self-sufficient ideal based on subsistence agriculture can be traced back to 'Wu Ling Yuan 武陵源' written by Tao Yuanming, often referenced as an idyllic paradise for later literati recluses. It simulated a self-sustaining agricultural lifestyle within an isolated space, resembling a kitchen garden. Essential crops and vegetables were cultivated alongside fruit trees and flowers, adding aesthetic value to meet daily life needs. For instance, plum and chrysanthemum flowers, as well as the symbolic peach blossoms representing Wu Ling Yuan in Tao's imaginary garden.

⁴⁴⁶ Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

Qian Yong 钱咏 Qian Yong praised his uncle's garden, describing it as a place for 'rest in spring and harvesting in autumn'.⁴⁴⁷ Shi Jian 施渐 used hibiscus hedges to separate vegetables, rice, and other crops, creating a picturesque landscape filled with the fragrance of rice and blooming flowers in the fields.⁴⁴⁸ They did not shy away from appreciating labour involved in cultivating plants, as depicted in the poems of Tao Yuanming.

Crops, fruit trees, and other economic outputs, as analysed by Clunas, can yield substantial benefits. Monks similarly maintain agricultural practice areas for orchards and vegetables in courtyards adjacent to or near Buddhist temples. Apart from the rice paddy landscapes within the gardens, which may have had tangible economic benefits for Buddhist communities, the majority of agricultural economic activities were centred around temples. This style follows the legacy of the Tang Dynasty's integration of agriculture with Chan practices in Buddhist temples. Monks support themselves through farming, viewing their labour as a form of Buddhist practice.

The vegetable gardens next to the temples are planted with fruit trees, vegetables, beans, and grains to mitigate food shortages in winter.⁴⁴⁹ Monks sometimes dig channels for growing rice in these fields, which are situated in their living areas separate from the main courtyard axis (Figure 56).⁴⁵⁰ The mistle tree in front of the mountain originally supplemented the monks' diet.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁷ Qian, Yong, Ming dynasty, 'Notes of Ke Zhuang', from Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

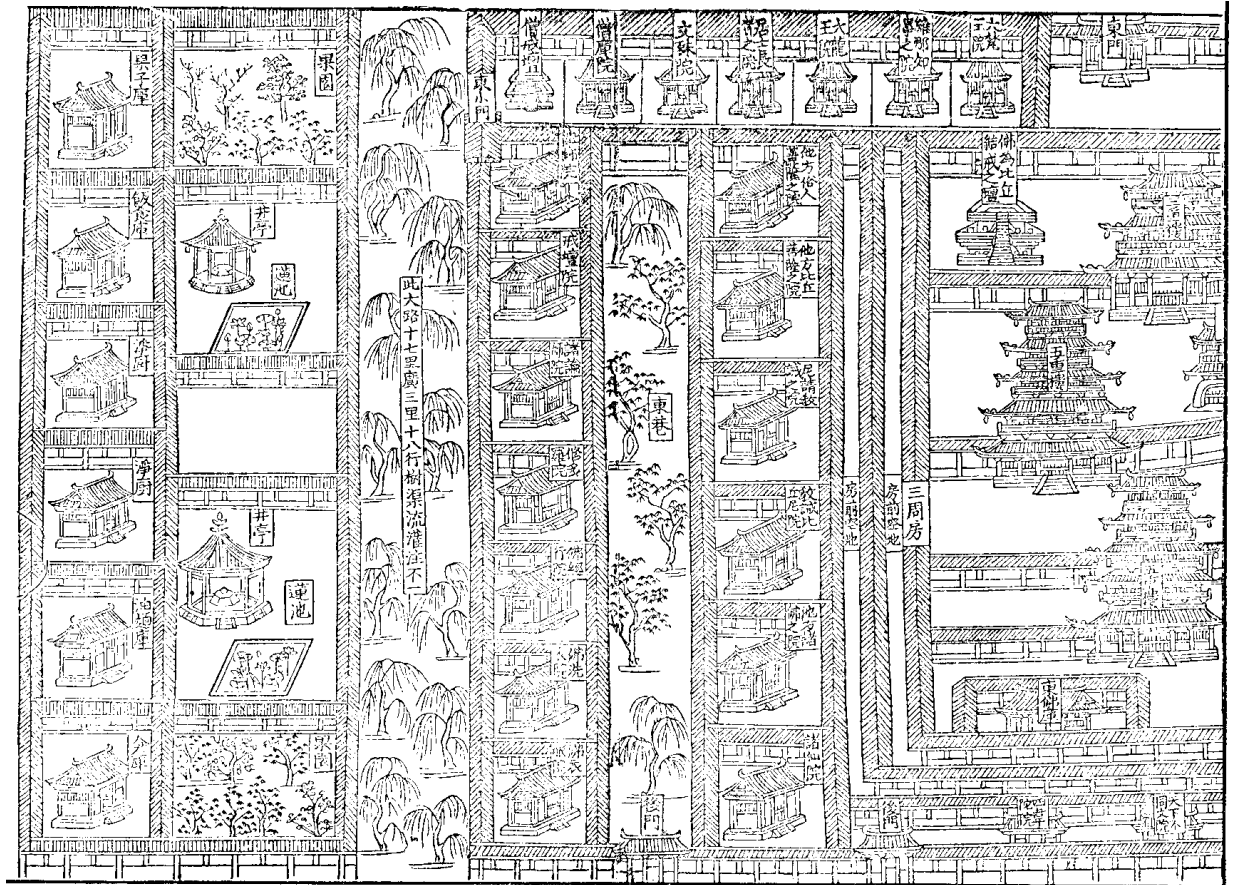
⁴⁴⁸ Wang, Yongji (Ming Dynasty), *A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁴⁴⁹ Rencao temple and Chaoyang temple from Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

⁴⁵⁰ Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

⁴⁵¹ Jiaosan Temple, from Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

Commercial practices also influenced local Buddhists. In the 18th century, a monk from Nanchan Temple 南禪寺 established a retirement garden about 1.5 kilometers east of the old main temple. Skilled in Chinese medicine and planting, he attracted many visitors who bought his flowers, enabling him to be self-sufficient without needing to beg for food.⁴⁵²



⁴⁵² Nanchan Temple, Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

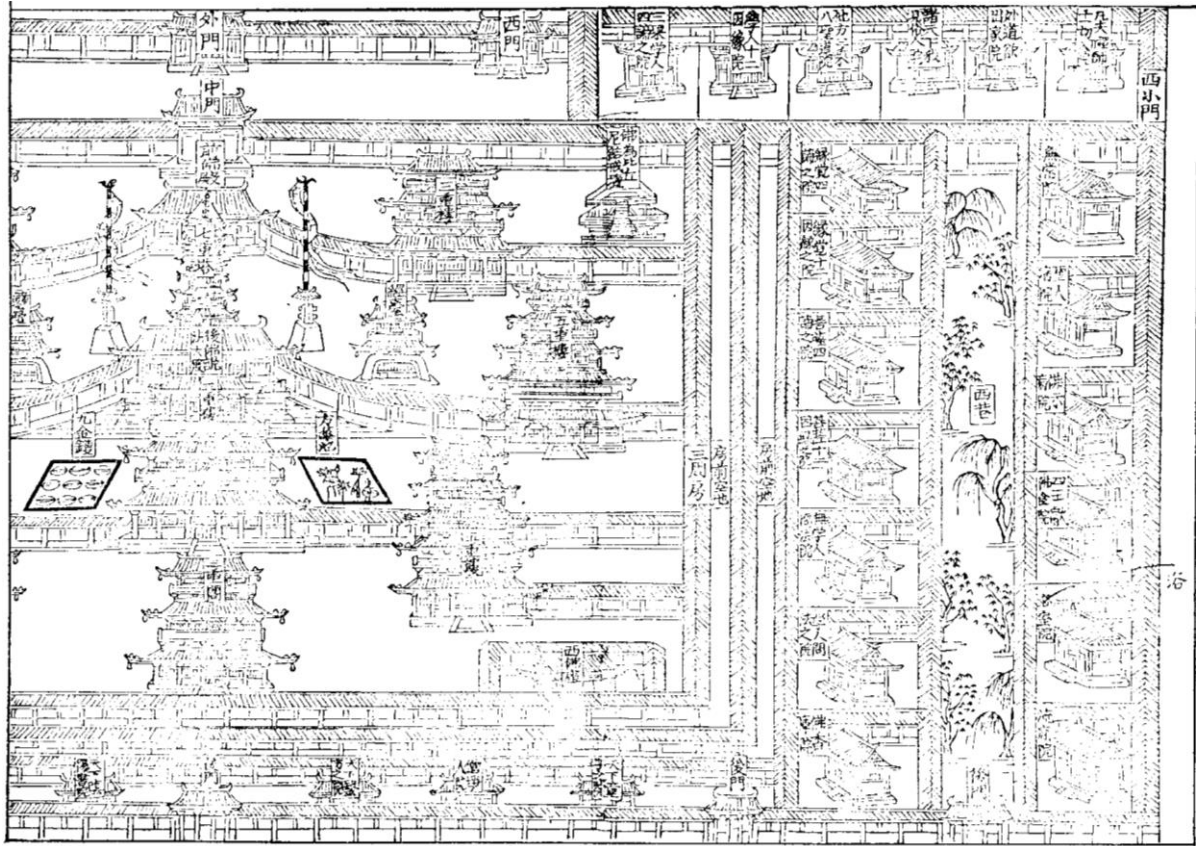


Figure 56: Ideal map of temples by Daoxuan (the top is the left part and the bottom is the right part) from No.1892 Guan Zhong Chuang Li Jie Tan Tu Jing Bing Xu, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Involvement in practice of aesthetics

The pursuit of luxury and aesthetics has never ceased, even though these ideals often diverged from the original intent of mimicking nature. Ji Cheng once remarked,

Today's remaining rockeries and water features are insufficient to reflect the charm of the garden... I wish to harness the power of the world, use its wealth, and renew the earth. Unfortunately, there are no grand patrons.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵³ Ji, Cheng, Ming dynasty, *Yuan Ye*[Art of Garden-building], Ying Zao Xue She edition, 1932 electric edition,

In the Jiangnan region, the economic hub and cultural centre supported the flourishing of garden culture with high aesthetic standards. Influenced by prevalent commercial culture, Wuxi was not immune to these trends. In the preface of his Yugong Valley, Zou Diguang (1550-1626) points to the emergence of literati gardens in the late 16th century.

Generally, garden construction was considered extravagant and self-indulgent, not aligning with traditional literati values. Those who built gardens were cautious and secretive to avoid ridicule and mockery.⁴⁵⁴

This indirectly confirms the flourishing of garden culture and its substantial pursuit of aesthetics and luxury. The aesthetic practices in Wuxi gardens lagged behind Suzhou by about half a century, while simultaneously coexisting with agricultural concepts.

Taking the transformations carried out by Qin Yao in Jichang Garden and the gardens designed by Zou Diguang as examples, these are among the few in Wuxi that perfectly align with the long-standing principles of traditional Chinese garden construction. Despite experiencing political setbacks in their prime years, officials who retreated to rustic countryside lives continued to create exquisite and luxurious personal paradises with the support of land and economic resources.

When Qin Yao undertook the renovation of Jichang Garden, he meticulously wandered the site day and night, carefully arranging the positions of various scenes with the precision of a military sand table exercise. Construction, earthworks, pottery, refinement, and decoration commenced simultaneously, taking several years to complete. Leveraging existing ancient trees, he built stone terraces and planted dozens of peony bushes, which rivaled the splendor of Jingu Garden 金谷园.⁴⁵⁵ The garden

Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁴⁵⁴ Zou Diguang, Yu Gong Gu Cheng [Garden Notes of Yugong Vallay], note 1, from, edit by Hou Hongjian, *Xi Shan Xian Zhe Cong Kan*[Compile of Works of Wuxi Sages]. (Nanjing: Phoenix Press, 2005) pp.345-378

⁴⁵⁵ a renowned extravagant garden of the Eastern Jin period

featured springs, rocks, bamboo, wood, flowers, medicinal plants, and vegetables, offering everything one could desire. It was considered a design of great sophistication, incorporating grand architecture, forests, mountains, valleys, and cultivated fields. Tu Long regarded it as ‘the best garden in the Wu region.’⁴⁵⁶

Compared to earlier gardens, the depiction of agronomic concepts such as artificially cultivated fruits and vegetables in this period tends to occupy the lowest position in garden records and appreciation. These elements are placed in secondary locations or reduced in proportion, especially in re-designed gardens such as Jichang Garden. However, the enhancement of aesthetics in Wuxi’s garden culture is not primarily characterized by the abandonment of agronomic elements (not authentic nature). As mentioned earlier, agricultural landscapes have always existed. Instead, the enhancement is reflected in the shift of attitudes towards ‘artificial landscaping(both agricultural and aesthetic)’ and ‘natural scenery (authentic nature of Ming people).’

According to previous chapters, during periods of low productivity, the natural environment limited the development of early Wuxi settlements and the creation of commemorative gardens. The reverence for and continuous transformation of nature persisted for nearly a thousand years (from pre-Qin to Tang). It was not until this prolonged interaction that residents’ attitudes gradually shifted to recognizing that nature could provide pleasing landscapes, becoming more human-centred. By the Ming and Qing dynasties, Wuxi residents further reinforced this change in attitude. The perspective evolved from assisting nature in showcasing its beauty to actively transforming nature based on human aesthetic standards, although this artificial

⁴⁵⁶ Wang, Chideng, Garden note of Jichang garden, from Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin’s Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)

landscaping aimed to achieve ‘perfect authentic nature.’⁴⁵⁷

Since natural landscapes cannot be completely intervened upon by humans, if there were a ranking, it would be: perfect nature (which may not exist or be unattainable by Wuxi residents, or similar to the more developed garden culture in wealthier Suzhou), nature transformed by humans aiming to achieve the first category (reflecting the owner’s aesthetic and economic capacity), and imperfect nature (displaying the owner’s discerning taste through selective showcasing).

In Wuxi, it is not the rejection of productivity but rather the difficulty in achieving beauty that is central to the enhancement of aesthetics of garden culture. This includes the transformation of nature, incorporating rarer and more difficult-to-manage plants. In the Jiangnan region, which leads the nation in both economic and garden cultural development, this pursuit of aesthetic difficulty serves as a reflection of personal taste, capability, and status. For instance, after its transformation, Jichang Garden no longer focused on the appreciation of extensive natural scenery. Instead, it showcased landscapes based on or simulating natural mountains and waters, achieving greater renown as a result.⁴⁵⁸

A more extreme example can be found across from Jichang Garden in the Yugong Valley. Although the construction of his garden spanned a significant period, extending over a decade, it was not due to a lack of financial resources necessitating time for accumulation. Instead, the length of time it took to build can be attributed to his near-daily efforts in garden reconstruction. Contemporary accounts describe his profound passion for garden development as a continuous and unceasing endeavor. Known to be

⁴⁵⁷ Zou Diguang, *Yu Gong Gu Cheng*[Garden Notes of Yugong Valley], note 1, edit by Hou Hongjian, *Xi Shan Xian Zhe Cong Kan*[Compile of Works of Wuxi Sages]. (Nanjing: Phoenix Press, 2005) pp.345-378

⁴⁵⁸ Wang, Chideng, Garden note of Jichang garden, from Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin’s Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)

‘engaged in year-round construction,’ after a mere ten days without inspecting the garden, it would be found utterly unrecognizable.⁴⁵⁹ Zuo expressed his indifference towards this social norm. He wanted to use his lifelong income to create a garden.⁴⁶⁰ He treated his gardens as if they were precious art crafts, meticulously refining them every day.

Yugong Valley was similarly established within a natural mountainous environment like Jichang Garden, with the mountain and water landscape comprising 60% of its total area. The construction of artificial hills in the garden was based on the natural contours of the mountain, and the spring water was sourced from Huishan Spring, creating water features within the garden. References to ancient trees are also frequently made. Mount Hui provided excellent natural conditions for garden construction. Even in the case of Jichang Garden, which underwent three generations of assistance in its construction, the spring and mountain landscapes were still more highly regarded than completely artificial ones. They often ranked scenes related to nature as the best designs.

It cannot be assumed that the garden concepts of that time considered untouched nature as inherently superior. From an aesthetic perspective, Zuo believed that if the mountains were too far from viewing points, they would lack interest; if too close, they would lack charm. Therefore, the best approach was to keep them neither too far nor too close, maintaining a delicate balance. The ideal construction site for viewing points allowed for panoramic views of the entire landscape, while the constructed elements themselves also served as focal points.

This design philosophy of the time placed greater emphasis on respecting the inherent

⁴⁵⁹ Shao Hanchu, *Hui Shan Ji Xu Bian* [Continuously Record of Mount Hui], Wuxi, Erquan Press, 1868, vol 2, pp24

⁴⁶⁰ Zou Diguang, *Yu Gong Gu Cheng* [Garden Notes of Yugong Valley], note 1, edit by Hou Hongjian, *Xi Shan Xian Zhe Cong Kan* [Compile of Works of Wuxi Sages]. (Nanjing: Phoenix Press, 2005) pp.345-378

value of nature within the garden, rather than solely relying on subjective human perceptions and added aesthetic judgments of natural scenery, as was more common during the Tang and Song dynasties. The concept of respecting nature and emulating natural elements differs from the rationalistic approach displayed in the Song Dynasty's Neo-Confucian gardens. With gardening increasingly becoming a source of aesthetic enjoyment rather than a means of self-cultivation, and driven by the contributions of renowned gardeners Zhang Nanyuan (1587-1673) and Ji Cheng (1582-1642), the spatial layout of water features gradually shifted from structured rectangles to more naturalistic forms.⁴⁶¹

Painting and naming

Landscape depictions of Wuxi during this period were similar to the 'Thirty-One Scenes of the Humble Administrator's Garden' by Wen Zhengming. Each painting represented a single scenic spot, accompanied by a title or a poem. There were fewer transitions between these spots, making it challenging to discern connections among them. Clunas argued that a prominent feature of these depictions was the artist's perspective, looking down from a high vantage point, a perspective not readily available in the topography of Suzhou. This viewpoint was considered a superior, authoritative perspective that could control narrative structures. Landowners used it as a primary means to uphold and maintain their social status.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶¹ Li, Zehou, *Meixue Sanshu* [Aesthetics of Three Books], (Hefei: Anhui Literature and Art Publishing House, 1999) p190.

Clunas, Craig, *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996) pp91-103

Cao, Xun, 'Research on the Development and Evolution of the Art of Mountain Stacking in Ancient Chinese Gardens', *Architectural History and Theory*, 6(1980), 74-85.

Ji, Cheng, Chen Zhi (Translate), *Yuan Ye Zhushi*, 2nd edn [Annotation of Yuan Ye] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press, 1988) p206

⁴⁶² Craig Clunas, *Fruitful Sites : Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*, Reaktion Books, Limited, 2004. ProQuest

Despite Jichang Garden and Xilin both being located at the foot of a mountain, it was difficult to capture specific scenic spots clearly from the mountains. It is likely that they used the metaphor of ‘elevation’ to maintain their social status. In the Fifty Scenes of Jichang Garden, six paintings depict buildings on the second floor or perched on elevated platforms. This might carry a similar connotation to the tall buildings often seen in Yuan dynasty landscapes, where high-rise structures were used to appreciate distant views, encompassing as much of Wuxi's natural scenery as possible within the field of vision. This expanded the perceived space of the garden.

In contrast to the practice in Yuan dynasty paintings, which primarily showcased the garden environment, Ming dynasty garden depictions focused on the scenes within the garden. A closer perspective can reveal more details, aligning with the heightened aesthetic and appreciation demands in garden culture, allowing for a more refined expression of the garden owner's desires. Without this, it would be like wearing a brocade robe on a dark night. However, at this time, a ground-level (visitor's) perspective had not yet developed. Both the ‘Wangchuan Villa’ painting and the Jie-Hua paintings the author have seen adopt a relatively high perspective to provide an overall view. For large scenes and complex structures, this perspective likely aimed to more clearly display all elements by eliminating vertical overlap, such as walls, mountains, and plants. However, in the smaller scenes depicted in post-Ming Wuxi, the content does not overlap, making it unnecessary to use a high perspective to achieve a comprehensive display. On the one hand, the development of painting techniques is worth considering; on the other hand, it is likely that the painter or garden owner chose to use a high perspective for display purposes.

The significance of height and distance is even more targeted in this context. The portrayal of an elevated perspective in relation to the environment symbolizes one's

sense of distance or detachment from it, while the authoritative view of the internal scenery from above represents a symbol of power and control.

Indeed, power and control are reflected in various forms throughout the entire thesis. The forms of expression, however, are different. For instance, in the second chapter, the dominance of natural rights over human productivity in the early period led to human beings being controlled, which determined the limitations of garden construction sites. In the mid to late period, the imperial control over Jiangnan and the political power centred in the capital had a significant influence on Wuxi's garden culture, closely linking it to the capital and regional centres. This influence persisted into the 20th century.

Additionally, there is a hidden line: the visible or easily observed historical garden remnants and records are manifestations of power. Consequently, the garden culture of lower-tier cities like Wuxi is less prominent compared to Suzhou and Beijing. The garden culture built by ordinary people is scattered and overlooked, unable to form a distinct discourse. For example, early records show that gardens established by temples and Neo-Confucian scholars held the discourse power of the time. During the Yuan dynasty, a short-lived foreign rule caused Han intellectuals to lose their upper-class discourse power, forcing them to seek power and status through economic means, transforming the singular political status representation into a diversified social status, such as the mix of four different classes. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, the intellectual class expanded to the lower levels of society with the construction of numerous private academies, which aroused the suspicion of the imperial power due to the rise of factions. The emergence of private writings and printing houses also promoted the development of private garden culture. As a researcher studying historic period hundreds of years later, the fact that these materials could be recorded demonstrates the extension of discourse power from the imperial aristocracy to the civilian society. In the later stage, those who held discourse power transformed into industrial merchants through the

global trade system, leading to the emergence of Sino-Western styles.

Therefore, the struggle for power, or the ‘discussion of status,’ is a central theme in garden culture. This is precisely why the author agrees with Clunas’s perspective that garden paintings were used to display power.

Some of the scenes depicted in Jichang Garden still exist today with minimal alterations. For example, parts of the south-eastern section of the garden, such as Woyun Hall 卧云堂 (‘Laying on cloud Hall’ depicted in Figure 58, bottom left), Lingxu Pavilion 凌虚阁 ‘close to the empty sky’ and High Stone with pond, remain relatively stable. The consistent layout is likely a deliberate choice passed down within the family lineage, demonstrating respect and acknowledgment of ancestral authority.



Figure 57: 4 Examples of the 50 scenery Jichang Scenery drawn by Song Maojin in early 17th century, paper, 27.4x 24.4cm. collected in Hua's family in Taipei⁴⁶³

⁴⁶³ Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)



Figure 58: 32 scenery of Xilin Garden drawn by Zhang Fu in 1580, collected in Wuxi Museum, 16 remained

In the nomenclature of gardens and paintings, there exists a certain literary quality, seen

in names such as Woyun 卧云 ‘Laying on cloud’ and Hanzhen 含贞 ‘Containing Virtue.’ However, the majority of names are derived from natural elements, such as Dashi 大石 ‘Big Stone’ Hechao 鹤巢 ‘Crane’s Nest’, Guicong 桂丛 ‘Osmanthus Grove, Shuangxi 双溪 ‘Twisting Stream’, and so on. While achieving aesthetic significance through naming is feasible, it is evident that garden owners in Wuxi did not intentionally adopt such an approach. The descriptive names of foundational features in gardens lack deeper aesthetic or personal significance, indicating an aesthetic practice in Wuxi gardens that lacks representativeness.

Entertainment areas and openness of private gardens

During this period, the lifestyles of the literati in gardens underwent significant changes. Hedonism emerged as a result of both economic prosperity and the influence of Chen Xianzhang’s 陈献章 individualistic Confucian thought. This not only impacted the corresponding folk culture in urban private gardens but also greatly enriched the activities in gardens, encompassing practices like tea appreciation, landscape appreciation, reading, and various forms of art. By the late Ming Dynasty, this trend had evolved to a point where it greatly diversified the activities within gardens and even gave rise to specialized activities such as poetry societies and theatre troupes, all of which were centred around gardens. Gardens were regarded as places of entertainment and leisure by these literati.

Zuo Diguang was originally an educational official in the Hu-Guang region but later resigned voluntarily. His resignation from office and his garden design showed a close relation to Chen Xianzhang’s view of personal consciousness and Chan-like thinking. Zou had a close affinity with Buddhism. He donated funds for the reconstruction of the Maitreya Hall on the right side of Huishan Temple’s main hall, as well as the surrounding corridors. His garden also featured areas designated for Buddhist practices, such as the Bodhi Field, with names imbued with Buddhist significance, such as the Nine Lotus Platform and Flowing Brahmana Crossing.

In terms of plant selection, he chose plum blossoms, which he considered similar to the Indian ‘Du Lu’ fruit (transliteration, maybe Durian), both known for their precious status in their respective societies. However, he only hired two Buddhist staff and did not allow monks to reside in the garden. He believed that the religious situation at the time was chaotic and that the monks did not adhere to proper conduct. He thought that their presence would taint the garden, so he preferred to have individuals who could uphold both physical and verbal discipline, such as himself, live there. His personal consciousness was strong. In fact, his garden prioritized the pursuit of entertainment far more than spiritual practice.

Both Zuo and Qin accepted the new Confucian thought, which related to Chan Buddhism philosophy. Gardens included elements from Buddhism. By this time, Buddhist influence had become deeply ingrained in the form of folklore, similar to (Feng Shui), and did not require additional emphasis.

Zuo employed private Kunqu opera troupes to perform in his garden, where ‘Sutra chanting is interwoven with Kunqu opera’.⁴⁶⁴ Similarly, in Jichang Garden, which served at one point as the inaugural stage for Tu Long’s Kunqu opera ‘The Tale of the Ephemeral Flower’, Wang’s poem mentioned the performance.⁴⁶⁵ There are also elements related to Buddhism in Jichang Garden, such as the Nine Lions Platform 九狮台 (the enlightenment of Buddhism is like the roaring of lions) and the Lin Fan 临梵 ‘near the Buddhism’ Pavilion. Both Zou and Qin accepted the new Confucianism thought, which related to Chan Buddhism philosophy.

By this time, Buddhism influence had become deeply ingrained in the form of folklore,

⁴⁶⁴ Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

⁴⁶⁵ Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin’s Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009) pp26

similar to Feng Shui, and did not require additional emphasis.⁴⁶⁶ At the end of the second chapter, it is mentioned that during the Tang and Song dynasties, the three major mainstream ideologies that significantly influenced Chinese history—Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism—gradually converged. This convergence materialized in private gardens (primarily constructed under Confucian principles) through the arrangement or planting of items or plants imbued with Buddhist (or Taoist) significance. Additionally, the use of Buddhist (or Taoist) elements in naming served to reflect the garden owners' acceptance of the other two ideologies, and possibly to distinguish themselves, especially when Confucian orthodoxy was not held in high regard. This influence was even more profound yet subtler in academies (further details will be discussed in the next section).

With the proliferation of recreational activities, gardens increasingly required greater public participation to fulfill their entertainment purposes. The original literati gardens, which were secluded private realms intended for specific individuals, were transformed into secular worlds. Part of Zou Diguang's garden was specifically designed for tourists, allowing them to appreciate the crowded boats with tourists and lively, beautiful girls wearing elegant dresses.⁴⁶⁷ The elegant and the vulgar are counterbalanced in the gardens. Gardens serve as places and objects for spiritual ballast as well as entertainment.⁴⁶⁸

The openness of private gardens can be gleaned to some extent from Wang Yongji's 王永积 compilation of Wuxi landscapes. In his book, he categorized Wuxi's landscapes based on different directions, listing all the gardens of aesthetic tourist value. This

⁴⁶⁶ Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

⁴⁶⁷ Zou Diguang, garden note of Yugong valley, Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

⁴⁶⁸ Zhou, Wei-quan, *Zhongguo Gudian Yuanlin Shi* [History of the Chinese Classical Gardens] (third edition), (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2008)

encompassed a majority of private gardens, academies, temples, ancestral halls, natural landscapes, public gardens, and so on. The tradition of visiting gardens, which was evident during the Tang Dynasty, gained momentum in the Song Dynasty and reached its zenith during the Ming and Qing periods as a widely embraced and popular activity. Jin Xuezhi believes that the art of gardens, as an aesthetic object in the realm of spiritual life, represents a historical connection between the creators of gardens (the gardeners) and the public who appreciate the beauty of gardens.⁴⁶⁹

The Water House of Gao Panlong 高攀龙, a professor at the Donglin Academy, located on the northern shore of Lake Taihu, also demonstrated openness. Through modifications to the water, a concentric structure was formed with the water and embankments intersecting each other, resulting in a calm and safe water area. Gao allowed fishing boats working on Taihu Lake to dock at his water residence to protect them in the evening and during bad weather. During the Dragon Boat Festival, he would distribute rice dumplings and rice wine to fishermen.⁴⁷⁰

The opening of gardens evolved into a form of public welfare, including direct public landscape making. For instance, shifting focus from Zou's Yugong Valley to other public landscapes he created, even in his retirement, Zou did not evade the ideals of 'Xiu-qi-zhi-ping' (self-cultivation and reaching social harmony), which are expected of a Confucian scholar. It was not an escape, but rather a choice for a different way of life, continuing to contribute to local development in practical ways.

The landscapes of Erquan 二泉 'the second spring' had deteriorated by the late Ming, with broken stone paths and dilapidated pavilions. With ample time, Zou discussed with

⁴⁶⁹ Jin Xuezhi, *Zhong Guo Yuan Lin Mei Xue* (second edition), (Beijing, China Architecture & Building Press, 2005): pp50-52

⁴⁷⁰ Qin Hang, Notes of Water Garden, in Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp349

Hua Deyuan 华德源 and procured timber, stone, and bricks, mobilizing workers to complete the repairs of stone steps, pavilions, Yilan Hall 漪澜堂, square ponds, and screens within two months. Zou documented this achievement with a sense of pride, believing that he himself was similar to the spring water. For the people of the Mount Hui area, this spring water was used for cooking, drinking, brewing wine, cleaning, and even for cleaning impurities (toilets). His garden landscapes also used this water. He said that to toil not for oneself but for others is the most precious virtue.⁴⁷¹ This sentiment echoed that of the Confucian official Ouyang Xiu (1007-1072), who believed that one must first worry about the world's problems, and then enjoy the world's pleasures.⁴⁷² This reflects the idea of prioritizing the well-being and concerns of others before seeking personal happiness and emphasizes the importance of considering the greater good and taking responsibility for the welfare of society.

A place for social education and realize public responsibility

This section particularly focuses on some garden constructions and uses that were primarily led by the populace but had some official involvement, explaining the culture of educational gardens.

The factors influencing the material of a large-scale study are necessarily complex. In this project, they include the arrangement of garden spaces catering to various usage requirements. The allocation of spaces such as ancestral halls or classrooms is driven by the sense of responsibility that the garden owner feels towards their family and hometown, representing a distinct category of space. This also exemplifies the richness encompassed within garden culture.

Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang further strengthened the Confucian ideals of respecting and

⁴⁷¹ Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan [Gardens in Wuxi]*, (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp17

⁴⁷² 先天下之忧而忧，后天下之乐而乐 Ouyang Xiu, Note of Yueyang Building

venerating the elderly and governing the world with filial piety, as he aimed to restore the orthodox traditions of Chinese civilization. The position of older people was elevated. Qin Kui 秦夔 rebuilt the Tingsong Courtyard 听松房 to fulfill his father, Qin Xu's 秦修, fondness for the pine forest and his dream of creating a garden for the Bishan Club. Carrying on the aspirations of his predecessors was an act of filial piety.⁴⁷³ As with the praise for a harmonious society by scholars in the Bishan Club, scholars and officials who extolled the virtues of a contented society were demonstrating their loyalty to the emperor in a form of allegiance to the monarch. The county-level education ritual, a town drinking ceremony, was fully revived.⁴⁷⁴

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, when Confucianism and politics were closely intertwined, almost all garden constructions were more or less influenced by the Confucian ideas of scholars who had been educated in the tradition. Many gardens incorporated educational spaces. For instance, Ming officials and prominent families also set up free schools in family gathering places to support disadvantaged residents or poor clansmen, such as in the charity school of the Hua family.

The emergence of academies in the form of Confucian schools is closely related to Buddhism. It is believed that the struggle for educational authority between Confucian scholars, particularly those of the Neo-Confucian school, and Buddhism played a significant role in the development of academies.⁴⁷⁵ Through the tradition of scholars studying in temples during the Tang dynasty, Yan Gengwang demonstrated the same site selection between Buddhist temples and academies.⁴⁷⁶ Zhu Xi 朱熹(1130-1200) was a prominent advocate for the development of academies and their regulations, and

⁴⁷³ Qin Kui, Song Feng Pavilion, from Chang Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan [Gardens in Wuxi]*, (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp349

⁴⁷⁴ He, Zongmei, 'Research on Literati Associations in the Late Ming and Early Qing Dynasties', (Shanghai, Joint Publishing, 2016), pp23

⁴⁷⁵ He, Mingdong, 'The influence of Buddhism on ancient academies', *Fan Yin*, 08 (1991):9-15

⁴⁷⁶ Yan, Gengwang, 'Studying in Mountain Temple of Tang Scholar', *Mainland Magazine*, 1951

he openly acknowledged that academy rules were modelled after the strict regulations observed in Buddhist monasteries. He noted the use of Buddhist regulations as references.⁴⁷⁷ The form of lectures and ceremonies, study tours, and quotations used were all influenced by Buddhism.⁴⁷⁸

Since the mid-Ming dynasty, which had entered a stage of consolidation, the inherent drawbacks of a feudal dynasty gradually developed. Zhan Ruoshui 湛若水(1466-1560) suggested that this was due to the laxity of Confucianism and emphasized the development of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism and Confucian education. Wherever Zhan went, he would establish academies to honour his teacher, Chen Xianzhang.⁴⁷⁹ Another scholar, Wang Yangming (1472-1528), also known as Wang Yangming, lived during a period of escalating economic and political contradictions. Wang's promotion of the establishment of academies and the spread of education embodied his idea of 'action'. During that time, it was said that scholars who did not follow Wang would

⁴⁷⁷ Wang, Maohong, Qing dyansty, *Annals of Zhu Xi*. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁴⁷⁸ He, Mingdong, 'The influence of Buddhism on ancient academies', *Fan Yin*, 08 (1991):9-15

⁴⁷⁹ 一二年間，天變地震，山崩川湧，人饑相食，殆無虛月。夫聖人不以屯否之時而後視賢之訓，明醫不以深錮之疾而廢元氣之劑，宜博求修明先王之道者，日侍文華，以裨聖學。陛下初政，漸不克終。。。亟請親賢遠奸，窮理講學，以隆太平之業。若水生平所至，必建書院以祀獻章。時王守仁在吏部講學，若水與相應和。During the years one and two, there were celestial changes and earthquakes, mountains collapsed and rivers surged. People starved and resorted to cannibalism, with scarcely a time of untroubled moonlight. A sage does not wait until times of adversity to consider the teachings of the wise; a skilled physician does not abandon treatments that fortify the body's essence in times of deep illness. It is appropriate to extensively seek and cultivate the enlightened ways of the ancient kings, daily attending to literary accomplishments to support sacred learning.

As Your Majesty begins your governance, gradually may you not fail to complete... I urgently request the appointment of trusted advisors and the removal of corrupt officials, the exploration of principles, and the promotion of scholarly learning to enhance the work of peace. Wherever Zhan Ruoshui travels, he will certainly establish academies to honour and offer his teacher Chen Xianzhang. At the time when Wang Yangming lectured at the Ministry of Personnel, Ruoshui corresponded with him harmoniously. Zhang Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty], vol 171, biography of Zhan Ruoshui, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

instead follow Zhan.⁴⁸⁰ The revival of Shao's Donglin Academy was related to his friend Wang and the land provided for the academy by Hua Yun, who studied with Wang (Figure 59).



Figure 59: Donglin Academy built by Shao Bao, the land provides by Hua Yun, Shao's student. Drawn by Hua Jiaofeng in the Qing dynasty⁴⁸¹

Shao Bao 邵宝 (1460-1527 Figure 60) was a key figure in promoting garden culture

⁴⁸⁰ 时天下言学者，不归王守仁，则归湛若水 At that time, scholars in the world, if not following Wang Yangming, turned to Zhan Ruoshui. vol 170, biography , Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁴⁸¹ Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007)

with a focus on social education and an academic atmosphere in Wuxi.⁴⁸² During the 18 years from Shao Bao's fifty-first to sixty-eighth year, when he returned to his hometown in Wuxi, he devoted more time to establishing educational gardens rather than entertainment gardens. Upon discovering that Li Gang hailed from Wuxi and did not possess a memorial temple, Shao felt a sense of regret. With the assistance of his nephew, Hua Min, the construction of one was initiated.

Shao had strong ties to the garden communities in Mount Hui, and his Erquan Academy served as one of the venues for poetry gatherings.⁴⁸³ However, Shao's retired life appears to have been relatively independent of gathering friends in gardens and was not as leisurely as that of a typical member of the gentry. In contrast to the relatively modest status of the ordinary local gentry, Shao, with his background as a former high-ranking official, not only contributed to the development of Wuxi's gardens but also played a significant role as a chronicler.

He recorded the Erquan Academy 二泉书院 in Mount Hui, the Ranjing Academy 冉泾书院 in his hometown, and the Donglin Academy 东林书院 outside the South City

⁴⁸² Shao, Wentao, *Genealogy of Shao's family in Xishan*. (Wuxi, Chao Ran Hall Publishing house, 1898), vol 1, pp25,

⁴⁸³ 时方考闻宋丞相李忠定公居锡之故而恨其未之祠也盖有意于斯者凡十余年至是幸获休退而始为堂于竹间以为公祠间尝登而四顾左右前后无非竹者乃颜其门曰尚德书院若谓竹有君子之德...吾甥华珉实任其劳始于正德庚午七夕成于中秋奉安于重九皆不愆其素冀毕小燕客赋淇澳而退 At that time, contemplating the former residence of Prime Minister Li Zhongding of the Song dynasty, there was regret that it had not been enshrined. With this intention persisting for over ten years, finally obtaining the opportunity to retire and rest, a hall was established amidst bamboo groves to serve as his shrine. Upon climbing and surveying all directions, there was nothing but bamboo. Therefore, above its entrance was inscribed "Shangde Academy," implying that bamboo embodies the virtues of a nobleman...

My nephew, Hua Min, indeed undertook this endeavor. It began in the seventh year of the Zhengde reign (1512) on the Double Seventh Festival and was completed on the Mid-Autumn Festival, then formally consecrated on the Double Ninth Festival. Throughout, there was no lapse in its simplicity. After the ritual offerings were completed, the minor guests composed verses at Qi Ao before departing. Shao Bao, *Rong Chun Tang Qian Ji* [Former Collection of Rongchun Hall], vol10, notes, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Gate. Erquan Academy was mainly used to hold sacrifices to memorialize Li Gang as a model for local scholars and as a place to hold meetings of the poetry club. Ranjing Academy was used to store books and collected more than ten thousand volumes. Donglin Academy in the south gate is where Shao Bao gave lectures after retirement, all aimed at promoting Confucian ethics and cultivating the younger generation of his family and the local community.⁴⁸⁴ Shao wrote garden records both for his own garden and others, which were compiled in his collection ‘Rong Chun Tang Ji 容春堂集’. It records the history of Mount Hui and documents the gardens and their stories.



Figure 60: Portrait of Shao Bao and the Ancestor Temple of Shao (Erquan Academy) from Genealogy of Shao's Family in Xishan (Wuxi)

⁴⁸⁴ Shao Wentao, *Xishan Shao Shi Zongpu* [Genealogy of Shao in Wuxi], (Wuxi, Chao Ran Hall Publishing House. 1898)

In his garden designs, the rules of Neo-Confucianism and educational principles are consistently applied.

After his retirement, Shao Bao reconstructed his garden and attended to his mother every day to show his filial piety. Following the rules of Neo-Confucianism, the separation of men and women increased. To better care for his mother while maintaining a distance, Shao built a separate bedroom on the west side of the main hall, Rongchun Hall 容春堂, where his mother resided. Every morning, he would first greet her and help her get up. Then he would pay his respects at the ancestral shrine and visit Yanju Pavilion 燕居亭 to pay his respects to Confucius. Only after these rituals would he begin his study routine.⁴⁸⁵

The naming of landscapes aimed to create ‘spiritual or symbolic scenery’.⁴⁸⁶ Jin Xuezhi has provided an analysis of the original names of landscapes, suggesting that in Tang Dynasty gardens, although there was an infusion of aesthetic subjectivity, the objective component, which consists of natural landscapes, remained more prominent. For instance, the square pond in Huishan Temple was named ‘Golden Lotus Pond.’ It was only during the Song Dynasty that a conscious and extensive introduction of names with literary or cultural connotations emerged, marking the literary transformation of gardens as material constructs.⁴⁸⁷ An example of this literary transformation can be seen in the naming of certain elements within the public landscape of Erquan (Huishan

⁴⁸⁵ 及终养归，得疾，左手不仁，犹朝夕侍亲侧不懈。Zhang Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty], vol 282 biography of Shao Bao, Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. 奉母居之未防别建于其西为堂寝...每晨兴 吾母起居于寝出于堂谒家庙乃至燕居亭瞻谒先圣退就精舍盖日例如此 Shao Bao, *Rong Chun Tang Hou Ji* [Later Collection of Rongchun Hall], vol14, notes, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁴⁸⁶ Coffin, the villa, p187, Williams Williams, Rural Economy, p74 from Clunas, Craig, *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

⁴⁸⁷ Jin, Xuezhi, *Zhong Guo Yuan Lin Mei Xue* [Chinese garden aesthetics](second edition), (Beijing, China Architecture & Building Press,2005) pp. 56-62

Springs), such as the Yilan 漪澜 Hall ‘Rippling Hall.’

In the gardens of Confucian scholars, landscape elements often featured names associated with stories of ancient sages, which belong to a conventional usage usually translated as ‘Typical Stories’. The application of these allusions was nearly indispensable in traditional gardens, serving as a structured means to express one's spiritual values.

Table 9: The categories and meanings of the twelve scenic spots in the garden of Shao Bao in Ranjing Town,

Catalogue	Number and name	
Show respect to Confucian sages	1. Yan Ju Pavilion 燕居亭 2. Zeng Shi Pavilion 曾侍亭 3. Rong Chun Hall 荣春堂 4. Si Lian ponds 思濂沼 5. Guan Ji Bridge 光霁桥 6. Xuelang stone and calamus	1.2. Portraits of Confucius and Zeng Zi. 3. The plaque of the Main Hall was writing by his teacher. 4.5. When watching the lotus Shao could remembering Lianxi (Zhou Dunyi), a representative figure in the founding period of Neo Confucianism 6. Stone and flower from Sichuan province are to show respect to Su Shi.
Show respect to his ancestor	7. Cun Yi House 存一斋	Portrait of his grand-grandfather
Embodiment of Confucius classic	8. Octagonal platform 八角台 9. Jia Shu Pavilion 嘉树亭	8. the eight trigrams From the Yi book which is similar in Erquan Academy. 9. Cultivate talents from the “Zuo Commentary” and praise virtuous people who rule and educated the south (that is, Jiangnan where Wuxi is located) from the Book of Songs
Official life	10. Stone Bonsai: Gui Stone and Mian stone 圭冕	The two stone like the clock and officials’ cap which is a reminisce about his career as an official

Plants with scholar meaning	11. Orchid Garden 兰畹在	Orchids are like virtuous people and Bamboo are like gentlemen
	12. Tranquil Path 静深径	

Table 10: The categories and meanings of the fifteen scenic spots in the garden of Shao Bao in Mount Hui

Catalogue	Number and name	
Show respect to Confucian sages and ancestor	1. Memorial temple for Li Gang	1. Portrait of Li Gang
	2. Liang Zhi Pavilion 两知亭	2. The portrait of his teacher is hanging in the Middle facing south, Portrait of his grand-grandfather is inscribed in the right wall and his friend article is inscribed in the left wall
	3. Spring Hall 泉斋	3. The plaque was writing by his teacher
	4. Jing Qing Shen Chu “remote area” 静清深处	4. The name comes from Zhou Dunyi’s book
Embodiment of Confucius classic	5. Dian Yi Platform 点易台	Same as Octagonal Platform from the Yi book
Official life	6. Yi Juan Hill 瘞卷邱	6. A tomb for exam paper
	7. Wang Que Cliff 望阙岩	7. Shao often helped by others to come here and look northwest, wishing the emperor a boundless life to show royalty to the emperor
	8. Chao Ran Hall 超然堂	8. 9. 10 the realize of a dream when he first became an official
	9. Yin Song Room 吟松个	11. the drops are clock for studying
	10. Yong Zhu Room 咏竹个	
	11. Dilu Spring 滴露泉	
Others	12. Turbulent Stream 湍涧	Mountainous scenery
	13. Wild Bridge 野桥	
	14. Long Steps 云阶	

	15.Haitian Pavilion 海天亭	
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These two tables display the names that Shao Bao chose for his two gardens. We are using him as an example of how Confucian scholars arranged and named their gardens.⁴⁸⁸ Compared to contemporaneous aesthetically-oriented gardens, there was relatively little emphasis on the appreciation of natural landscapes. The Erquan Academy had natural features named after the objects they represented, owing to its location amidst the mountains and forests, while the Ranjing Mansion, situated on the eastern plains, had hardly any natural objects serving as focal points. Like the interpretations of gardens by Neo-Confucian scholars in the Song Dynasty, natural scenery was endowed with symbolic meanings associated with the personalities of literati. There was no veneration of past sages in the Song, but rather a display of one's own and one's friends' social status. There was also no indication of longing for official careers; instead, they exhibited confidence in their roles as guides. Such overt displays of confidence are not as evident in Ming gardens. Although the metaphor of humans and plants has been present for a long time, it was during the Song Dynasty that the explicit connection between humans and plants began to emerge.

The interpretation of natural structures based on the identities of different owners was a very common practice. The name of the Beauty Stone in Jichang Garden changed to Jie-Ru 介如 Stone because Emperor Qianlong recognized that the stone possessed more masculine qualities and was not as soft as beauties.⁴⁸⁹ Jie Ru comes from the Book of Changes.

Shao's portrayal of his official career and experiences in the political arena can be

⁴⁸⁸ Shao Bao, *Rong Chun Tang Hou Ji* [Later Collection of Rongchun Hall], vol, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁴⁸⁹ Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)

considered a unique exception in the gardens of Wuxi. The Yijuan Hill 瘞卷邱 ‘tomb for exam paper’ buried student examination papers he collected during his tenure as an educational official. The Gui stone 圭 ‘Clock Stone’ and Mian 冕 ‘Officials’ Cap Stone’, representing timepieces and headgear respectively, are essential daily items for officials, symbolizing his diligent experiences as a government official. His political career left a profound imprint on his mind. For instance, the Old-Gentleman Stone in front of the Worshipping Stone House (Gu’s Ancestral Hall) was a 4-meter stone. Shao Bao praised it as the embodiment of the political life of the garden owner, who was the Prosecutor of Guangdong Province, wearing an official uniform and holding a Hu (a board held by officials in court) to protect the country.⁴⁹⁰ Others say that the descendants of Gu regard this stone as a statue of their ancestor, remembering and expressing their reverence.



Figure 61: First two were Worshipping stone in Gu’s ancestor hall

The third one is Jiru Stone in Jichang Garden, photo all by author in May,2020

Evidently, he took immense pride in his own identity, which he directly showcased in his gardens. His emphasis on political status also extended to reverence for Confucian

⁴⁹⁰ Shao Bao, the Taihu stone in Feng Kui’s garden, from the Collection of Rongchun Hall

sages and education. Following the loss of aristocratic privileges in the election process, the imperial examination system remained the sole pathway to maintain political standing. Therefore, he expanded the scope of education for his descendants to perpetuate the family's status. He adhered to the moral principles of a loyal subject, refraining from establishing spaces dedicated to commemorating Confucius. Instead, he made a distinction between his garden and the official school to signify his humility. He erected a pavilion in honor of Zengzi, a disciple of Confucius who held deep respect for Confucius, symbolizing his own reverence for Confucius.

Many features of his garden were associated with Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073), indicating a commitment to the transmission of Song Confucianism. Zhou's philosophy marked the beginning of the New Confucian School. Carsun Chang noted Zhou's diagram (Figure 62), explaining it as a Chinese version of the theory of the creation and evolution of the universe.⁴⁹¹ Zhou pointed out a method of moral cultivation through 'tranquillity' with few desires, even none, and the preservation of rituals, which involve suppressing or sacrificing natural inclinations in exchange for the persistence of social morality connected to the Book of Changes.⁴⁹² For instance, the design of the 'Octagonal Pavilion' in his garden carried the intention of the Eight Trigrams.

The Donglin Academy, known as the central hub of 'Luoyang and Fujian,' with the two place respectively being the hometowns of the Cheng brothers and Zhu Xi, is not far removed from Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism despite its location in Wuxi. Earlier in

⁴⁹¹ Cao, Duan, *Tai Ji Tu Shuo Shu Jie* [Interpretation of Tai Ji Figure], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Carsun Chang, *the development of Neo-Confucian Thought*, 2 vols (NewYork, Bookman Associates ,1957-1962), vol 2:pp143

⁴⁹² 邪動辱也甚焉害也,故君子慎動.一日克己復禮天下歸仁焉. Evil movements bring great shame and harm; therefore, the nobleman is cautious in his actions. By self-discipline and returning to propriety daily, the world finds its way to benevolence. Zhou, Dunyi, *Tong Shu*, vol2,3, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

this text, Shao's conduct in the garden also adheres to the development of Neo-Confucianism. However, the garden's reverence for early Confucian scholars does not include the highly renowned Neo-Confucian leader Zhu Xi. The reasons for this omission may involve the new developments in Confucianism during the mid-Ming period and the relationships of master-disciple succession.

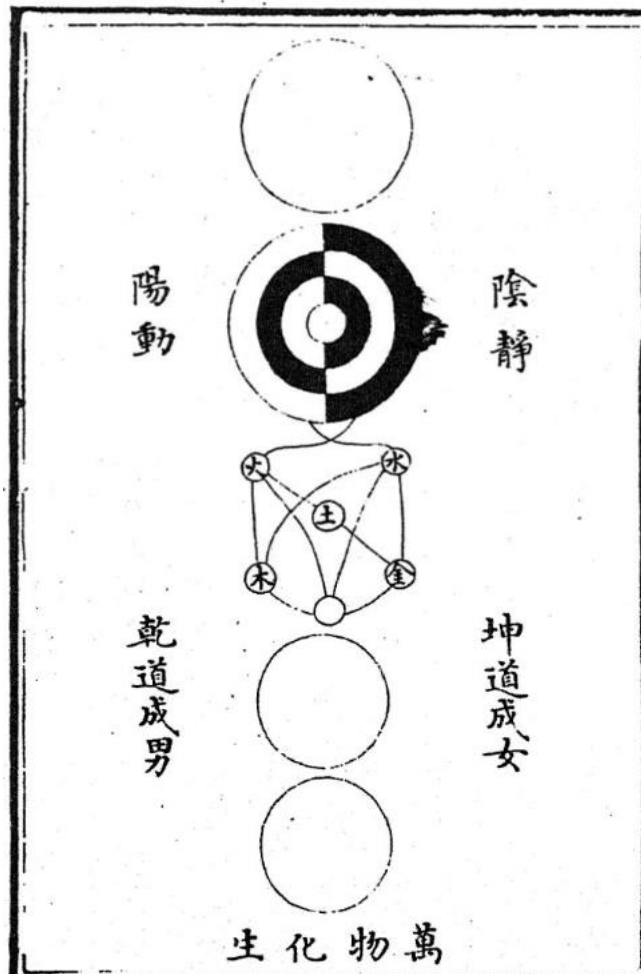


Figure 62: Tai Ji Tu by Zhou Dunyi from Cao Duan, *Tai Ji Tu Shuo Shu Jie*[Interpretation of Tai Ji Figure], Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

Following Zhou Dunyi, the development of Neo-Confucianism gave rise to two distinct branches: the Cheng brothers' Principle or Neo-Confucianism 理学, and the Lu brothers'

Mind-heart Learning. The Cheng brothers, Cheng Hao (1032-1085) and Cheng Yi (1033-1107), defined Li (理, Principle, distinct from Ritual) as the ‘ultimate principle’ of the universe, the sole existence governing the world, and the ‘collection of feudal moral principles and hierarchy.’⁴⁹³ Zhu Xi, who inherited Cheng’s theory, sought the metaphysical foundation of moral order in the world.⁴⁹⁴

They emphasized that the hierarchical system of human society and its corresponding social moral norms are specific manifestations of Li in human society, with the latter being more significant.⁴⁹⁵ A tight hierarchy was well-suited to the centralized ruler’s needs. The status of Neo-Confucianism gradually ascended, eventually reaching a position second only to Confucius and Mencius, marked by the installation of Zhu Xi’s memorial tablet in Confucian temples and the decline of Wang Anshi.⁴⁹⁶ Since then,

⁴⁹³ It is also called Luo Xue 洛学 Luoyang School, named for their hometown. 万物皆是一理, All things adhere to a single principle. Cheng, Hao, Cheng, Yi, edit by Zhu Xi, *Henan Cheng Shi Yi Shu*[Book of Chen in Henan Province], vol 15. Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

上下之分尊卑之义理之当也. The distinction between superior and inferior, and the principles of respect and humility, are natural. Cheng, Hao, edit by Tu, Zongying, *Zhou Yi Cheng Shi Zhuan*[Interpretation of Yi by Cheng], vol 1, pp54, Lu’an: Qiu Wo Zai of Tu’s Press, Collected in the Library of Qsinghua University.

⁴⁹⁴ It is also called Min Xue 闽学 Fujian School named for Zhu’s born province.

⁴⁹⁵ 君臣父子，天下之定理，无所逃乎天地之间 The relationships of sovereign and subject, father and son, constitute the established principles of the world, unavoidable within the realm of heaven and earth. “理只是人理，甚分明” from Cheng Hao, Cheng Yi, edit by Zhu Xi, *Henan Cheng Shi Yi Shu*[Book of Chen in Henan Province], vol 5 and 18. Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁴⁹⁶ 宝庆三年(1227)春正月诏曰：…可特赠熹太师追封信国公…淳祐元年春正月甲辰诏曰…其令学官列诸从祀以副朕崇奖儒先之意寻以王安石谓天变不足畏祖宗不足法人言不足恤为万世罪人岂宜从祀孔子其黜之 In the spring of the third year of Baoqing (1227), a decree stated: …honors may be specially conferred upon Grand Preceptor Xi and he may be posthumously titled Duke of Xingguo… In the spring of the first year of Chunyou (1241), a decree declared: …educational institutions shall list him among those worthy of veneration, in keeping with our intent to elevate scholars…Soon after, Wang Anshi said, Changes in nature should not be feared, and those from ancestors should not be abandoned. Words should be cared for and the crimes of all ages should be punished Should not be allowed. Tuo Tuo, Yuan dynasty, *Song Shi* [The History of the Song], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook vol emperor 7

Neo-Confucianism, represented by Zhu Xi, became the predominant ideological system of China until the Qing dynasty. Despite the rigid hierarchical structures that strictly defined each person's position and prohibited questioning or modification, the emphasis on the individual's importance within the social order laid the groundwork for developing individual consciousness—an outcome perhaps unforeseen by Zhu Xi and his contemporaries.

Another branch of New Confucianism is Xin Xue 心学 or 'Mind-heart learning,' represented by Lu Jiuyuan 陆九渊 (1139-1193), who is renowned for challenging Zhu Xi. While both emphasize self-cultivation and the perfection of morality as central to life, their methods differ. Lu asserts that my mind-heart is the universe and the principles of heaven, humanity, and all physical things exist only within my mind-heart. When people share this mind, they share this principle. From ancient times to the present, there is nothing beyond this.⁴⁹⁷ Yang Kaiyuan evaluated these two branches of education, stating that 'one is fragmented (involving all things in the world) and the other is too simple (based solely on one's mind-heart).'⁴⁹⁸

Although Chen Xianzhang's concept of individual consciousness was not directly developed by Zhan Ruoshui, Chen's student, Zhan's friend, Wang Yangming (1472-1529) drew inspiration from the spirit of questioning Zhu Xi, achieving similar effects from other perspectives. Zhu's concept posited a supreme level higher than the social system, which facilitated the solidification and sanctification of feudal principles. In contrast, Wang placed the supreme principle within the minds of the people, thereby

⁴⁹⁷ Zhang, Qizhi, *Zhong Guo Si Xiang Shi* [History of Chinese Thoughts] (Xi'an: University of Northwest, 2001) 357-361

⁴⁹⁸ 鹅湖之会，论及教人。朱子之意，欲令人泛观博览，而后归之约。二陆之意，欲先发明人之本心，而后使之博览。朱以陆之教人为太简，陆以朱之教人为支离，此两不相合之由也，然亦不过各欲明其道耳。Huang, Zongxi, completed by Quan Zuwang, *Song Yuan Xue An* [Cases of Education and Masters in Song and Yuan], vol 57, *Qinding Siku Quanshu*, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

challenging the constraints of feudalism.⁴⁹⁹ Zhang contends that Wang still subjectively adhered to the fundamental principles of feudal society. However, the awakening of individual consciousness inevitably threatened the rule of feudal absolutism.⁵⁰⁰ This phenomenon is linked to Wang Yangming's exchanges with Zhan Ruoshui, and the decline of feudal society alongside the rise of capitalism in mid-Ming China. Wang disrupted Zhu Xi's 'orthodoxy' with the proliferation of private academies. This divergence led to significant shifts among Confucian scholars during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Wang's adherence to and development of the Mind-Heart school were closely aligned, accompanied by a degree of critique of Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism. As a friend of Wang, as a result, Shao Bao did not commemorate Zhu Xi.

The arrangement of scenery in his two gardens is described as similar, including the names of landscapes. Therefore, he found it necessary to provide a specific explanation to his friends to correct their misunderstanding of his gardens. This indicates that he did not invest as much effort in the scenery design compared to the years of design and construction undertaken by Qin Yao and Zou Diguang.⁵⁰¹

The plants in the garden, such as plum blossoms, orchids, bamboo, and pine, were all chosen for their embodiment of the moral qualities of a Jun Zi 君子, a 'gentleman.' The planting of calamus and lotus flowers was due to his admiration for Confucian scholars of previous generations. Among them, orchids are the only plants mentioned specifically, which he obtained from the mountains in Changzhou. The names of the

⁴⁹⁹ 良知之在人心，非但圣贤，虽常人亦无不如此。The sense of conscience resides in the human heart, not only in the wise and virtuous, but also in ordinary people; there is none who does not possess it. Wang, Yangming, *Chuan Xi Lu* [Records in Learning and Passing on], letters to Lu Yuanjing, Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁰⁰ Zhang Qizhi, et. al, *Zhongguo Sixiang Shi* [History of Chinese Thought], (Xi'an, Northwest University Press, 2001) pp397

⁵⁰¹ Shao Bao, *Rong Chun Tang Hou Ji* [Later Collection of Rongchun Hall], vol14, notes, Qinding Siku Quanshu, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

other plants were not mentioned, which indicate the communication within the region is very close, even the link with foreign countries.

The era marked the initial spread of Western learning to the East, symbolized by Matteo Ricci, which began at the end of the 16th century. Amidst a general crisis at the end of the Ming Dynasty, coinciding with the pragmatism proposed by the Donglin Party, a significant influx of natural science books was imported into China and translated.⁵⁰² Scholars and officials recognized and applied these new knowledges and skills in practice. For example, An Rui 安睿(1629-1703) used the term 支那 ‘China’ in his writings, demonstrating language exchanges between the Western world and Wuxi.⁵⁰³

Numerous flower catalogues began to emerge, documenting plants such as peonies, crab apples, plum blossoms, bamboo, orchids, and others. Their records and classifications do not entirely align with modern taxonomy. Treating science as a means to achieve the Confucian scholars’ goal of ‘saving the world’ was often seen as relegating it to a secondary doctrine. Scholars like Shao Bao were not typically concerned with scientific aspects of plants.

The social crisis temporarily abated with the establishment of the Qing government. Due to deep-rooted Confucian cultural attitudes and biases against foreign learning, Lu argued that once the crisis passed, these foreign studies would again be marginalized within the Confucian cultural system, and possibly even eradicated. This situation paralleled the early Qing Dynasty, where foreign knowledge in fields such as military science, agriculture, medicine, and the arts gradually transitioned into courtly knowledge, reserved exclusively for the emperor's understanding and recorded in

502 Zhang, Jian. ‘Solid Scholarship of Ming and Qing Dynasties Provides Ground of Thinking for Eastward Development of Western Learning’, *Journal of North China University of Technology*, 16.2(2004): 57-62

503 An, Rui, 18 century, *Jiao Dong Shan Shui Zhi*[Chronicle of East part of Mount Jiao], *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

official records, while diminishing among the scholar-official class. The emphasis on practical learning and knowledge waned after the 17th century, despite education continuing to prioritize classical studies, thus bringing forth new opportunities.

Academy

Shao Bao's contributions extended beyond providing an enlightening space within his family; he also initiated the construction of the Wuxi Academy. The primary purpose of his academy was to honor past sages, with education restricted to the family's descendants. Through rituals and the education of their progeny, ancestral halls and academy gardens became sources of influence for local elites.

During the early Ming period, there was a revival, support, utilization, and control of Confucianism and the imperial examination system, which maintained a certain balance through the mid-Ming period. However, as the dynasty neared its later stages, the status of educational institutions and gardens gradually began to pose a threat to imperial authority, harbouring latent risks for the fate of academies in the later Ming period. Challenging imperial authority was no simple endeavour.

In the late Ming period, the Donglin Academy emerged as the most renowned institution, making Wuxi a prominent academic center in the Jiangnan region. This gave rise to the Donglin School and the Donglin Party, which sparked significant political factionalism and garnered widespread attention, with its influence extending into the Qing Dynasty. The establishment of the Donglin Academy underscored how the culture of garden-making had become a manifestation of social influence, even as scholars and officials continued to uphold principles of loyalty to the emperor, patriotism, and adherence to strict social hierarchy and rituals within the garden.

With the advent of individual consciousness following the Ming Dynasty, Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 (1610-1695) proposed that people are the masters of the world and the

emperor is merely a guest, marking a departure from traditional Confucianism.⁵⁰⁴ This challenged the notion that the highest echelons of society necessarily included the emperor, though this realization may not have been fully recognized in the 16th century.

The Donglin Academy was established with strong political motives, aiming to function as an independent public opinion organization separate from the government, capable of rectifying the emperor's mistakes according to its builders.

The separation of production and leisure activities limited access to education to certain economic groups.⁵⁰⁵ Wang and Zhan expanded the reach of academies and significantly promoted their civilianization.⁵⁰⁶ Scholars sought to relocate academies from picturesque mountains and forests to urban centres to serve the general public. For instance, the Donglin Academy was situated near the eastern gate of the city, close to the Grand Beijing-Hangzhou Canal, with roads leading to the north (Ruoye Lane) and west (Sujia Lane) facilitating easy access to the city centre (Figure 63).⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁴ 古者以天下为主，君为客，凡君之所毕世而经营者，为天下也。In ancient times, the world was considered the master, and the ruler was the servant. Everything that a ruler accomplishes throughout their life is ultimately for the sake of the world. Huang, Zongxi, *Ming Yi Dai Fang Lu* [Waiting for Holy Monarch], (Ningbo: Zheng's Erlao Ge, Qing Qianlong period) vol 1 Original Monarch, collected in Berkeley Library of California, eBook

⁵⁰⁵ Fei, Xiaotong., and Margaret Park. Redfield, *China's Gentry: Essays in Rural-Urban Relations* (Chicago: University Press, 1953) pp103

⁵⁰⁶ Deng Hongbo, *Zhong Guo Shu Yuan Shi* [the history of Chinese academies], (Shang Hai: Oriental Publishing Center, 2004), pp 305-330

⁵⁰⁷ Zhu Xi inscribed the Bailudong Academy in Jiujiang, Jiangxi Province.

Zhou, Bangjie, and Qin Liang, *Wuxi Xian Zhi* [Chronicle of Wuxi in Wanli reign], 1574 edition, *Wuxi Wenku*, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

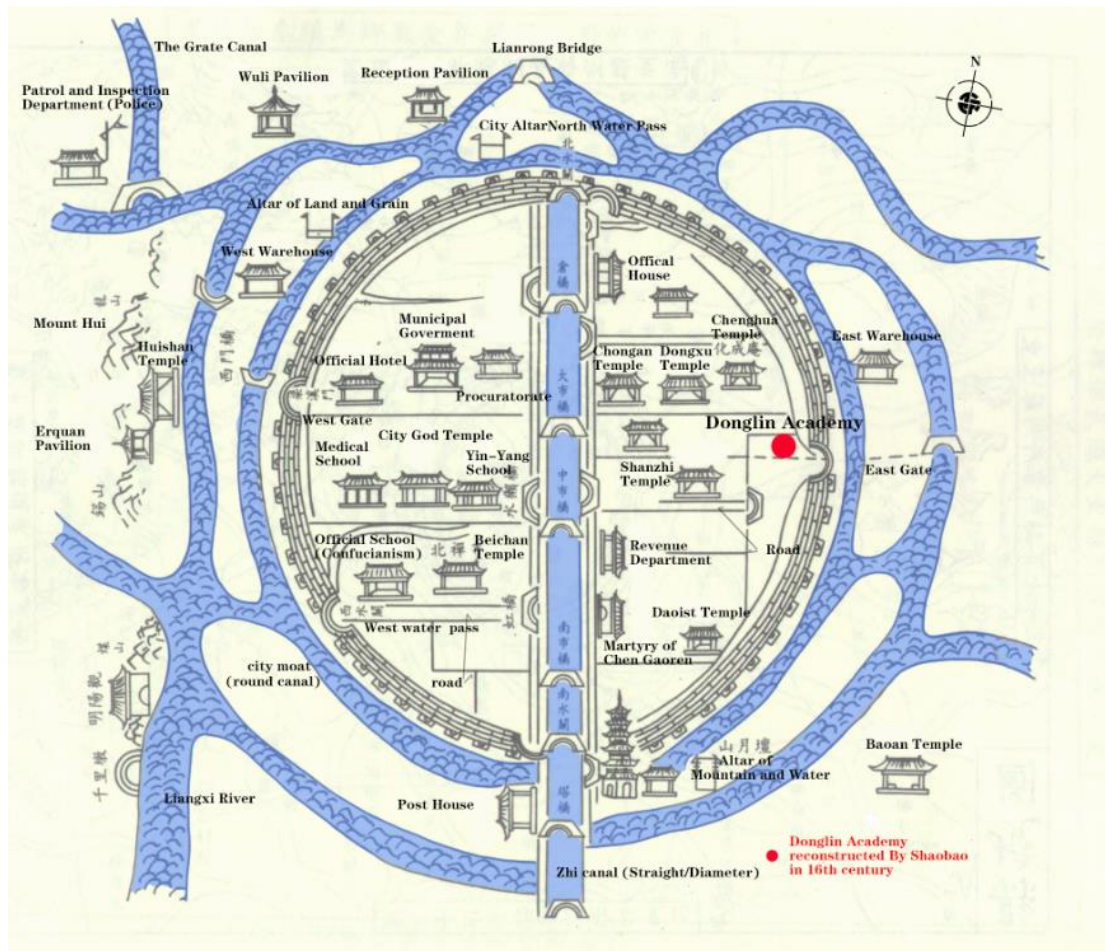


Figure 63: The location of the two Donglin academy (draw by author based on 1494 city map)

The ten years of Zhang Juzheng 张居正 (1525-1582) as Prime Minister are regarded as the last brilliant radiance of the Ming Dynasty in its twilight years. However, both his actions in not observing the traditional mourning period for his mother for three years and the emperor's attempt to bypass the hierarchical order in establishing the crown prince went against Confucian values of filial piety and respect for seniority. Additionally, the formation of practical factions among scholars in the middle and lower classes, based on mentor-disciple relationships, posed a challenge to the power structure at the upper echelons.⁵⁰⁸ Zhang felt threatened by a 'disloyal force' comprised of

⁵⁰⁸ Frederick W. Mote, and Twitchett, Denis, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 7 Part 1 The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)

closely connected Jiangnan scholars, whom he perceived as loyal officials daring to criticize the emperor.⁵⁰⁹ The magistrate of Changzhou was dismissed in 1579 for constructing academies without permission.⁵¹⁰ Most of these academies were disguised as memorial halls 祠堂 or clubs 社.

In terms of power, these scholars clearly lacked the ability to contend with the central government. Unlike Shao Bao, young officials in the middle and lower ranks did not earn the emperor's trust, nor did they hold high-ranking positions or enjoy the protection afforded to disciples of the Prime Minister. In fact, their opportunity to establish academies often arose from expulsion from the political system, leaving them feeling powerless.

Fortunately, Zhang passed away in 1582, potentially allowing for some flexibility in enforcement of prohibitions.⁵¹¹ Local officials retained the potential to support academy construction. In the case of Donglin Academy, besides local scholars and dismissed officials, provincial governors and officials from neighboring counties, typically at the county magistrate level, supported its establishment. By invoking the veneration of virtuous predecessors and leveraging Yang Shi's reputation, Donglin Academy was established. Perhaps it can be said that by the late Ming Dynasty, scholars of humble origins gained qualification to challenge the aristocratic system through collective

⁵⁰⁹ Zhang Juzheng, *Zhang Tai Yue Wen Ji* [The collection of Zhang Juzheng] Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook volume 39

Zhang Tingyu, Qing Dynasty, *Ming Shi* [The History of the Ming Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵¹⁰ Official, Ming Shen Zong Shi Lu [The record of the Ming Shenzong reign] Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. volume 83

⁵¹¹ Zhang Juzheng, *Zhang Tai Yue Wen Ji* [The collection of Zhang Juzheng] Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook volume 39

strength.⁵¹²

The central government's control over thought did not suddenly emerge in the 16th century; the process of official incorporation had already begun with the establishment of private academies. The layouts of private academies uniformly adopted the layout of official schools and temples (Figure 64).⁵¹³ In reality, the nature and structure of space for reading or studying did not have a decisive impact. Scholars tended to avoid losing their independence, and their emulation of official institutions in architectural design signaled a desire for educational authority (Figure 65).⁵¹⁴

⁵¹² Deng, Hongbo, *Academy History of China*, Shanghai: Oriental Press Company, 2004, pp 305-330

⁵¹³ Yang, Shenchu, *Chinese Academy Culture and Architecture*, (Wuhan, Hubei Education Press. 2002)

⁵¹⁴ Gao, Tingzhen et al, *Dong Lin Shu Yuan Zhi* [Chorography of Donglin Academy], from Wang, Liren, et al, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi library], (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-12)

Zou, Minghe, *Daonan Yuanyuan Lu* [the close ties with Daonan], Luo Lin et al, *Si Ku Wei Shou Shu Ji Kan*, (Beijing, Beijing press, 1995) Chinese Studies Classical Books.

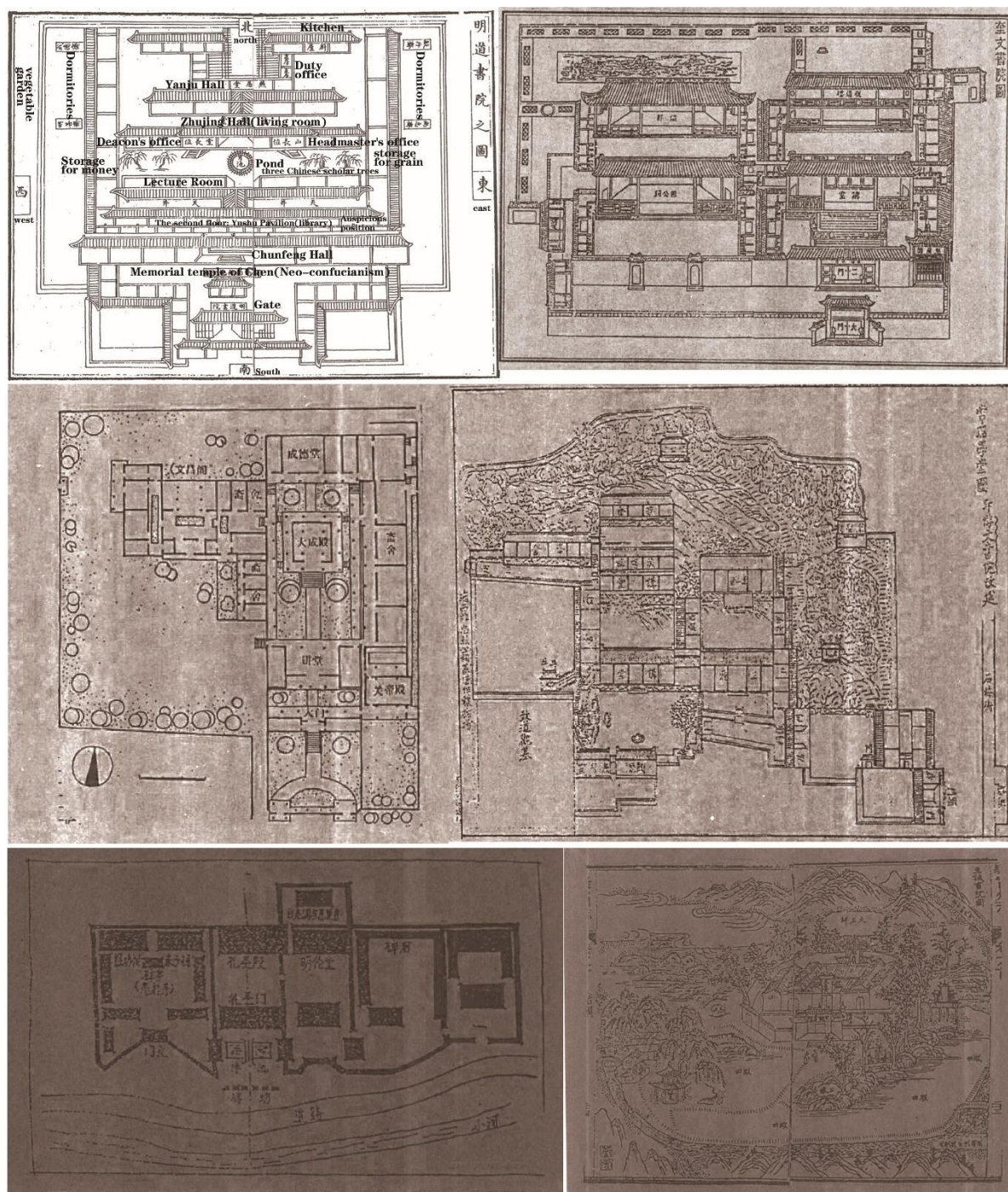


Figure 64: Top: Mingdao academy in Jiangsu; Kuiwen academy in Jiangsu;

Middle: Wenhua academy in Hunan; Youwen academy in Jiangsu

Bottom: Bailu academy in Jiangxi; Zhicheng academy in Jiangxi

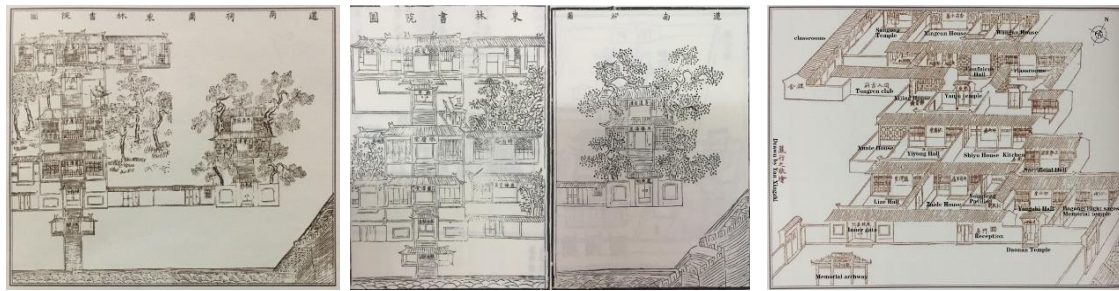


Figure 65: Maps of the Donglin Academy in 1733, 1752, and 1848. All of them are combine Confucius Temple and education halls from Chorography of Donglin Academy

In fact, for reading or studing, neither the nature nor the layout of space has a decisive influence. Scholars worked in various locations, both indoors and outdoors (Figure 66, Figure 67).⁵¹⁵ The ‘self-studying schedule’ developed by Cheng provides the opportunity to democratize education and foster a habit of reading anytime and anywhere. Therefore, the form and layout were used to embody orthodoxy.



Figure 66: Reading in the private houses and Reading I Ching in the autumn

⁵¹⁵ Paintings in the Ming dynasty all from the Palace Museum of China in Beijing



Figure 67: 1) Reading in the boat 2) Reading in the forest 3) Reading under the banana tree 4) Reading on the way

The spaces in the garden were utilized for reading, which was an important function in a scholar's garden. Scholars designed multiple spaces to accommodate different weather conditions and seasons. In Zou Diguang's garden, there was a dedicated area called the Nine Lotus Terrace for reading Buddhist scriptures, providing a tranquil environment. Another spot, the Jade Lotus Pond, was specifically designed for reading and calligraphy practice during hot summer days. Sitting beside the blooming lotus pond, scholars could enjoy the cool breeze while indulging in the pleasure of reading. During winter, under the plum trees at Donglin Academy, there was a designated reading space.

What distinguishes the academy as a unique space, separate from other gardens, is a series of rituals. The systematic rules for academies were first proposed by Zhu Xi, who asserted that 'regarding the way of learning, the rules of Bailudong are to be followed.'⁵¹⁶ These rules were established during the Song dynasty by imperial decree and were mandated for all academies, including those in Wuxi. They also influenced academies in Japan and the Joseon dynasty.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁶ Wang, Yangming, *Yangming Xiangsheng Wenji* [Collection of Yangming], vol 4, (Beijing:Yanshan Press,2009),pp.984

⁵¹⁷ Ren, Wenxiang, 'On the Cultural Connotations of School Regulations in Bailudong Academy', *Journal of Henan Normal University (Philosophy and Social Science)*, 41(2014),173-175

Participants in rituals could glean psychological cues, identify group members, demonstrate commitment to in-group values, facilitate cooperation within social coalitions, and enhance social cohesion, thereby forming stable social order and organizational relations.⁵¹⁸ This cohesive power was often perceived as threatening by imperial authorities, who sought to control and assimilate it.

The various expenses associated with these ceremonies were covered by income from fields affiliated with the schools. The land for these fields came from government support or donations from scholars. Subsequently, Donglin Academy's lands were confiscated. Although the academy was later restored, fees were imposed on the original Xuetian school lands belonging to Donglin, requesting tax exemptions. This indicates that originally, these fields supporting education were exempt from taxes, and the additional taxes and fees levied on Donglin Academy were part of the government's strategy to control various ceremonies and reduce academy operations.

The rites conducted in early academies encompassed three main aspects: sacrificial ceremonies, academic conferences, and daily study, which were generally practiced throughout the 17th century. Since the 11th century, Shi Cai 释菜 and Shi Dian 释奠 ceremonies have been conducted at the official school of Wuxi, following regulations promulgated by the central government specific to scholars and local officials.⁵¹⁹ After the Ming dynasty, special experts were appointed to oversee sacrificial rituals in

Li, Bangguo, 'the Influence of Zhu Xi and Bailudong Academy in Korean peninsula and Japan', *Journal of Hebei Normal University (Philosophy and Social Science)*, 15.1 (1995), 98-101

Gu, Xiancheng, Gu Duanwen Gong Yigao [Collection of Gu Xiancheng], electronic edition: collected in Jingli Gu's ancestral temple

⁵¹⁸ Watson-Jones, Rachel E., and Cristine H. Legare, 'The Social Functions of Group Rituals', *Current Directions in Psychological Science: a Journal of the American Psychological Society*, 25.1 (2016), 42-46

⁵¹⁹ Li Mizheng's record, Wang, Furen, 1335, *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi], Zhizheng period edition, Editor Wang Liren, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

Confucius temples, known as Fengci Staff (奉祠生).⁵²⁰

The evolution of rituals underwent changes in detail, becoming seasonal during the Tang Dynasty, with standardized offering vessel standards issued in 1010.⁵²¹ The procedures involved increasing steps with reduced details per step and more participants.⁵²² Buddhist elements began to appear in Confucian temples during the Qing Dynasty, such as the practice of burning incense sticks in rituals originated from Buddhism. Although not specifically mentioned in Donglin Academy, incense sticks and candles were included in preparation lists and arrangement maps.⁵²³ Ironically, the original intent of establishing academies was to counteract popular religious fervour and promote enlightenment.

The procedural steps at different levels were fundamentally similar, involving fasting, preparations for offerings, the welcoming of the spirits of sages, presenting offerings with deep reverence, accompanied by music and dance performances by students, bidding farewell to the spirits of sages, and concluding the ceremony. Throughout this process, participants were required to dress in auspicious attire.⁵²⁴ The spatial connection between the ceremonies in two memorial temples was facilitated by long

⁵²⁰ Zhang Tingyu, Qing Dynasty, *Ming Shi* [The History of the Ming Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. vol 75

Liu, Yonghua. 'Rituals and Rituals in Ming and Qing Dynasties'. *Chinese Social and Historical Review* 00(2008),245-257.

⁵²¹ Tuo Tuo, Yuan dynasty, *Song Shi* [The History of the Song], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook vol emperor 7

⁵²² 唐书/大唐开元礼/政和五礼新义/大明集礼/明史/大清会典(Kaiyuan ceremony of the Tang Dynasty/New Rites of The Five Rites in Zhenghe period of the Song dynasty/Rites of the Ming Dynasty/ ceremony of the Qing Dynasty)

⁵²³ Zhu, Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan Congtan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing: Chronicle Press, 2013)

⁵²⁴ Pictures come from the Huangchao Liqi Tushi (the ritual vessels) in 17th century

Pictures of vessels come from The Sancai Tuhui (Encyclopedia illustration book) 三才图会 of the Ming Dynasty, Huangchao Liqi Tushi (the ritual vessels) of the Qing Dynasty, the Palace Museum, and Dujiangyan Confucius Temple

corridors on both sides of the buildings. Compared to halls with elevated foundations and internal routes, using corridors avoids the need for frequent ascents and descents. Moreover, corridors lack indoor partitions like screens, reducing the number of turns required.

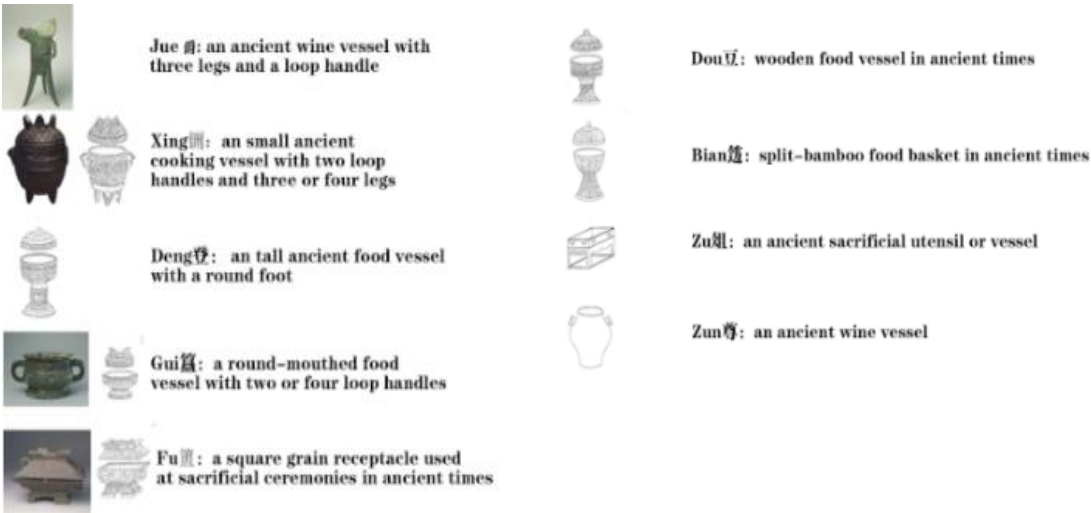


Figure 68: Ritual vessels used in the Donglin Academy chorography

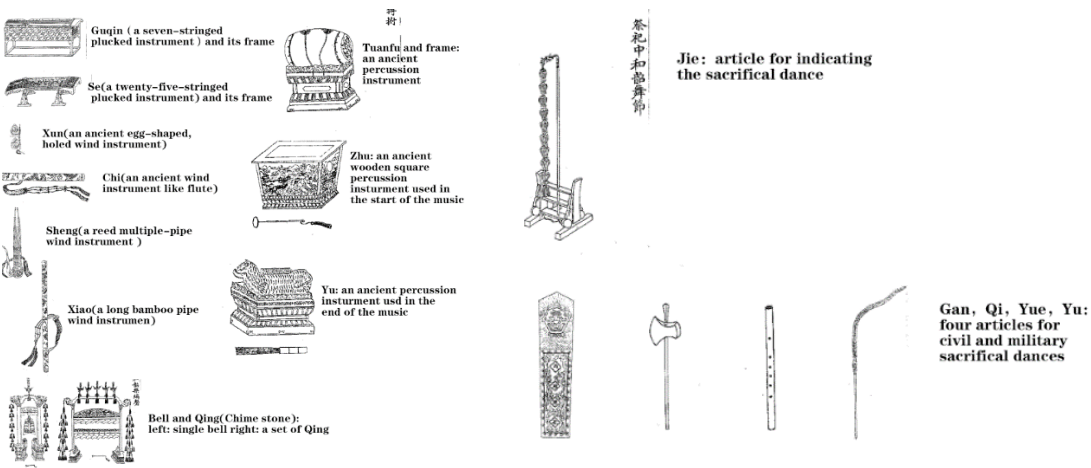


Figure 69: Left: Pictures of musical instruments used in the Donglin academy

Right: Pictures of dancing instrument



Figure 70: vessels and instruments kept in Donglin academy (photo by author in May, 2020)

Sacrificial rituals were conducted in both memorial temples, starting with the Yanju Temple 燕居庙 followed by the Daonan Memorial Temple 道南祠.⁵²⁵ After considering the antiquity and modern complexity of the rituals, it was decided to hold Shi Dian twice: on the second ‘Ding 丁’ day of February and Autumn, ten days later than the official school, and Shi Cai on the first ‘Jia 甲’ day of January to mark the beginning of the semester.⁵²⁶

The prepare of ritual offerings is a important part of the preparation period, usually three or one day in advance. Offerings for Confucius is same as that in the official

⁵²⁵ Zhu, Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan Congtan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing: Chronicle Press, 2013)

⁵²⁶ the ten Heavenly Stems: Jia 甲, Yi 乙, Bing 丙, Ding 丁, Wu 戊, Ji 己, Geng 庚, Xin 辛, Ren 壬, Gui 癸

school, but Yang Shi’s offerings in Daonan Temple is relatively lower level than that in the official school (Figure 71Figure 72Figure 73Figure 74Figure 76).⁵²⁷

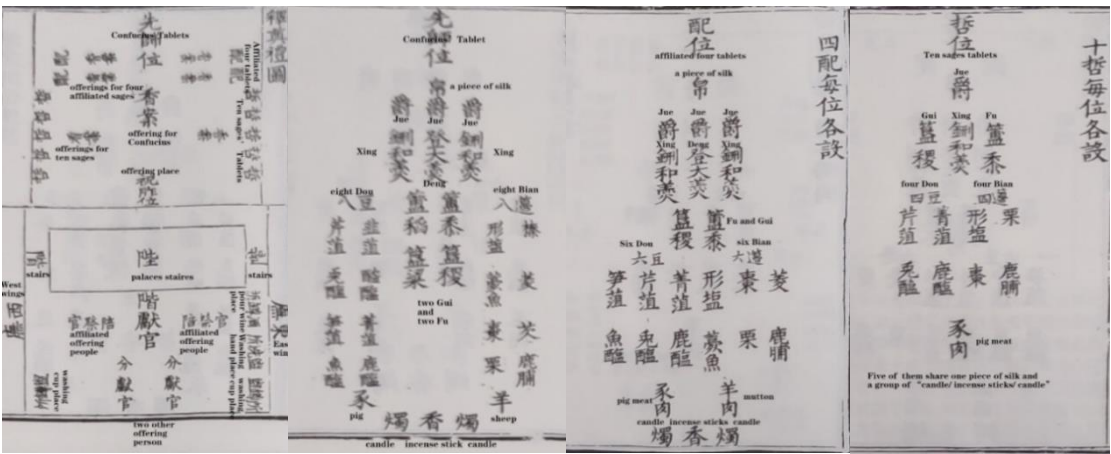


Figure 71: Arrangement of *Shi Dian* in the official school. 1) overall arrangement inside and in the courtyard 2) offerings of the Confucius 3) offerings of the four affiliated sacrificed sages 4) offerings of the ten affiliated sacrificed Confucians (separated into two groups and each group shared a group of candle and incense sticks

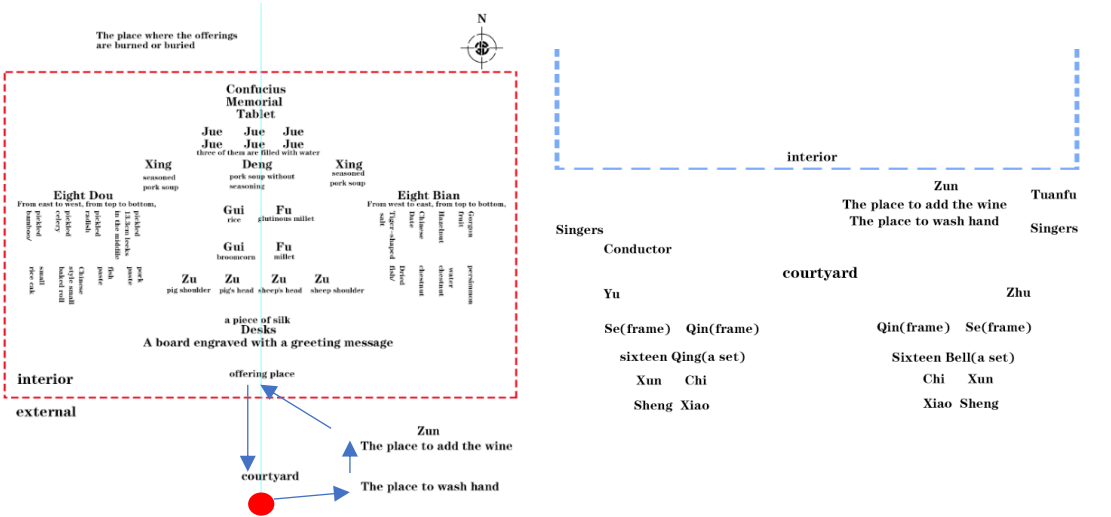


Figure 72: Arrangement of vessels in Confucius temple (Yanju Temple) (the candle and incense sticks

⁵²⁷ Tan,Xiu, Ming dynasty, *Wuxi Xian Xue Bi Ji*[Chorography of the Wuxi Official School] Wang, Liren, et al, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi library], (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-12)

are same as the official schools) and the musical instrument of *Shi Dian*.

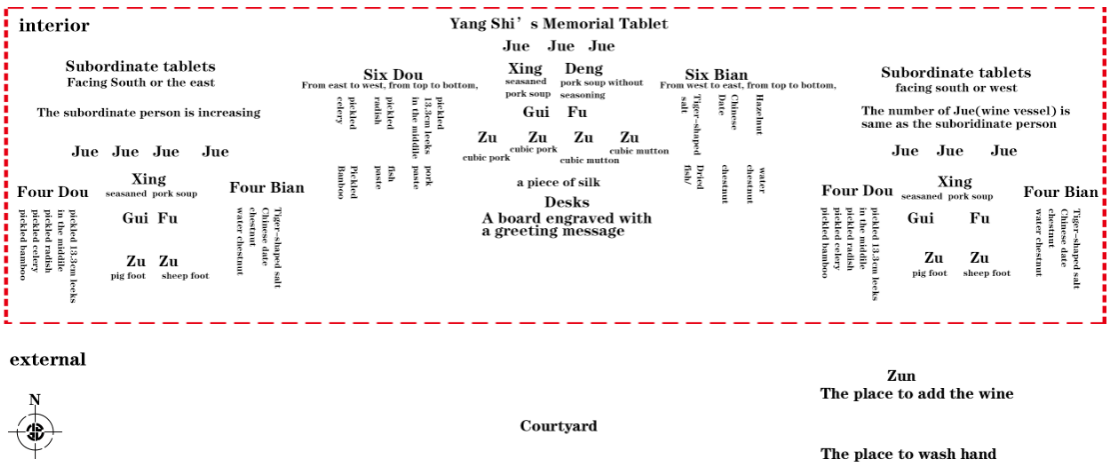


Figure 73: Arrangement of *Shi Dian* in the Daonan memorial temple

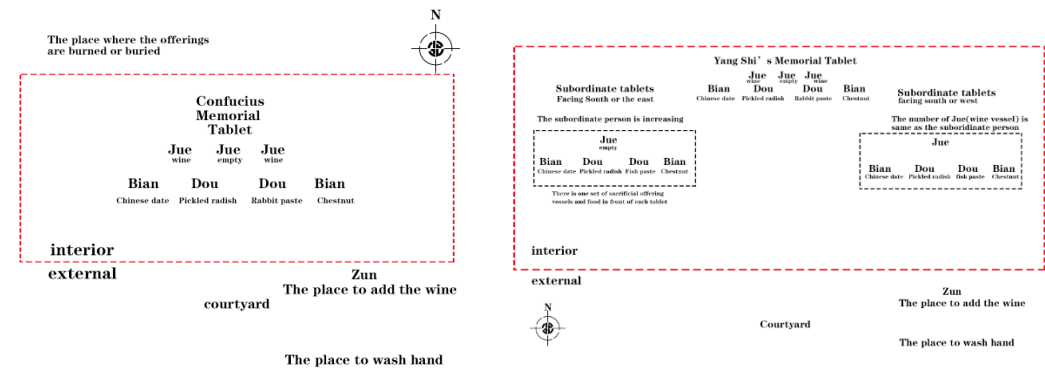


Figure 74: Arrangement of *Shi Cai* in the Yanju temple and the Daonan temple

As the principal honouree and subsidiary honourees of the Independent Memorial Temple, Yang Shi and local sages receive less veneration than Confucius and his subsidiary honourees. However, in terms of the quantity of offerings, their status in Wuxi aligns with that of Confucius's Four Assessors and Ten Philosophers, who are recognized within the national sacrificial system. This alignment thus constitutes a form of transgression, highlighting an elevation and promotion of hometown pride and local luminaries, thereby demonstrating local confidence.

From the outside to the inside (south to north), in the waiting practice before the ceremony, the academy is divided into three areas, the preparation area, the teaching area (ceremonial transition area) and the core ceremonial area, which are connected by the left and right corridors. The differences in elevation within Wuxi schools were negligible, with distinctions between interior and exterior achieved through the use of steps. (Figure 75).

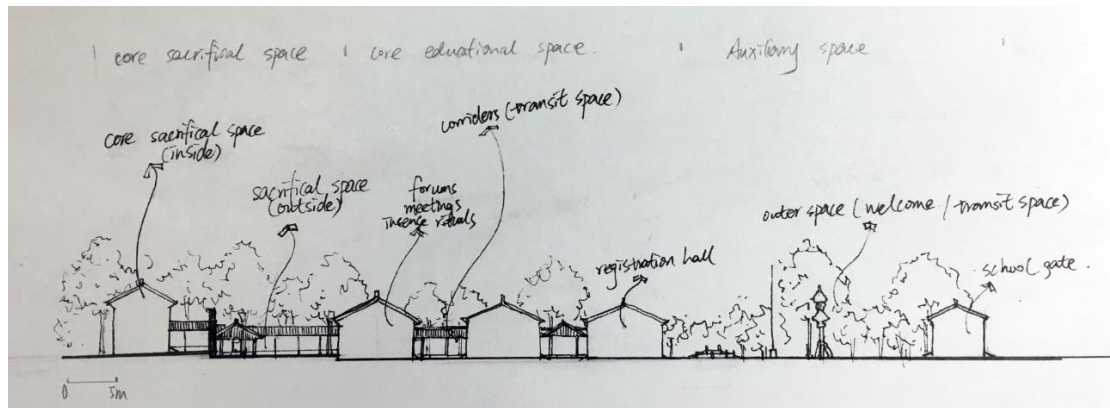


Figure 75: Space of Donglin academy for holding rituals

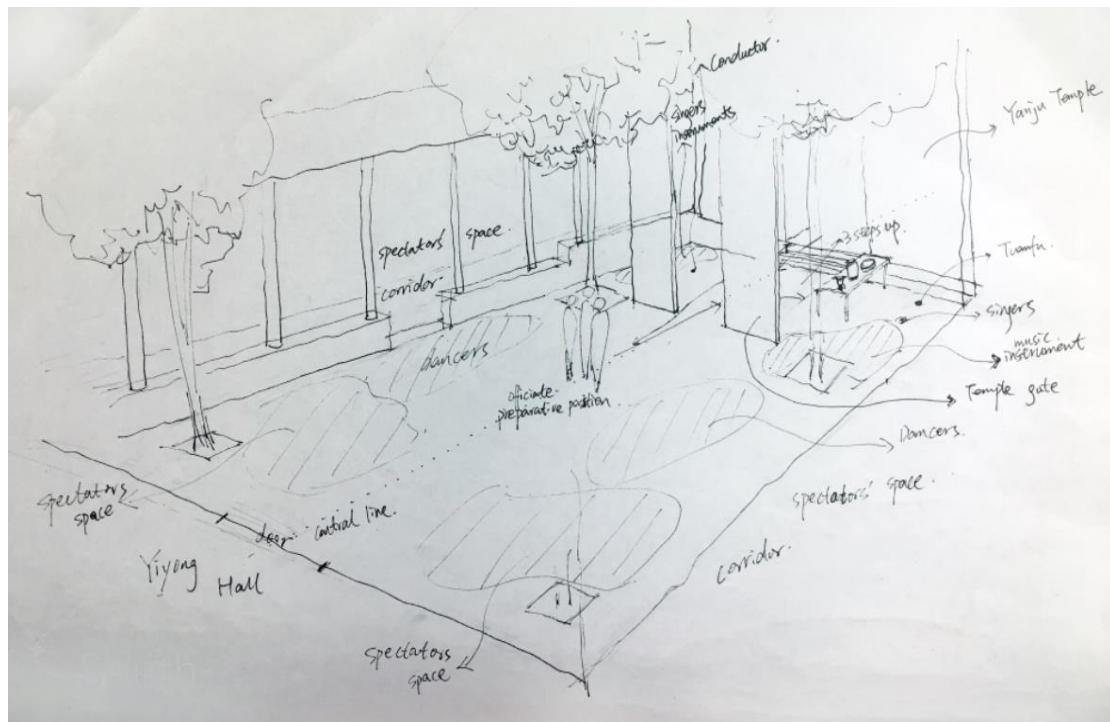


Figure 76: Positions in the courtyard (drawn by author based on Ritual Book of Ming and Chronicle of Donglin Academy)

The brief processes were as follows (Figure 77 and Figure 78):



Figure 77:Top: 1) prepare position 2) original position of all staff 3) washing hand

Middle: 1) pouring wine 2) offering wine 3) reading the blessing words

Bottom:1) salute 2) dance 3) music



Figure 78: Examples of auspicious clothes 1) official robe 2) auspicious clothes in the Imperial college of the Ming Dynasty

All the steps of the ritual emphasize respect for the Confucian sages and conclude the ceremony with the belief that blessings have been obtained. The step to welcome the souls of the gods/sages was meant to establish a connection between the sages and the students. The ritual space essentially serves as a mapping of the sacrificial ceremony, presenting the external form of the participants' ritual behavior. Once the ritual space is established, it also in turn constrains the form of the sacrificial ceremony, making it relatively stable over a long period of time. The ritual adapts to the space and maintains the stability of the space.

A greater influence comes from the more intimate and extensive social attributes that the academy space provides. Through regularly held academic exchange meetings, social relationships among scholars were closely forged. Scholars from Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and surrounding regions frequently convened near the Huishan spring to passionately engage in discussions on Neo-Confucianism since 1598. This intellectual fervor could be compared to the scholarly exchanges that occurred at the Bailudong Academy and the Ehu Debate Competition in the 12th century, reaching its zenith in

popularity during the mid-Ming period.⁵²⁸ These forums and regular meetings represented a distinctive pedagogical approach that demonstrated openness to different schools of thought, prompting scholars to travel great distances to participate.

Gu Xiancheng's couplet for the Yiyong Hall 依庸堂, which reads, 'The sounds of wind, rain, and reading fill the ears, caring about family matters, national affairs, and worldly matters,' aptly portrays the prevailing atmosphere of learning and forum activities marked by an unrestrained dedication to scholarly pursuits.⁵²⁹ These regular academic exchange meetings included a series of rigorous, detailed, and personalized processes such as registration, reverence for Confucius and Yang Shi 杨时, breaks between classes, and specific dinner arrangements. Through this ritualization, their influence was expanded.

Although scholars in the field of management have made efforts to expand the participation of the common people and collective power, Qian Mu discusses the transformation of the power background of intellectuals. He believes that the support for intellectuals shifted from Buddhist temples to academies during the former stage when private lectures on various thoughts prospered. They sought to transfer the religious spirit of renunciation in monk temples to the real-world application of the traditional Confucian ideals: self-cultivation, harmonizing the family, governing the country, and achieving world peace. The academies represented the most powerless

⁵²⁸ Gao, Tingzhen et al, *Dong Lin Shu Yuan Zhi* [Chorography of Donglin Academy], from Wang, Liren, et al, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi library], (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-12)

Zhang Tingyu, Qing Dynasty, *Ming Shi* [The History of the Ming Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁵²⁹ Zhang Tingyu, Qing Dynasty, *Ming Shi* [The History of the Ming Dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. Vol 119

Chen, Yuanhui, et al, *Zhongguo Gudai de Shuyuan Zhidu* [the Academy Principles of Ancient China], (Shanghai: Shanghai Education Press, 1981)

group, vulnerable to powerful bureaucratic systems like those of Zhang Juzheng and Wei Zhongxian 魏忠贤, who could easily suppress them.⁵³⁰

Following dissemination, connections, and expansion through scholars and officials, the Donglin Academy's fame grew. This influence was likely influenced by Western technology and science introduced by Matteo Ricci. They aimed to impact the world through practical actions, moving beyond mere theoretical discussions. Critical voices emerged as early as the Southern Song period from figures like Chen Liang 陈亮 (1143-1194) and Ye Shi 叶适 (1150-1223). Living in troubled times at the end of the dynasty, with backgrounds from the lower classes and experience in repelling invaders, they criticized civil servants who could only theorize without practical knowledge.⁵³¹ They viewed Neo-Confucianism as inadequate for ensuring the real security of the nation during the weak Southern Song dynasty. This sentiment echoed at the end of the Ming Dynasty, when Han rulers faced similar external threats, prompting a call for practical applications, which is coinciding with the initial spread aim of Western science in China. Despite their influence, as small to medium-sized landlords or middle- and lower-level officials, their social power remained limited at 17th century. At this time, the upper class had not yet been subjected to the direct political and security shocks brought about by technological developments such as the Industrial Revolution, so internal class contradictions were more pronounced. When scholars lost in struggles against eunuchs (the servant and hatchet men of the upper class), they became prime targets for Wei Zhongxian's reprisals.

The political power of the emperor constrained Confucianism to its intended role as a

⁵³⁰ Qian Mu, *New Theory of National History*, (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 2005)

⁵³¹ 无半点头巾气。胜李纲范纯仁远矣，真用得 There is not the slightest air of pretentiousness. Far surpassing Li Gang and Fan Chunren, truly effective in practice Li, Zhi, *Cang Shu*[Library], vol 14, pp25, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

tool, preventing it from exceeding its boundaries. In the crisis of 1624, the Donglin Academy, particularly its main hall—symbolizing enlightenment through lectures and forums—was demolished. Despite this setback, the spread of Donglin thought continued unabated. With the collapse of the Ming court, Gu Yanwu 顾炎武 (1613-1682) advocated for empowering the people from the perspective of expanding the power of the middle and lower classes.⁵³² His ideas, challenging Dong Zhongshu's 董仲舒 theory of the three cardinal principles and five constant virtues, from the perspective of the emperor exercising strict control and stabilizing society, eventually drew severe reprisals from the Qing government.

Benjamin notes that the bankruptcy of the Donglin Academy in the 1620s marked a challenge from local gentry forces to the centralized system. Followers of the Donglin Academy called for decentralization of power, advocating for both central and local authorities to participate in governance.⁵³³ This intense conflict arose as civilization's growth expanded beyond the ruling class's control.⁵³⁴ After enduring significant changes, later leaders like Wu Guisen 吴桂森 and Gao Shitai 高士泰 notably refrained from discussing politics for survival.⁵³⁵ The spirit of the academy could not be fully revived, and it was eventually absorbed into official academies.⁵³⁶ Their temporary capitulation is also reflected in the 'Shangiang Wen 上梁文,' an auspicious document

⁵³² 以天下之权寄之天下之人 Entrust the power of the world to the people of the world Huang, Rucheng, *Ri Zhi Lu Ji Shi* [Interpretation of Ri Zhi Lu], vol 9 Talents, pp16, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵³³ Benjamin A. Elman, Imperial Politics and Confucian Societies in Late Imperial China: The Hanlin and Donglin Academies, *Modern China*, Oct., 1989, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Oct., 1989), pp. 379-418
URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/189239>

⁵³⁴ John Meskill's, 'the growth of a civilization against the boundaries of the political order it had produced' (1982: 159).

⁵³⁵ Gao, Tingzhen et al, *Chorography of Donglin Academy*, from editorial board, Siku Quanshu Cunmu, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part,

⁵³⁶ Qian Mu, *New Theory of National History*, (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 2005)

for placing the beam.⁵³⁷ As a ritual inscription written upon the completion of construction, the ‘Shangliang Wen’ 上梁文 was documented in Wuxi’s garden literature during the Song Dynasty. For instance, Li Gang composed Shangliang Wen for two of his architectural projects.

When the Donglin Academy was rebuilt in 1629, the Shangliang Wen was authored by Zou Qizhen 邹期桢 (1567-1642), a Confucian scholar of the academy. The document typically begins by praising the academy’s excellent environment and talented scholars with a rich cultural heritage, emphasizing the theme of construction. Given the recent hardships, the paper first mourned the scholars and predecessors involved in the anti-eunuch incident. Without embellishment, this ceremony served as a solemn declaration of the younger generation’s resolve to carry on the aspirations of their forebears.

In the three-sentence poems following a structured style, synesthetic rhetoric was employed to offer prayers in all directions, merging human hearts with the power of nature. This transcended the confines of the academy walls and even the geographical boundaries of the city. In the final blessing, rather than merely wishing the students to be virtuous, knowledgeable, and renowned, Zou emphasized the importance of avoiding empty rhetoric and earnestly pursuing studies, aligning with the revised rules of the forums post-reconstruction. Despite temporary setbacks, the ambitions of Confucian scholars remained steadfast, advocating for independent thinking, practical application, and the betterment of the nation.⁵³⁸

A stable ridgepole symbolizes the safety and fortune of the new house and its inhabitants.⁵³⁹ People select an auspicious day to conduct the Shangliang ceremony,

⁵³⁷ Zhu, Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan CongTan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing, Chronicle Press, 2013)

Gao, Tingzhen et al, *Chorography of Donglin Academy*, from editorial board, *Siku Quanshu Cunmu*, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part,

⁵³⁸ Zhu Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan CongTan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing, Chronicle Press, 2013)

⁵³⁹ Xu, Longmei, ‘Old Building Rituals in Nanjing’, *Chorography of Jiangsu*, 58-60

during which they recite the Shangliang Wen. In the central courtyard, a table is set with items such as five-colour coins, fragrant flowers, candles, fruits, wine, and three animals.⁵⁴⁰

This architectural procedure was later included in the ‘Lu Ban Jing 鲁班经,’ a book specifically dedicated to documenting folk architectural practices during the Ming Dynasty.⁵⁴¹ It described certain practices that should be avoided, possibly catering to residents’ superstitions related to auspiciousness in major construction projects, often associated with Feng Shui.

In the Ming Dynasty, although relatively rare in documentation, evidence suggests a wide readership for such practices. For example, the mountain in Jichang Garden was initially constructed to complement the feng shui of Mount Hui, ensuring the safety of Huishan Temple. This project was carried out under the direction of Governor Zhou Chen 周忱. Gu Xiancheng also mentioned in his garden records for another city academy that Feng Shui played a role in selecting the academy’s location. While there is no direct evidence of this practice during the construction of the Donglin Academy, as a former memorial hall, it likely continued the observational practices from earlier periods.

Clunas concludes that the prevalent Feng Shui awareness among elites at the time had reached a point where it did not need to be explicitly mentioned in formal texts. He views the extravagant construction practices as attempts, from a geomantic perspective, to rectify the aesthetic flaws in the original landscape of the site by investing heavily in

⁵⁴⁰ Wu, Rong, Zhang Yan(write), Jiang Mu, Feng Lvwen, Xie Jing (edit), *the Compile of Lu Ban Jing*, (Beijing: Renmin Press, 2018)

⁵⁴¹ Wu, Rong, *Xin Juan Jing Ban Gong Shi Jiao Qi Lu Ban Jing Jiang Jia Jing*, (Haikou, Hainan Publishing House, 2006)

large-scale civil engineering projects.⁵⁴²

There is no recorded evidence of ceremonial activities and forums taking place during the period of the Donglin Academy's restoration, apart from the resumption of teaching in 1643. Symbolic rituals of education did not resume until the 1680s, benefiting from Emperor Kangxi's lenient cultural policies. After the division of Wuxi in 1726 into Wuxi (west) and Jinkui 金匮 (east), it naturally became an official school of Jinkui County. The division of the county, Fu Guo County 附郭县, is usually seen as another method of facilitating control over a city prevalent in the economically and culturally dominant Jiangnan region.⁵⁴³

In medieval Europe, with the development of industry and commerce, cities gradually acquired special and independent administrative powers, relying on citizen solidarity and the promotion of urban industry and commerce. However, during the highly centralized Qing Dynasty, independent administrative powers for cities were unattainable. Centralization was at its peak, and societal control was increasing. While Wakeman finds Huang Zongxi's questioning of the absolute power of the emperor impressive and contradictory to traditional Confucianism, the Donglin Academy still maintained its role as an official school, conducting regular teaching and participating in the imperial examination system.⁵⁴⁴

There was a gradual strengthening of ideological control. In the Ming Dynasty, three pavilions were added to unify government and school, emphasizing loyalty and

⁵⁴² Craig Clunas, *Fruitful Sites : Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*, Reaktion Books, Limited, 2004. ProQuest Ebook Central pp183-189

⁵⁴³ Jin, Runcheng , Yu Shuangyuan, ' Limitations of Suzhou City-political Zone' s in Qing-Dynasty', *Journal of Tianjin Normal University (Social Science)*, 3(2010):38-42

⁵⁴⁴ Wakeman, F. 'Localism and loyalism during the Ch'ing conquest of Kiangnan: the tragedy of Chiangyin,' in Frederic Wakeman, Jr., and Carolyn Grant (eds.), *Conflict and Control in Late Imperial China*. (Berkeley: University of California Press. 1975) pp.68-73

authority. Consequently, official schools began enforcing stricter rituals and education, becoming closely linked to the imperial examination system.

Increased control over enlightenment and locality was reflected at the official level through changes in township drinking rituals. Additional processes were introduced, such as the recitation of laws and regulations, which included evident moral and educational content. During the Tang and Song dynasties, these rituals were mainly organized by local officials and selected Confucian scholars. However, in the Ming Dynasty, village drinking rituals merged activities related to ancestral rites and grassroots political governance. This expansion saw the participation not only of county-level official schools but also lower-level neighbourhood communities (li she 里社) that held regular ceremonies.



Figure 79: Arrangement of Drinking rite in official schools (redrawn by author based on Yang Fu, *Map*

Invitations were extended and categorized into three levels: the upper level comprised local elites—elderly and virtuous individuals without public or private faults; the middle level included those who had delayed or failed to pay taxes or fulfill labor obligations, or had previously received punishments from authorities; the lower level encompassed individuals who had committed fraudulent acts, theft, or engaged in detrimental governance.⁵⁴⁵ The main procedures remained similar to those of the Tang and Song periods. However, post-Ming rituals included the reading of laws and regulations in the center of the hall, where offenders stood facing north to listen.⁵⁴⁶ Other relevant documents issued by the Ministry of Justice were read aloud, accompanied by admonitions.

Additionally, even minor errors during the participation process would result in immediate punishment. This excessively strict system may have deterred many individuals from willingly participating in the ritual, despite a moderate mindset that refrained from activities solely for honor and jealousy. As a prominent local clan, the Hua family elders were often invited, but examples of their polite refusal were recorded

⁵⁴⁵ 命凡有过犯之人列于外坐，同类者成席，不许杂于善良之中，著为令。In the twenty-second year, it was decreed that all those who had committed offenses would be seated separately outside, grouped together, not allowed to mingle with those of good character, and this decree was duly issued. Zhang, Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty], vol32 Ritual, *Qinding Siku Quanshu*, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books

⁵⁴⁶ 赞礼唱读律令，执事举律令案于堂之中。读律令者诣案前，北向立读，皆如扬觶仪。有过之人俱赴正席立听，读毕复位。Praising rituals, singing and reciting laws and regulations, the officials responsible would present cases of laws and regulations in the hall. Those reciting the laws and regulations would approach the case, stand facing north, and recite, following the ceremonial manner of lifting the wine vessel. Those who had committed offenses would all approach and stand at the formal seating area to listen, then return to their places after the recitation. Zhang, Tingyu et al, *Ming Shi* [History of the Ming Dynasty], vol32 Ritual, *Qinding Siku Quanshu*, Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986. Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

in their genealogy.⁵⁴⁷

To enhance the practicality of the ritual, Emperor Qianlong implemented unified regulations during his reign, eliminating some cumbersome formalities and stipulating that the village drinking ritual should not be excessively prolonged.⁵⁴⁸ Due to lack of funds, all rituals were essentially no longer held regularly.⁵⁴⁹ The academies, as inheritors of Confucianism and its rituals, gradually lost their original complex meaning and became purely educational places.

With the discontinuation of formal rituals, this particular form of garden culture also lost its significance and became susceptible to encroachment by neighbours. When Qin Zhenjun 秦振钧 oversaw the repair of the Donglin Academy in 1802, he purchased the garden land between the gate and the inner gate from neighbours, who had converted it into vegetable gardens. Subsequently, 700-meter walls and 300-meter bamboo fences were erected to demarcate the boundaries and maintain a quiet learning environment. Despite these efforts, land encroachment remained a challenge for government-run schools and other private academic gardens.

Although academies primarily serve as spaces for teaching and learning, scholars residing in these institutions continued to engage in various social activities akin to

⁵⁴⁷ Hua, Ziheng (1676-1744), *Hua Shi Chuan Fang Lu* [Genealogy of the Hua], Wuxi Wenku, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁵⁴⁸ 乾隆八年，以各省乡饮制不画一，或频年阙略不行。旧仪载图...名号纷歧...初，乡饮诸费取给公家，自道光末叶，移充军饷，始改归地方指办。馀准故事行。然行之亦仅矣。In the eighth year of the Qianlong reign, the regulations concerning local village feasts and drinks were not uniformly implemented across provinces, and there were occasional lapses over several years. The old practices were recorded in illustrations... with various names and titles... Initially, the expenses for village feasts and drinks were provided to the government. Since the late years of the Daoguang period, these funds were redirected to support military provisions, and only later returned to be managed by local authorities. The rest followed according to established practices, but their implementation was limited. Zhao, Erxun, *Qing Shi Gao*[Draft of History of Qing], vol89 Ritual, Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books.

⁵⁴⁹ Zhu Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan CongTan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing, Chronicle Press, 2013)

gatherings in private gardens. Academic conferences functioned as conventional social interactions within the secluded confines of scholarly gardens. Inheritance within families relied on blood ties, whereas within academies, it was contingent upon the transmission of intellectual legacies. Rituals played a crucial role in fostering a unified spirit and strengthening bonds among scholars. However, an excessive emphasis on rituals could elicit negative feedback, disrupting the flow of resources and support. Consequently, the unique garden-like spaces of academies gradually declined.

Family destiny and family temples

The garden culture of Wuxi during the later stage of this period (especially Qing dynasty) clearly leaned towards a clan-oriented perspective, focusing on how to keep gardens as part of clan property for a long time and maximize the benefits. Gardens, as a type of property, gradually shifted from being family property to becoming clan property.

Entering the Qing Dynasty, the overall culture of gardens gradually declined. Only ancestral hall-style gardens were extensively constructed. For example, 16 ancestral halls were built on the site of Yugong Valley, and the Jichang Garden was renamed the Ancestral Hall of the Qin family. More than 70 ancestral halls were built or rebuilt during the Qing period.⁵⁵⁰ The special privacy requirements of ancestral temples gradually displaced the tourist activities associated with gardens. Except for the ancestral halls, other types of gardens continued their decline. What's worse, a considerable number of gardens were destroyed during the Taiping Rebellion in the 1860s.

The substantial costs involved in building new gardens may explain the decline, as the Wuxi economy had not fully recovered to its previous levels after experiencing another

⁵⁵⁰ Jiangnan Newspaper, <<https://www.wxrb.com/doc/2021/08/13/108542.shtml>> [accessed by 10 November 2021]

dynastic change. The Qing Dynasty was ruled by a minority ethnic group from the north. During the Kangxi era, discontent persisted in the downstream areas of the Yangtze River. The emperor recognized that employing military force could not resolve the taxation issues in this prosperous and culturally advanced region.⁵⁵¹ Emperors Kangxi and Qianlong conducted 12 southern inspections, which are difficult to interpret; whether they were acts of appeasement or intimidation of the literati in Jiangnan remains unclear. These inspections were by no means aimed at keeping the society stable.

Individuals relied on their kinship networks for their livelihoods, obtaining safety protections similar to modern insurance. They also had access to education, entertainment, and the establishment of significant social relationships. The classic teachings of the Three Bonds and Five Relationships held authority, demanding filial piety from children towards their parents, wifely obedience to husbands, and the loyalty of subjects to the monarch. The kinship system extended outward to form collective or clan structures with common blood ties, linking most families together. A clan often maintained its ancestral hall and conducted ancestor worship as a religious ritual. Clan status was recognized by Qing Dynasty law, which always upheld the authority of the clan head and imposed punishments based on kinship identities. The state thus provided legal support for family structures, another clear means of maintaining social order.⁵⁵²

For the gentry, representing their clan's power, they gradually accumulated wealth through family members becoming officials, increasing land ownership, and often engaging in business activities in the Jiangnan region. Since the Song Dynasty, local gentry had begun to acquire ethical power through village contracts. As Fei Xiaotong

⁵⁵¹ Edited by Willard J. Peterson, *The Cambridge History of China. Volume 9 Part Two: The Ch'ing Dynasty to 1800*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.)

⁵⁵² John K. Fairbank, editor of compilation, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 10 Part 1 Late Ch'ing 1800–1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978)

pointed out, although they lacked political power, they held significant importance in the society they resided in, ruling over the people through morality and social influence. However, they were suppressed by imperial authority, subjected to heavy taxes, and frequently coveted by other clans, so inheritance became crucial, manifesting in various aspects of Chinese society.⁵⁵³

When the chapter ‘Gardens and Mansions’ was first separately listed in the Chorography of Wuxi County during the Kangxi era, it was noted:

The evaluation of gardens in terms of luxury, simplicity, elegance, and vulgarity varies from person to person. The fluctuations in their rise and decline often evoke a sense of contemplation, likely because they can only be built after acquiring power, and once their fortunes wane, they are often the first to be sold off. The transitions of people in Wuxi, similar to this, find their tangible embodiment in gardens, serving as a reflection of human affairs.⁵⁵⁴

The fate of garden culture is intertwined with that of the family, so the preservation and inheritance of gardens have become more than just a matter of property; they have become a symbol closely associated with the family.

As time passed in Wuxi, large families often established more than one garden. Besides the Xilin Garden, which was established and expanded by An Guo, three more gardens were built by the family during the 16th century.⁵⁵⁵ Another family residing in the eastern part of Wuxi, the Hua family, owned fourteen private gardens around their

⁵⁵³ Fei, Xiaotong., and Margaret Park. Redfield, China's Gentry: Essays in Rural-Urban Relations (Chicago: University Press, 1953)

⁵⁵⁴ 若夫奢简雅俗人有殊心而兴废之端易生感慨，盖由其势至则後營，而运谢先鬻矣。况锡之人事流轉良有可知审而所托焉。 Xu, Yongyan, Yan Shengsun, Qin Songling. *Kangxi Wuxi Xian Zhi* [Chronical of Wuxi County Kangxi edition] Volume 7. 1690. Wuxi Library Volume 2. (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

⁵⁵⁵ Chang Rongchu et al, Liang Xi Gu Yuan [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), p322.

dwellings (Figure 80).⁵⁵⁶ Except for the Xilin Garden, all of them disappeared quickly.

Jiadun garden 嘉遁园 became waste; the Leyu garden 乐榆园 was built from the Jiadun garden waste, the Huanhong garden 浣红园 was built from the Leyu waste, and the Huaxiao garden 花笑园 was built from the Huanhong waste.⁵⁵⁷

The cost of gardening was huge, and it was difficult to guarantee that the financial status of a family would always remain at a high level. The construction of Hua Cha's Garden required an expenditure of 4,000 Liang 两 of silver (4,000 * 32g) for lime, while the expenses for transforming the northwest corner of Jichang Garden into a family ancestral hall exceeded 2,000 Liang 两 (2,000 * 32g) of silver.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁶ Hua, Ziheng (1676-1744), *Hua Shi Chuan Fang Lu* [Genealogy of the Hua], Wuxi Wenku, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012). Album 61

⁵⁵⁷ An, Qidong et al, *Tai Bao Mei li Zhi*[Chronicle of Meili, Wuxi], vol 7, Wuxi Wenku, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁵⁵⁸ Chang ,Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp260
Qin, Zhihao, *Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009)



Figure 80: The Scenery of Mount Jiao area drawn by Hua Po, Qing dynasty from the book *Liang Xi Gu Yuan*. Wuxi Ancient Gardens

Even meticulously constructed gardens like Yugong Valley, which belonged to the Qin family, known as the most important of the clans in the Jiangnan area, had unsatisfactory protection. Zou's son was killed by accident, and the land of Yugong Valley was quickly occupied by several families after his death. The land of Bishan Club was seized by the local powerful after Qin Xu's death, even though his two sons were officials. Qin Daoran 秦道然, who once saved Jichang Garden from division among offspring, was unfortunately involved in the princes' battle for the throne. He was arrested for his student's failure, and Jichang Garden was confiscated for thirteen years. Amid the power struggles among the elite, anyone could be vulnerable. Individual and familial resilience against risks was notably low. If we regard gardens as family clan assets, then property division resulting from the expansion of the family could lead to the fragmentation of the complete landscape due to self-interest-driven

division.⁵⁵⁹ These factors laid the foundation for the transformation of gardens into ancestral halls.

The ideological trend towards democracy in the late Ming turned elites to serve the families rather than the emperor. It became difficult for them to become employees of the emperor with the increasing competition of the imperial examination, and as small landlords switched careers from being officials, they had strong conflicts with the big landlords due to land annexation in the late Ming Dynasty.

The protection of ancestral halls was achieved through the promotion of filial piety, fostering greater recognition of ancestors and family. This encouraged more people to participate in the preservation of gardens and helped minimize accidental damage caused by selfish or personal negligence. Promotion and education regarding filial piety and heritage were still achieved within gardens through various forms of ceremonies.

When they are alive, one must always follow etiquette in dealing with their parents, and even after their parents pass away, the burial and worship should also adhere to proper etiquette.⁵⁶⁰

It is the influence of filial piety culture that led people, from emperors and generals to ordinary citizens, to consider posthumous ancestor worship a matter of utmost importance since Pre-Qin era.

Although strict and dogmatic clan culture is usually considered poor, Wu Huiliang believes that the construction of ancestral halls was beneficial for promoting the

⁵⁵⁹ Qin, Zhihao, *Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2009)

⁵⁶⁰ 生，事之以礼；死，葬之以礼，祭之以礼 Zeng, Zi, edit by Wang Chuo, *Zeng Zi Quan Shu* [Anelact of Zeng Zi], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

Confucian ideology of family education and social harmony.⁵⁶¹ The ability to choose the form of ancestral hall gardens is closely related to scholars' promotion of social ideological and cultural construction. During the Western Han, filial piety culture was institutionalized and formed the Ancestral Temple System. The family teachings of Yan's family originating from the Southern Dynasty, and the clan rules and exemplary sayings of Zhu Xi expanded the scope of the ancestral memorial system to the commoners to ensure that everyone adhered to social order and hierarchy.⁵⁶² The word 'Ci Tang 祠堂 Ancestor Hall' was used by the common people to distinguish it from aristocratic 'Miao 庙 temple'.⁵⁶³

The greatest change came during the Ming Jiajing 嘉靖 reign (1522-1566). Emperor Jiajing succeeded to the throne as a cousin of the former emperor, and the canonization of his own father based on filial piety caused a debate on etiquette and a reform of the memorial temple system. As a result, everyone could worship the first generation of the family, and it encouraged officials to build family temples and replace the temporary memorial tablets of ancestors with permanent ones.⁵⁶⁴

The previous ancestral halls primarily featured shrines dedicated to high-ranking officials, signifying them as exemplars for later local officials, as well as shrines

⁵⁶¹ Wu, Huiliang, *Atlas of Ancestral Temples in Huishan Ancient Town*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Science and Technology Press, 2004), perface

⁵⁶² Zhang Zai 管摄天下人心，收宗族，厚风俗，使人不忘本，须是明谱学世族与立宗之法 To manage and govern the hearts of the people throughout the world, to regulate clans, to foster customs deeply, ensuring that people do not forget their roots, it is necessary to have clear regulations on learning, hereditary families, and the establishment of ancestral rules. from Qin, Huitian, *Wu Li Tong Kao* [Research of Five Rites], part 18, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁶³ 然古之庙制，不见于经，且今士庶人家亦贱，亦有所不得为者，故特以祠堂名之，而其制度亦多礼云。Zhu, Xi, *Jia Li* [Family Rituals], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁶⁴ 诏天下臣民得祀始祖 Gu, Yingtai, *Ming Shi Ji Shi Ben Mo* [Story of the Ming] vol 51, Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

dedicated to local virtuous individuals, similarly symbolizing them as role models within the local community. These local virtuous individuals typically continued to reside in the same area and became revered as ancestors, signifying public recognition of their family's elite status and thereby intensifying competition. This even gave rise to the issue of 'excessive ancestral worship.'⁵⁶⁵ The proliferation of family ancestral halls further exacerbated this cultural trend.

After Emperor Qianlong 乾隆 ascended the throne, Qin Huitian 秦蕙田, the son of Qin Daoran, passed the imperial examination and became an official. He wrote a letter to the emperor recounting the political discrimination his father had faced, hoping to exchange his own official position for his father's exoneration. Touched by his filial piety, Emperor Qianlong restored his father's honour and returned the Jichang Garden to the family. Around the same time, the descendants of the Qin family gathered together, led by Qin Daoran and Qin Jingran 秦敬然, to discuss the possibility of converting the garden into a family ancestral hall.

In dealing with the issue of Jichang Garden (Figure 81), the descendants supported their ancestor Qin Dezao's 秦德藻 idea of preserving the garden intact; it gradually transformed from a familial garden into a clan property. The building, Jiashu Hall in the north, was changed to Ancestral Halls. Qin Daoran and more than 50 other descendants approved the decision of 'Public Deliberation on the Renovation of the Ancestral Hall of Jichang Garden' to ensure its eternal preservation in 1746. 'Any damage to even a single blade of grass was considered unfilial'.⁵⁶⁶ The expenses for maintenance and ancestral worship were funded by donations of over 200 Mu 亩

⁵⁶⁵ Edited by Willard J. Peterson, *The Cambridge History of China. Volume 9 Part Two: The Ch'ing Dynasty to 1800*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.)

⁵⁶⁶ 若有损伤一草一木者，以不孝论。Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2009, pp 109

(122880m²) of land from various families, and this practice was sustained for over 100 years.



Figure 81: Jichang Garden in the early Qianlong Regim (painting from the book Qin Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian* [Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009))

Sacrificial rituals

Ancestral halls ensure the continuity and cohesion of a lineage through the ceremonial practice of ancestral worship. Ancestral halls built adjacent to burial grounds are a common occurrence. For instance, Figure 82 displays the tomb and ancestral hall of the Gu family in Jingli Town, northeast of Wuxi, during the Qing Dynasty. In the lower right corner of the illustration, there are houses where the managers of the tombs would reside. Their names, along with the locations of the tombs they managed and descriptions of the tombs, would be recorded in the genealogy, making it easier for

future generations to locate them.⁵⁶⁷

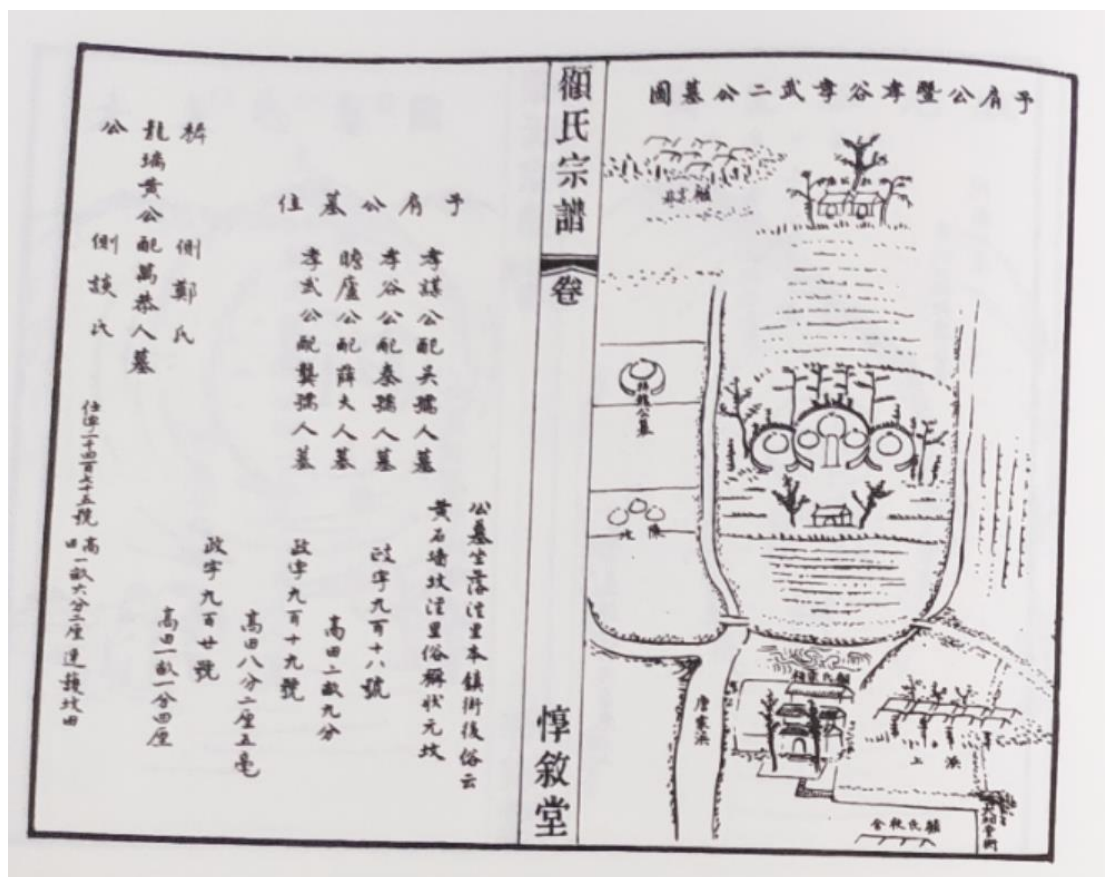


Figure 82: The Tomb of Gu Xiaogu and Gu Xiaowu in Gu's Genealogy

This integrated form, centred around burial grounds, typically involves commemorative activities returning to the cemetery. For example, after the death of Qin Songling 秦松齡, the early Qing owner of Jichang Garden, small boats were annually hired to journey to his grave for worship during the Qingming Festival in spring and on the 15th day of the tenth lunar month (Cold Clothing Festival, when winter garments were offered to the deceased). The boats would dock at Daxu Lane.

For larger families, especially those with distinguished members honoured by official

⁵⁶⁷ Gu, Baojue, and Gu Baochen, *Branch Genealogy of Gu's family in Jingli Town, Wuxi*, (Wuxi, Zhunxu Hall Press, 1933)

commendations, separate ancestral halls are often established in nearer urban areas or locations with convenient transportation. Ancestral halls converted from gardens typically fall into this category. These commemorative activities are funded by the family and involve participation from internal family members, akin to local virtuous Memorial Hall. For instance, in Wuxi, the Qin family has the Qin Huaihai 秦淮海 Ancestral Hall and a reconstructed ancestral hall at Jichang Garden. The rites at Qin Huaihai Ancestral Hall represent collective family activities, while those at Jichang Garden's ancestral hall signify ceremonies specific to a flourishing branch. The most prosperous branch is often considered the main lineage, wielding family authority while also providing shelter to other branches. Therefore, the commemoration at the Qin Huaihai Ancestral Hall is overseen by the main branch (other branches are not mentioned), while participants in the activities at the ancestral hall of Jichang Garden are rotated among smaller subdivisions within the main branch family.

Considering the costs of the ceremonies and the scheduling of participants, the exact dates for ancestral worship ceremonies at the ancestral hall are uncertain, but auspicious days in the second and eighth lunar months are typically chosen. On the ritual day, everyone first conducts the ceremony at the Qin Huaihai Ancestral Hall in the city before proceeding to the ancestral hall at Jichang Garden.

The ancestral worship process resembled ceremonies honouring Confucius and other venerable figures. Offerings in the Ancestor Halls consisted of substitutes and foods used by common people, replacing traditional offerings of a pig, a cow, a sheep, and exquisite ritual vessels, likely due to the cost of sacrificial rituals. Funds for the rituals were sourced from profits from a 40 Mu (24576m²) ritual field, with each of the four subdivisions branch families donating 10 Mu of land. However, it is evident that the maintenance and management of the garden still required significant investment. Additional donations were necessary, and dedicated personnel were advisable for property management. All the established rules were meant to

show respect for our ancestors and guide future generations. Upon entering the ancestral hall, family members should reflect on filial piety and friendship, contributing to the family's prosperity. The establishment has faced difficulties, and maintaining its achievements is challenging. Moving forward, let us reinforce rules of family ethics to uphold the virtues of our ancestors. Future generations of this family should embody filial piety, friendship, and honor the past. Those who have made outstanding contributions will be recognized in the ancestral hall, inspiring future generations of virtuous individuals.⁵⁶⁸

It serves both the purpose of functional transformation and conducting rituals, making it a prominent expression of garden culture during the Qing Dynasty. The effects were quite noticeable, as the practice of ancestral worship resulted in a steady increase rather than decrease in the number of family ancestral halls in the Mount Hui area. The original landscape and scenery of the gardens are also largely preserved. For example, in the case of Hu Garden, the layout of the water pool, originally designed to resemble Yugong Valley, remains intact. The ginkgo trees by the pool have endured for 500 years, while the magnolia trees have stood for 330 years. Many gardens within Eastern families and other Qin family estates, which did not evolve into ancestral halls, swiftly vanished over time.

Preference for Large Trees

The connection between garden culture and the fate of families can be observed through the choice of plants, a trend that began as early as the mid-Ming Dynasty.

Since the 15th century, a diverse array of plants has been featured in gardens. These include conifers, bamboo, ginkgo, flowering fruit trees such as plum, peach, orange,

⁵⁶⁸ Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian*[Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House,2009), pp 109

sweet osmanthus, and Chinese parasol tree from the rose and citrus families. Other commonly used plants included ulmaceae, willow, lotus, and reed in ponds (Figure 83). These plants can be considered native to Wuxi (Appendix 8: Plants in the records of Wuxi from 9th century Appendix 9: Species in garden space in different centuries Appendix 10: Old trees over 100 -year-old in Wuxi Garden space (planted during 1390 to 1920) Appendix 11: Old trees over 100-year- old out of the garden space).

In almost all gardens, at least one of the following plants was used: pine, plum, or bamboo. These plants were often described in large quantities, such as ‘tens of thousands,’ ‘thousands,’ or ‘hundreds.’ Typically, a group landscape would be formed by selecting a certain type or several types of fruit trees or sweet osmanthus, with tens of trees being the norm. Apart from Shao Bao’s house garden and Jichang Garden, there were no rare tree species or plants introduced from other places during this chapter’s research period (Mid Ming and Pre-Qing).

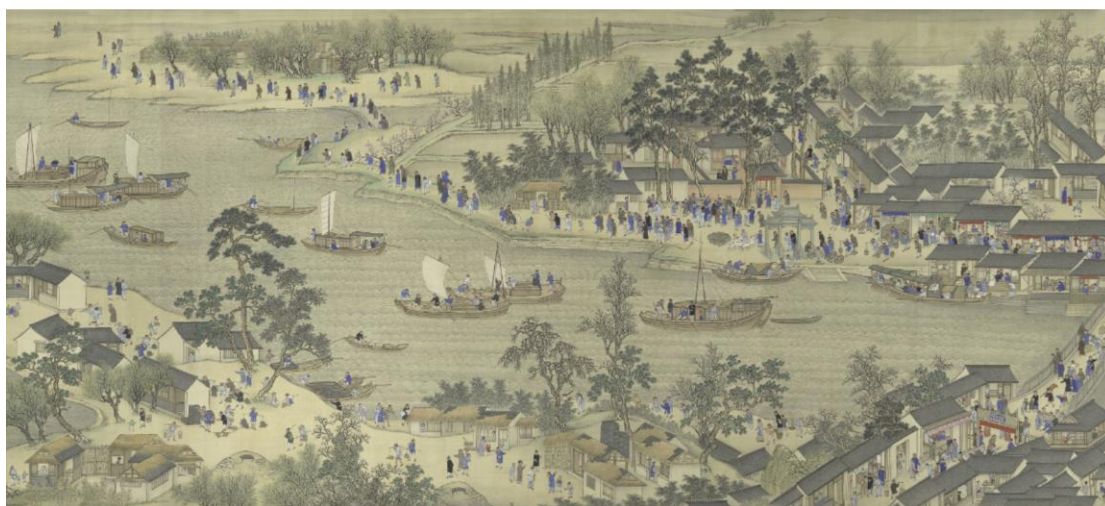


Figure 83: The native plants showed in the 18th century painting of Wuxi including pine, bamboo, sophora, willow, ulmaceae, fruit trees in rose family, etc. drawn by Wang Hui et al, Kangxi South Tour, from Wuxi to Suzhou Part, collected in the Museum of University of Alberta

Herbaceous plants were rarely recorded in gardens, often described as ‘hard to obtain,’

‘expensive,’ or ‘rare,’ and primarily used for appreciation. These herbaceous plants, such as tree peonies and orchids, could be grown in open ground or in pots, but it was uncommon to find dozens of them in a single garden. Specialized gardens dedicated to specific ornamental flowers emerged in Wuxi, like the Chrysanthemum Garden established by Wu Xue 吴学 in the 17th century, although little information remains about this garden.

Among the list of rare species in Suzhou compiled by Gu, only two gardens in Wuxi followed the luxurious trend, featuring two magnolia trees, several pear trees, and citron fruit for fragrance.⁵⁶⁹ One belonged to the Qin family, known for their affluent officials, and the other to one of the 17 wealthiest landlords in 16th century China, whose wealth exceeded one million. It was not until the mid-17th century that gardens in Wuxi introduced plants like the ‘jade-butterfly’ or ‘green calyx’ flowering plum and plantain. Plants such as ‘dragon’s claw’ sophora and Luohan pine appeared in Wuxi gardens later on modern times. Wen’s recommended garden plants included some normal native species like Chinese scholar trees, pine, bamboo, lotus, and fruit trees of the rose family, which helped maintain the reputation of Wuxi Gardens to some extent. However, species like ‘Photinia, holly, cedar, and cypress, criticized by Wen as unsuitable due to their wild growth in ridges, continued to be used in Wuxi Gardens.⁵⁷⁰ The lack of financial resources is also an important reason for the compromise between appreciation and utility of Wuxi gardens. They opted for native plants that were easier to manage and had practical value.

It cannot be claimed that plant selection in Wuxi’s garden culture completely deviated from purely aesthetic practices. Zou Wang 邹望, for instance, rotated hundreds of pots

⁵⁶⁹ Gu, Qiyuan (Ming Dynasty), *Ke Zuo Zhui Yu* [Miscellany of Informal Essay], The Si Ku Quan Shu [Complete Works of Chinese Classics] (electronic book)

⁵⁷⁰ Wen, Zhenheng, c.17th century, *Zhang Wu Zhi* [Superfluous Things], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

of each species, ensuring there were always flowers in full bloom and replacing them when they faded. Unfortunately, due to Zou Wang's social status, he was not included in the circle of scholars, resulting in limited historical records about his garden and the specific flowers he cultivated.

Are garden plants meant for appreciation? The answer is unequivocally affirmative within the framework of a garden, yet appreciation is not solely focused on beauty and novelty. Yuelu Academy once attributed meaning to trees:

planting them in public spaces cultivated talents, while in private areas, it symbolized one's far-reaching aspirations. Trees provided shade for rest, offerings for sacrifices, and vessels for daily life.⁵⁷¹

Some trees in Wuxi gardens are older than the gardens themselves, indicating a love for large, old trees and a tendency to preserve them. This trend is reflected in Bian Rong's (1419—1487) poem: 'Wild trees in rows are not newly planted, fishing families in the neighbourhood have known each other for a long time.'⁵⁷² Most Wuxi gardens were situated in suburban areas, making it easier to incorporate existing natural conditions. Ji Cheng 计成, in his book, affirmed the practice of preserving a variety of trees.⁵⁷³ Gardens in Mount Hui often retained existing old or large trees during several transformations.

In Wuxi, trees that are 'huge or old' are preferred, which are a good choice for

⁵⁷¹ Wu Daoxing, Ming dynasty, and Zhao Ning, Qing dynasty, *Yue Lu Shu Yuan Zhi* [Chorography of Yuelu Academy]. (Changsha: Yuelu press, 2012). pp59

⁵⁷² "South Lake" written by Bian Rong (1419-1487), from Wang, Yongji (Ming Dynasty), *A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery*, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁵⁷³ 开荒欲引长流，摘景全留杂树。Opening up new land, desiring to channel a long flow. Selecting scenic spots to preserve amidst diverse trees. Ji, Cheng, Chen Zhi (Translate), *Yuan Ye Zhushi*, 2nd edn [Annotation of Yuan Ye] (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press, 1988) pp206

gardens.⁵⁷⁴ For example, a sweet osmanthus tree covered the whole courtyard in An's Tianquan Hall.⁵⁷⁵ Decision-makers of Wuxi Gardens chose to emphasize 'old trees' or 'big trees' rather than naming specific species like Ginkgo or Sophora to describe the landscape plants. Wang Yongji emphasized that the growth of trees cannot be achieved overnight, and those not easily obtained are more precious.

There are four types of evil people who look at tall trees and immediately think of cutting them down: mediocre and inept officials, lawless soldiers, unworthy descendants, and deceitful monks.⁵⁷⁶



Figure 84: old Cinnamomum camphora trees in Jichang garden and ginkgo trees in old Yugong valley (photo from Wuxi Garden Bureau, in 2020.)

The preference for large trees in gardens can be attributed to the severe shortage of

⁵⁷⁴ Gu Qiyuan, Ming Dynasty, *Ke Zuo Zhui Yu* [Miscellany of Informal Essay], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁷⁵ An, Rui, 18 century, *Jiao Dong Shan Shui Zhi* [Chronicle of East part of Mount Jiao], Wang, Liren, et al, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi library], (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-12)

⁵⁷⁶ 凡物可猝致，惟乔木不可猝致。望乔木而即思砍伐者，其恶有四：曰俗吏，曰乱兵，曰不肖子孙，曰奸僧。 Wang Yongji (Ming Dynasty), *A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery*, vol 7, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

wood in the Jiangnan area, as analysed by Li Bozhong.⁵⁷⁷ Wood was the fundamental material used for building houses, constructing vehicles and boats, crafting tools, and even making furniture in the pre-industrial era known as the ‘Age of Timber.’⁵⁷⁸ House construction was the primary consumer of wood in the Jiangnan region.⁵⁷⁹ In Wuxi, large trees in gardens were unlawfully cut down because of a scarcity of wood for housing purposes, fuel, or other benefits.⁵⁸⁰ When gardens are abandoned or lose their owners, the importance of wood can lead to outcomes in sad reality that are contrary to conservation efforts. To protect trees from being cut down without permission, the government set up permanent prohibition monuments and announced management punishment regulations to raise public awareness of tree protection.

The summer in Wuxi is both hot and rainy due to the monsoon climate. Trees can block the scorching sunlight and provide shade for ponds, buildings, and animals, including humans. Zou was considered very eager to preserve them.⁵⁸¹ Pine, cypress, Chinese parasol trees, sophora, and willow are common garden shade trees (Figure 85).

⁵⁷⁷ Li, Bozhong, wood problems in the area south of the Yangtze River in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

⁵⁷⁸ Cf. W. Sombart. *Der Moderne Kapitalismus*, 1916, Vol.ii, pp.1138-40; Stow's *Annals*, ed.E. Howe, 1613, p.1024. from J.U. Nef. *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, (Frank Cass & Co.Ltd. Oxon, by arrangement with George Routledge & Sons Ltd. London, 1932), pp191

⁵⁷⁹ 自房屋地基到梁柱，都是木头，隔断和门窗，非竹即木 From the foundation of the house to the beams and pillars, all are made of wood. Partitions and doors and windows are either bamboo or wood. Mao, Qiling, *Discussion on the Control of Fire in Hangzhou*, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁵⁸⁰ Huang, Ang Qing Dynast), *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983) Vol. 1, the Benefits of Mountain and lake 而松亦旋剪为薪 And pine is also often cut into firewood. Chang, Rongchu et al, Liang Xi Gu Yuan [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007), pp26

Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian* [Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2009)

⁵⁸¹ Zou Diguang, Yu Gong Gu Cheng [Garden Notes of Yugong Vallay], note 1, from, edit by Hou Hongjian, *Xi Shan Xian Zhe Cong Kan* [Compile of Works of Wuxi Sages]. (Nanjing: Phoenix Press, 2005), pp.345-378



Figure 85: Pine and Chinese parasol trees in the middle courtyard of Bishan Club (Drawn by Shen Zhou 15th century, Bi Shan Yin She Tu Juan [gathering of the Bishan garden], paper, 31.7×206 collected by Palace Museum)

Cinnamomun camphora in Woyun courtyard of Jichang Garden (Drawn by Song Maojin in the early 17th century)

The homonymic relationship between ‘shade’ (Yin Bi) and ‘shelter’ (Bi Hu) reflects a common folk belief that big trees symbolize protection and serve as a shelter for people. Gu argues that ‘lives in the shadow are sheltered by the god of big tree.’⁵⁸² The Aishan Academy in Huzhou encourages students to study and forge ahead with trees, suggesting that students should plant a tree in front of the academy.⁵⁸³ The trees form a direct reflection of the pillars of society, and the trees in the garden are like spiritual monuments to genius. Gu Keshi 顾可适 compared the country to the main hall, and the owner was the beam supporting the hall. Similarly, cranes, often raised in Wuxi gardens,

⁵⁸² Gu Qiyuan, Ming Dynasty, *Ke Zuo Zhui Yu* [Miscellany of Informal Essay], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁸³ Huzhou Education Chronicles Compiling Committee. *Chorography of Huzhou Education*. (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Education Press, 1995) pp.41

also represent intelligent offspring (Figure 86).



Figure 86 Crane in gardens paintings for Jichang garden drawn by Song Maojin and Xilin Garden, collected in Wuxi Museum

The appreciation of the ‘old’ might derived from the inheritance culture. This is why many ancient gardens, especially Jichang Garden, have been commemorated. ‘Only Jichang Garden of the Qin family has gone through hardships.’⁵⁸⁴ ‘Old pines are better’ and ‘courtyard must have twisted old trees.’⁵⁸⁵ The praise for the garden is actually praise for the members of the Qin family. It is believed that the garden’s longevity is due to the good descendants of the family, rather than the garden’s fame or past splendour.

In animism, which posits that natural non-human entities possess a spiritual essence independently of their own, there is a supposition that these spirits can influence the fate of human beings. Humans have a tendency to include everything in their own

⁵⁸⁴ Wang, Yunqian, and Hua Xihong, *Wuxi Xian Zhi, Jinkui Xian Zhi* [Chorography of Wuxi and Jinkui], Wang, Liren, et al, *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi library], (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-12)

⁵⁸⁵ Cheng, Yuwen, Ming Dynasty, *Bai Hua Li* [Calender of flowers], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook
Wen, Zhenheng, c.17th century, *Zhang Wu Zhi* [Superfluous Things], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

species, making descriptions for objects that relate to themselves as human beings.⁵⁸⁶ Humans undergo a psychological process of homogenization in aesthetic activities, naturally humanizing objects or vice versa, which is called resonance.⁵⁸⁷ A typical early example is the metaphor of plants in the ‘Chu Ci’ and the ‘Book of Songs’ from the Spring and Autumn Period. When certain aesthetic features are gradually endowed through empathy, this corresponding reflection is constantly repeated and gradually strengthened, as seen in the allusions in Chinese literature, eventually forming a stable (conventional) meaning. For example, the peony is the king of flowers and the favourite of the Tang Dynasty, and bamboo grows section by section, symbolizing its humble quality of introspection.

Plant applications rarely violate these meanings in use. Different appreciation subjects, such as literati, businessmen, local residents, and religious believers, determine the origin of multiple plant meanings in development. For instance, conifers symbolize ‘longevity’ in citizen gardens, ‘constancy does not change quality’ in elite gardens, and the spirit of monks in temples. Orchids, which hold great cultural significance in Chinese culture, have been used as a symbol of character since before the Qin Dynasty, appearing in poetry. After the Tang and Song Dynasties, their meaning transitioned from representing noble gentlemen to outstanding descendants.

The construction of ancestral temple gardens serves as a base for promoting the education of future generations and as a means of inheritance and protection by expanding the interests of the family and involving relevant stakeholders. As literati gardens gradually transformed into gardens of local elites, the significance of plants became more folkloric, with a greater emphasis on symbolizing auspiciousness,

⁵⁸⁶ Freud and Human Nature (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983)

⁵⁸⁷ Liang Han. *Aesthetic Empathy*. Li Zehou, Honorary Chief editor of Ruxin. *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*. (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, ,1990) pp.407-408

prosperity, and the preservation of family social status.

The motivation for the relationship between ginkgo trees and ancestral hall-style gardens may have stemmed from an appreciation for large trees, as well as the necessity for continuity and inheritance. There was a significant transformation in the use of ginkgo trees in Buddhist temples and ancestral halls, especially in the symmetrical planting or solitary placement within the courtyards of main buildings. It is often believed that the spread of ginkgo is closely linked with the communication of Buddhism.⁵⁸⁸ Pei Yin records that ‘who eating one of the Ginkgo seed can be immortal’ in the Southern dynasties, when Buddhism started rising and spreading widely in China. Wang Shizhen records a story that ancient ginkgo trees bled when they were cut down to make warships, and the high official in charge died from fright in the Qing dynasty, showing the special power believed to be possessed by the trees.⁵⁸⁹ There is a custom of holding a temple fair on the second day of August every year to worship the ginkgo tree, which represented King Yan 徐偃王 (Xu Dan), a folk god who once saved the people in Wuxi during a famine. Wen Zhengming praised the shape and leaves of large ginkgo trees as beautiful but did not recommend planting new small ginkgo trees in gardens.⁵⁹⁰ From pine trees to prominently showcasing ginkgo trees, there have been some changes in the tree species within temples, enhancing their ornamental value. To some extent, as religious institutions sought support from the public after losing government backing, the aesthetic aspects were also simultaneously altered.

Virtuous Woman Ancestral Hall⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁸ Guan, Chuanyou, ‘On Ginkgo worship culture in China’. *Agricultural Archaeology*. 01(2007),169-173+280.

⁵⁸⁹ Wang, Shizhen, Ming dynasty, *Chi Bei Ou Tan*, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. vol 25

⁵⁹⁰ Wen, Zhenheng, c.17th century, *Zhang Wu Zhi* [Superfluous Things], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁹¹ The information about the temple comes from Wang Yongji, *Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue* [*A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery*], (Wuxi, Jiale Hall Press, late Ming) from editorial board, *Siku Quanshu Cunmu*, Jinan, Qilu Shushe, 1996, vol 234 in History part, pp462

Within this society, the lower classes are rarely discussed. Women are subordinate in a Confucian system that prioritizes men. It is difficult to find records of women's perspectives as the main focus in garden spaces. However, through the lens of rituals, we can understand the exclusive ritual space and layout for women by interpreting the daily life rules specific to them.

Ancestral halls with a female theme emerged during the Ming Dynasty. Wang Yongji believed that the title of 'virtuous woman' originated from Miss Shan 单小姐 in Wuxi, the daughter of Shan Siming 单思明. At the age of twelve, she was engaged to Shen Sheng 沈笙, but before their marriage could take place, Shen Sheng passed away. She desired to uphold the betrothal to the Shen family and vowed not to marry anyone else, symbolizing her determination by cutting off her hair. Later, upon hearing that her family was discussing marriage arrangements with other families, she attempted to hang herself. Her sister-in-law saved her, but she then used scissors to cut her wrists. Her family abandoned the idea of marrying her off, and she resided in her family home. Her father, brothers, and nephews took turns caring for her, and she lived until the age of eighty-five.

Shao Bao praised her unwavering virtue, noting that her heart remained steadfast. Like their male counterparts, female ancestral halls also served as a form of maintaining and showcasing family status. This exemplified the quality of loyalty to the emperor that was advocated during the feudal era. It was believed that her longevity was a testament to the rewards received for her loyalty, as there were always people willing to support and care for her. Gu Xiancheng wrote an epitaph for her, stating, 'Gold and stone may be easily destroyed, but steadfast virtue endures.'

In the Record of Women's Model written by Mrs Liu 刘夫人 in the Ming, she mentioned,

Loyal subjects do not serve two rulers, and devoted women do not remarry...

They remain unwavering. Men may remarry, but women are not allowed to remarry... Their virtue spans day and night, their determination fills the universe. Their righteousness shines in their husbands, and their integrity echoes throughout history. Should we not aspire to such dedication? ⁵⁹²

The expectation for women to remain loyal to their husbands stems from the hierarchical social order known as the ‘Three Bonds’ established by Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 during the Han Dynasty, which includes the tight hierarchical relationships between ruler and subject, father and son, and husband and wife.⁵⁹³ The decline in women’s status is closely related to the hierarchical system promoted by Confucianism. Ban Gu, a historian of the Han Dynasty and scion of a Confucian family, provided his sister Ban Zhao with a good education. To guide the conduct of women in the Ban family, she compiled the Lessons for Women, emphasizing the importance of ritual propriety and learning.⁵⁹⁴

Like male Confucian scholars, educated women Confucian scholars also wrote books on female virtues and guidelines for women’s conduct, such as the Nü Lun Yu 女论语 (Women’s Analects), which corresponds to the original Lun Yu (Analects by Confucius) in the Tang Dynasty. Sisters Song Ruoshen 宋若莘 and Song Ruozhao 宋若昭, along with Master Xuanwen 宣文君 (female) as a counterpart to Confucius, and Ban Zhao 班昭 and others as counterparts to Yan Yuan 颜渊 and Ran You 冉有, advocated for the

⁵⁹² 忠臣不事两国，烈女不更二夫。终身不移。男可重婚，女无再适...是皆贞心贯乎日月，烈志塞乎两仪，正气凛于丈夫，节操播乎青史者也，可不勉欤？Mrs Liu (Confucian Wang Xiang’s Mother), *Nv Fan Jie Lv* [Record of Women’s Model], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁹³ Ban, Gu, Han dynasty, *Han Shu* [the History of the Han dynasty], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986.) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. Biography of Dong Zhongshu

⁵⁹⁴ Fan, Ye, interpreted by Liu Zhao, Li Xian, *Hou Han Shu* [the later History of the Han], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. vol 74

promotion of proper female conduct based on Confucian teachings.⁵⁹⁵ They believed it was equally important for women to understand how to conduct themselves, acquire the necessary skills and etiquette, and fulfil their daily responsibilities.

Faithfulness and purity were the foremost virtues to be upheld. In the case of women's ancestral halls, the highest praise and honour were accorded to those who demonstrated faithfulness.⁵⁹⁶

The status of women gradually declined, along with their decision-making power, until they became akin to property and appendages, much like gardens to buildings. Before the rise of Neo-Confucianism, women's roles were not as rigidly defined. Men and women had similar educational content, although different expectations arose due to women's physical vulnerabilities, and women were required to respect their husbands. One notable figure in this regard is Master Xuanwen (283-?), who lived during the Sixteen Kingdoms period (304-439) and was the mother of Wei Cheng, the Minister of Rites in the Former-Qin dynasty(前秦 350—394). When Emperor Fu Jian 苻坚 wanted to establish a school, the scholar Lu Hu recommended Mrs. Song, and she received Emperor's approval, thus teaching behind the vermillion curtain, instructing in the Book of Rites. As a reward, Emperor Fu Jian granted her ten maidservants and bestowed upon her the title 'Master Xuanwen 宣文 (promoting Confucian classics)' (Figure 87). In the painting, Ms Xuanwen was one of the primary users in that beautiful environment. Chen used this painting to celebrate his aunt's birthday, indicating that his aunt may have had certain spiritual qualities that matched those of Xuanwen. Such cases were not common in the Ming Dynasty. Since the standards for accomplished women proposed in the late Ming Dynasty were also parallel to the prevailing social trend of relegating women to a lower social status. This was due to the increase in

⁵⁹⁵ Two of the best 72 students of Confucius

⁵⁹⁶ Song, Ruoshen, and Song Ruozhao, *Nv Lun Yu*[Women's Analects], Qinding Siku Quanshu,)Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

productivity, as well as the widespread dissemination of academies and education to the middle and lower social classes. This does not imply a significant decline in the abilities of noblewomen but rather acknowledges that recognizing women's abilities in the outer world was no longer the prevailing trend.



Figure 87: Teaching Classics by Master Xuanwen, collected by Cleveland Museum of Art Drawn by Chen Hongshou in 1638 to celebrate his aunts' birthday.

Although accounts of women's achievements have been relatively scarce throughout history, starting from the Tang Dynasty, with the strengthening of Confucian education and the rise of Neo-Confucianism, the image of women gradually shifted from being perceived as the weaker sex to being considered of lower status and even inauspicious.

The best example of the portrayal of women in Wuxi gardens is found in the legends surrounding Jinlian 'golden lotus' Pond at Huishan Temple. During the Tang, local women would often come to the square pond to wash their clothes, and the pond would be filled with lotus leaves. Lu Yu specifically praised the high quality of the water, which made the clothes even more beautiful. However, during the Song, the description of the lotus leaves changed to golden lotus flowers. The explanation given was that women would bathe in the pond, causing the lotus to transform into a five-petal form. By the end of the Ming Dynasty, the disappearance of the lotus leaves was attributed to contamination by the blood of pregnant women. In an era of limited technology, being considered inauspicious was equivalent to being stigmatized.⁵⁹⁷

This decline in status was accompanied by changes in women's daily behaviour. Since the Tang Dynasty, gender-specific divisions of labour and distinct educational paths for

⁵⁹⁷ Lu Yu in the Tang 方池池中生千叶莲花服之羽化...亦名浣沼岁集山姬野妇漂纱涤缕其皎皎之色彼耶溪镜湖不类也 Chronicles in the Yuan 金莲花池者池中有金莲花蔓生如荇开花黄色似莲萼半开而不实朵小如水仙甚香旧称千叶云后有女子入池澡浴花遂省为五瓣. The Golden Lotus Pond is known for its lotus flowers. Within the pond, golden lotus flowers bloom abundantly like water lilies. The flowers are yellow, resembling half-opened lotus buds, small like narcissus, and emit a strong fragrance. In the past, it was called the Thousand Petal Cloud Pond. Legend has it that after a woman bathed in the pond among the flowers, they changed into five-petals. Wang, Furen (Yuan Dynasty), *Wuxi Xianzhi* [Chorography of Wuxi, Zhizheng period edn] vol 4, Wuxi Wenku, Album 1, Volume 1 (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

Wang, Yongji (Ming Dynasty), *A Brief Description of Xishan Scenery*, vol 7, Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012). Vol 2

men and women have been deliberately established. The evaluation criteria for women were different from those for men.⁵⁹⁸

From that point onwards, the living space for women became progressively constrained. Women in their daily lives were expected to acquire skills primarily in spinning and garment-making, as failing to do so would subject them to ridicule. They were also expected to learn etiquette related to clothing, walking, conversation, and visiting others; neglecting these manners would liken them to mice or dogs. Unmarried women were to be filial to their parents, paying morning respects to them. Married women were expected to show respect and filial piety to their husbands' parents. They were to treat their husbands with reverence and loyalty. When it came to educating children, particularly daughters, they were to do so diligently. Daily routines for women would typically begin at five in the morning, involving dressing, washing, grooming, managing household chores, paying respects in the morning and evening, and attending to meals. An important aspect of their responsibilities included managing the family's finances, regardless of wealth or poverty, by making sound financial plans.⁵⁹⁹ In fact, the daily rituals of women described in later dynasties were quite similar to those outlined by the Song sisters in their writings. These tasks consumed all their time, in contrast to Cheng Duanli's 程端礼 schedule as a scholar, or one might say, a boy's study routine, which also began during childhood and revolved around studying Confucian classics for an official career. In contrast, a girl's educational tasks were supportive in nature.

Their living space was often confined to small courtyards within the gardens, making

⁵⁹⁸ Song, Ruoshen, and Song Ruozhao, *Nv Lun Yu*[Women's Analects], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁵⁹⁹ Song, Ruoshen, and Song Ruozhao, *Nv Lun Yu*[Women's Analects], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. In fact, the daily rituals of women that followed were quite similar to those described by the Song sisters in their writings.

it difficult for them to access larger garden areas. In the case of ‘Garden notes of Yugong Valley’ by Zou Yong, which consists of 11 garden records describing his gardens, the sections related to his wives and concubines are primarily limited to the inner garden. The inner garden includes his bedroom, study, reception hall for banquets and entertaining guests, as well as other facilities like the kitchen, bathroom, toilet, and living quarters for servants. Within the inner garden, there is a courtyard with a perfectly symmetrical layout, consisting of a total of 16 identical small rooms, each with an osmanthus tree at its entrance. The designated spaces for his wives and concubines are mostly within the courtyard. The only space in the innermost part lacks special design and attention, and is close to the living space of the servants.

This arrangement aligns with the prescribed norms for women in the Ming Dynasty, which involved the separation of men and women in different areas, with no peering over the outer walls or venturing into the outer courtyard. Men who are not immediate family members should not be addressed by name, and women who are not virtuous should not have close contact with others.⁶⁰⁰

Since women were responsible for managing the internal affairs of the family, during garden banquets, they were not expected to appear normally. Instead, they would be busy preparing utensils, setting tables, arranging snacks, and brewing tea for the banquet. Afterward, they would retire to the back chambers and await their husbands’ instructions. They might also be responsible for food preparation and arranging bedrooms. Their role was akin to that of servants, as they had to attend to guests in the main hall but promptly withdraw when necessary. They held leadership over servants yet shared a similar status with them.

The records of women’s activities in gardens are not entirely overlooked. On the one

⁶⁰⁰ Mrs Liu (Confucian Wang Xiang’s Mother), *Nv Fan Jie Lv* [Record of Women’s Model], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

hand, as a general practice, they were expected to avoid crowds and especially public outings, even within the confines of their own gardens. In Yuan Dynasty dramas, characters like Du Liniang 杜丽娘 needed to instruct garden servants in advance to clean and clear the garden of any unwanted personnel before she could explore her own garden. Similarly, a daughter-in-law of the Qin family believed that she could only venture out to visit her own garden when there were fewer people around.

On the other hand, it was quite common for women to engage in recreational activities in gardens and public landscape areas. In Yugong Valley, women could often be seen strolling around. Gu Zhenli 顾贞立 (around 1675) mentioned that before getting married, every spring her female cousins would gather at her home with their parents, the Gu's aunts.⁶⁰¹ In 'Six Records of a Floating Life,' Shen Fu's 沈复 acquaintance with his wife Yunniang 芸娘 (his cousin) began when he was a child visiting his cousin's house with his mother.⁶⁰² However, these interactions between female friends sharply decreased after they married. Instead, they often corresponded through letters as they typically moved far away to follow their husbands' work experiences. Their interactions with the opposite sex were limited to their husbands, brothers, and fathers.⁶⁰³

Another female of the Gu family, Gu Ling 顾翎 (1778-1849), after getting married, focused her poetry on personal activities within the family, such as appreciating flowers, moon gazing, and expressing sentiments about the seasons. Despite her domestic focus, she had more opportunities to venture out to places like Erquan Spring in Mount Hui,

⁶⁰¹ 予未出阁时每至春月诸姑归于大父母，携表姊妹数人，流连宴笑，自戊寅己卯各各三星入户，贲实宜家，不相聚首 Before I married, every spring month, all my aunts would return to my grandparents' home, bringing along several cousins. We would linger in feasts and laughter. Since the years of Wuyin and Jimao, everyone has become busy with their own families, and we no longer gather together. Gu, Zhenli, *Qi Xiang Ge Ci*, (Wuxi, Wenmiaoxiang Hall of Li's family, 1824) National library

⁶⁰² Shen, Fu, *Fu Sheng Liu Ji* [Six Records of a Floating Life], Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

⁶⁰³ Gu Zhenli, *Qi Xiang Ge Ci*, Wuxi, Wenmiaoxiang Hall of Li's family, 1824 electric edition, National library <http://mylib.nlc.cn/OutOpenBook/OpenObjectBook?aid=892&bid=137372.0>

Ronghu Lake, and temples, often set against the backdrop of gardens. While she mentioned cultivating potted flowers and arranging vases of flowers, she had little influence over changes in the gardens themselves. Gu's works primarily included poems written during gatherings with friends, which sometimes included both men and women. Although their social circles were not extensive, the fact that women like Gu Ling contributed poetically during garden gatherings and banquets can be seen as progress.⁶⁰⁴

Since the Ming Dynasty, collections of poetry by women have included accounts of their activities in gardens, opening a new avenue for research. Throughout the feudal period, women generally occupied a relatively low status in garden spaces. Zhou believes that in late Ming society, gardens served as windows reflecting both freedom and constraint, illustrating how women sought greater freedom through their talents. Their aesthetic concepts and needs not only brought subtle changes to the style of private gardens in the late Ming period but also provided many ordinary women with the possibility of glimpsing the outside world. This significantly impacted the family roles and social status of women at the time.⁶⁰⁵

The preceding analysis in this section provides two pieces of information. First, the overall decline in women's social status and the increasing stringency of rules gradually confined them to the inner corners of residential gardens. On the other hand, women in the Ming Dynasty, particularly in the mid-to-late period, gained the opportunity to participate in garden modifications and activities, enjoying a certain freedom to tour scenic spots, and their social status expanded beyond the family. These seemingly contradictory developments can be analysed from the perspectives of economic

⁶⁰⁴ Gu, Ling, *Lv Mei Ying Lou Shi Ci Cun*[Records of Poems written in Lv Mei Ying Building], 1888, Wuxi Wenku, [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

⁶⁰⁵ Zhou, Xiangpin, Chen,luping, 'Freedom and Confinement: The Use and Influence of Garden Spaces by Women in Late Ming Dynasty', *Journal of Tongji University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 32,6 (2021) 62-70

development and the expansion of the intellectual class.

Overall, while productivity and economic development were rapid, the land in Wuxi was nearly fully developed by the 16th century. Coupled with the population explosion in Jiangnan since the Ming and Qing dynasties, this led to increasing tension over resources such as food. Confining women, who comprised about half the population, to the household was a measure to reduce disorder caused by resource shortages, prompting the emergence of stricter management systems. These circumstances were especially severe for lower-class women, whose share of resources was already small.

However, as previously mentioned, the rapid economic development in the Jiangnan region resulted in social stratification based on occupation becoming less distinct than before. The expansion of private academies further increased the lower intellectual class. The social and political upheavals of the late Ming period led to a decline in the binding power of traditional rites and norms. Consequently, the broad citizen class in the Jiangnan region established social structures based on economic indicators, which did not entirely conform to official systems. Therefore, women with economic or cultural advantages possessed certain privileges when facing increasingly stringent doctrines.

Dorothy Ko, in her book, analyses how some educated women have carved out spaces for freedom within the contexts of gender and class.⁶⁰⁶ The emergence of the standard for talented women in the Ming Dynasty increased their leverage to contribute to their families, thereby enhancing their status within the household. Moreover, the rise of social discourse, represented by the Donglin party and its followers, questioned and criticized traditional Confucianism, gradually establishing a cultural space for women

⁶⁰⁶ Dorothy Ko. *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China*[M]. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994

to exist.⁶⁰⁷ The thriving printing industry in Wuxi serves as a prime example. Its benefits not only the lower classes but also women. The influence of books is far more profound than that of spoken language. This ties into the earlier discussion on the development of Confucianism during the Ming Dynasty, where despite Wang Yangming maintaining feudal imperial power, he effectively promoted the awareness and capabilities of self-realization among the lower and middle classes.

Given that spaces outside the household still restricted their movement and activities, the domestic space remained the primary sphere of women's lives. Liu Shanshan identifies a 'women's world' within traditional gardens, highlighting that women's activities at various life stages, such as education, entertainment, marital interactions, and being cared for, are closely related to garden spaces, and they participated in modifying these small spaces.⁶⁰⁸ Her supervisor and she further argue that based on the emotional projection between gardens and women, as the primary users and managers of gardens, women drove changes in garden spaces.⁶⁰⁹

Their voices remained constrained. Despite having names, courtesy names, and works, these women were often considered supplementary and did not receive much additional attention, leading to limited circulation of their works. Gu Ling's poems were eventually compiled by her younger brother and transcribed by relatives, leading to their publication around 40 years later. In addition to Gu Ling's works, the poems of Zhu Huizhen 朱慧贞, who was Gu Zhenguan's 顾贞观 (male) niece-in-law, were also included. Female works often lack specific location records, whether in their

⁶⁰⁷ Liu, Suping, 'Study on the Boom of Book Collection and the Living Space of Female Culture in the Late Ming Dynasty'. *Journal of Hubei University(Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 39,3 (2012) :67-73.

⁶⁰⁸ Liu, Shanshan, 'Back Garden in Boudoir: The World of Female Gardens in Painting'. *Art Collection and Appreciation*, 6 (2020) 4-35.

⁶⁰⁹ Cahill, James, Huang, Xiao, Liu, Shanshan. *Bu Xiu De Lin Quan* [Immortal Garden: Garden Painting in Old China], (Beijing, Sanlian Bookstore, 2012).

homes or in public places. Without a sense of ownership, it becomes difficult to record or retrieve these works.

Due to their lack of independence and the requirement to be subordinate, the lives of lower-class women were even more devoid of dignity. In the previous passage, it was mentioned that Zou Wang, a merchant, was recorded in the county annals for his charitable activities during disaster relief efforts. One of his deeds was sharing two beautiful maids with his subordinates, which further increased their loyalty to him.⁶¹⁰ The establishment of ‘virtuous woman shrines’ did not signify an elevation or recognition of women’s status. The form and purpose of these shrines differed significantly from those dedicated to male sages. The selection criteria were completely different: men needed to make outstanding contributions acknowledged by society to receive such recognition, while women only had to be perceived as selfless and desireless deceased souls to be honored. Failure to meet these standards was considered a transgression. This requirement stems from Zhu Xi’s concept of preserving the natural order by suppressing human desires, but the interpretation of this concept clearly differed between men and women.

There is no detailed description of the ritual process at the memorial temples of Chaste Women. As officially established ancestral halls, the ritual procedures were likely similar to the worship ceremonies of other local virtuous individuals. Chinese clans are bound by patrilineal kinship, and women continue to be overlooked in ritual ceremonies due to the absence of a defined role for them. Their participation is limited to a few ceremonies such as adulthood rites and weddings, where they are central participants rather than assistants. These ceremonies take place within the family context, serving as occasions for two families to interact and establish practical connections. The

⁶¹⁰ Xu, Yongyan, Yan Shengsun, Qin Songling (Qing dynasty), *Wuxi Xian Zhi* [Chorography of Wuxi (1690 edition)], vol 22 Righteous people. Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Source] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2012).

connections based on patrilineal kinship and the absence of women in rituals offering a plausible explanation that many social interactions between women are disrupted by marriage.

In contrast to the reverence offered to Confucius or ancestral worship mentioned earlier, there is no central role for women in these ceremonies. They are primarily regarded as constituents of garden culture rather than its leaders. Similar to inheritance rights, the titles and landed properties increasingly demanded the selection of male heirs, and the stricter inheritance system during the Ming and Qing dynasties also affected the status of women. They remained in subordinate positions akin to servants within the same social stratum, unable to actively drive the advancement of garden culture.

Generation of discourse of ‘Garden 园亭’

Despite the lengthy discussion of Wuxi’s garden culture, in official Wuxi documents, the terms ‘Yuanting’ 园亭(garden pavilions) were not separately delineated until the Kangxi 康熙 period in the Qing dyansty. It was added to the Wuxi County Chorography during the compilation of the county annals by members of the Qin family who occupied the Jichang Garden. This was the first time that gardens appeared as an independent discourse in official records in Wuxi. Without dispute, Jichang Garden consistently occupies the first position in this chapter.

With the increase in this form, the inevitable emergence of specific interests becomes associated. The opportunity for this was likely created during the six Southern Inspection Tours of Emperor Kangxi. As one of the stops along the Grand Canal, Emperor Kangxi visited Mount Hui and Jichang Garden seven times, significantly elevating the reputation of Jichang Garden and the scenery of Mount Hui. The discourse about gardens then naturally was brought and recognized by local people and local county records.

Through the names of gardens, we can discern that the development of garden culture predates the formation of local discourse. In the earlier two chapter, gardens were typically named after someone's residence, or with the main building in the garden. The emphasis was more on the owner's status or ambition. Later, a few gardens were named after 'Yuan 园,' such as the Jianjiu Yuan 'Cutting Chives Garden' in the 14th century and the Xilin Yuan 'West Forest' in the early 16th century, where the connection between 'Yuan' and 'Lin' (introduction figure) was closely tied to agricultural significance. The practice of naming gardens for their aesthetic value truly began in the latter half of the 16th century, roughly coinciding with the time when garden culture began to engage in aesthetic practices.

Before the Ming dynasty, Wuxi still lacked official recognition, and its garden culture may have been perceived as an entity, representing a manifestation of a unique social network's activity space. Although the influence of Suzhou is not explicitly mentioned, it can be observed from informal interactions that there was frequent communication between literary figures from Suzhou and Wuxi. Their works often referenced the cultural region known as 'Wu,' which originated from the establishment of the Wu and Yue kingdoms in the pre-Qin period. As the birthplace of Wu culture, Wuxi was often included within this cultural scope.

In the Ming Dynasty, despite having a wealth of garden practices, the culture of garden construction remained more closely associated with the development of official gardens and public landscapes. Garden owners were introduced through interactions with well-travelled officials or individuals from Suzhou or the capital city. In terms of utilizing space for functional purposes in garden practices, a truly established garden discourse based on aesthetics might not have fully emerged; they were merely imitating societal trends. Subsequent dynastic changes disrupted the continuity of development.

It was not until the Qing Dynasty that the owners of Wuxi gardens began actively seeking more professional craftsmen, such as the Zhang Nanyuan 张南垣 family known

for rockeries, which marked the transition into a realm of complete aesthetic practice. However, the brief development in the early Qing Dynasty declined with the fall of the Qing Dynasty, and garden chapters were once again merged into other categories. The discourse on garden aesthetics further waned.

Summary

This chapter mainly discusses the overall prosperity of Wuxi garden culture within the socio-economic and cultural dual development social-political context. Compared to previous developments, the expansion of garden culture in Wuxi in this period is manifested in more and increasingly diverse occupations or identities of garden owners, a greater number and variety of gardens, the spread of gardening to larger regions and lower-level towns, and the increase in the frequency of activities and garden use.

More social elites began to establish gardens, displaying their prosperity and reinforcing their elite status through gardening. These social elites (local gentry) had diverse identities, which contributed to the variety of garden culture. The intersection of these various identities led to different interpretations and expressions of garden culture.

Specifically, during the mid-Ming and Qing dynasties, rapid economic development and wealth growth broke the traditional social class divisions of scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants. The composition of garden owners' identities became more complex. For merchants, gardens served as props to display wealth and elevate social status. For small landowners and local literati, gardens served as spaces to showcase their affluent and leisurely lifestyles while also functioning as productive spaces. For officials facing career setbacks, gardens were sanctuaries for spiritual rejuvenation based on their land income. Overall, garden culture gradually became a means for garden owners to demonstrate their status and power through wealth, including meticulous design and construction, the addition of rare, exotic, or difficult-to-maintain

precious plants. The activities within gardens also showed a significant increase in entertainment, including banquets and gatherings in natural scenic areas outside the gardens.

At the same time, retired Confucian scholars represented by Shao Bao and Gu Xiancheng focused on promoting the establishment of Confucian academies and local family education. Some gardens maintained the sage-like tastes of previous Neo-Confucian garden owners, placing more emphasis on the interpretation of garden elements to reflect gentlemanly character or the idolization of Confucian sages. The development of the printing industry and local education jointly promoted the expansion of intellectual influence to lower social strata, giving a voice to lower-middle-class individuals and upper-middle-class women, thus expanding the documentation of garden culture.

The Ming Dynasty's return to Confucian orthodoxy and later policies on ancestral worship influenced family sacrificial rituals. Faced with the objective reality of the difficulty in passing down gardens, a trend emerged in garden culture to transform entertainment-oriented private properties into family assets, bestowing auspicious meanings on garden elements to honour the family. This was reinforced through regular rituals and family rules to extend the preservation time of gardens.

The prosperity of garden culture directly contributed to the eventual formation of Wuxi's 'garden' discourse.

As the main battlefield of the Taiping Rebellion in the 1860s, the Jiangnan region, including Wuxi, suffered tremendous devastation, with many gardens destroyed during the conflict. This period can be viewed as the end of the era of traditional Chinese garden construction in the feudal period. Subsequently, modern times saw the emergence of a new garden culture that combines elements of both Chinese and Western styles.

The modern garden in Wuxi (1860-1949⁶¹¹)

This chapter will analyse the changes in garden culture in Wuxi over approximately 100 years during the late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China period. Although the social turmoil at the end of the dynasty shares a similar context with the final stages of previous garden development phases, the increasing influence of the world during this period brought entirely new changes to social systems, ideologies, economies, technologies, and garden activities. Notably, the rapid development of Wuxi's industrial and commercial economy driven by global trade made modern garden construction in Wuxi particularly prominent. The construction density surpassed that of the mid to late Ming period, expanding into new construction areas such as the northern shore of Lake Tai. Alongside Suzhou in the Ming Dynasty and Yangzhou in the Qing Dynasty, Wuxi became renowned, forming part of the modern urban tourism landscape.⁶¹² (Figure 88)

611 The cut-off time of 1949 was divided by regime in order to maintain the unity of the narrative. In fact, since the invasion of Japan in 1931, there has been no new garden construction in the turbulent society in Wuxi.

612 Chen, Congzhou. *Shuo Yuan* [About Gardens]. (Shanghai: Tongji University Press, 2007)

Forty-one gardens are recorded including two public gardens funded by the gentry located in Mount Hui and the city centre respectively, three commemorative ancestral halls made by the government, a Buddhist Temple, one plant experiment field and 34 private gardens. Data from Chang Rongchu, *Wuxi Yuanlin Zhi* [Wuxi Gardens], (Nanjing: Phoenix Press, 2013) / Wuxi Bureau of Gardens and Forestry, Wuxi Chronicle Office, Wuxi Library, Ancient Gardens in Liangxi, Beijing: Fang Zhi Press, 2007.



Figure 88: Gardens and villas built by gentry-merchants based on natural landscape by the northern shore of Taihu Lake connected together to form a cluster over about 30 years. (1911-1931, photo from chorography of Wuxi 1994 edition)

The Li Garden and the Plum Garden (photo by author, May 2020 and May 2021)

Over approximately ninety years, under the combined influence of global trends and internal developments, the social environment underwent dramatic changes. This chapter will first analyse the socio-political context of garden culture development in Wuxi. Garden owners, situated in a rapidly changing environment and experiencing varying degrees of transformation, showed different levels of acceptance towards trends

in both private and public spheres. Consequently, they made diverse choices, resulting in a range of garden cultures that combined Chinese and Western elements to varying extents, from strictly adhering to Eastern forms to embracing Western culture.

Following a chronological order, this chapter selects the first phase of the Xue Fucheng Garden, the City Public Garden 公花园, Plum Garden 梅园, Li Garden 蠡园, and Yi Garden 佚园 as representatives of modern gardens. It analyses the design, construction, and usage changes of modern Wuxi gardens under the global context and the cultural conflicts between internal and external influences.

Social political context

The closed-door policy that began in the late Ming Dynasty led to a reduction in exchanges between the government and the world, resulting in backward technology and weak protective power. After 1840, the First Opium War had a profound impact on the Qing Dynasty government, as ongoing Western expansion and internal conflicts, such as the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom movement, accentuated the theme of national salvation.

This period was not the first time that elites in the Jiangnan region came into contact with foreign culture. The initial spread of Western learning to the East, represented by Matteo Ricci, began at the end of the 16th century. As the saying goes, ‘the outside world is the outside world after all’, Cohen pointed out that many times, China was influenced but not in a very close manner.⁶¹³ His judgment is not entirely without merit. While most knowledge and skills were recognized and applied in practice by the scholar-officials, they were regarded merely as tools. Fundamental Confucian

613 Cohen, Paul A. *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese past*. (New York: Columbia UP, 2010). Studies of the East Asian Institute.

principles, such as ritual and music, as well as the overarching system, remained unchanged, thus not undermining the roots of Confucian thought.⁶¹⁴ The emphasis on practical learning and knowledge ceased for a period of time after the 17th century. It is highly likely that there was strict ideological control, as Confucian scholars shifted their focus from current political issues to studying ancient texts and classics, such as Han Studies and Classic Studies, which involved the research of ancient texts and scriptures. It was not until later, during the modern industrialization process led by the Westernization School in the second half of the 19th century, that foreign learning spread again. Artillery fire from the West forced open the gates of the Chinese blockade. Western garden culture and technology, mostly introduced from Japan, reached Wuxi with an open attitude towards the world. This approach was termed *Shi Yi Chang Ji Yi Zhi Yi* 师夷长技以制夷 ‘learn from foreigners to compete with them.’⁶¹⁵

For the gardens of Wuxi, the more significant impact came from the Taiping Rebellion. In 1860, the county town of Wuxi was captured, and although it was recaptured by the Qing Dynasty army within a year, only one-tenth of the population remained. Among them, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom’s army destroyed one-fifth, bandits destroyed another one-fifth, and the Qing Dynasty army was responsible for the destruction of three-fifths.⁶¹⁶ This period of turmoil also resulted in the destruction of many gardens,

614 多藉技艺，希投我圣天子之器使，胡公卿士大夫相率诗咏之、文赞之、疏荐之，至于礼乐、兵刑、钱谷、营建诸大权，皆让能于夷，欲夷司其事 Many rely on their skills, hoping to be employed by our holy emperor. Hence, ministers and gentlemen, one after another, compose poems in their praise, write articles lauding them, and submit memorials recommending them. As a result, in matters of great importance such as rites and music, military affairs and punishments, finances, and construction, they all defer to the capable foreigners, wishing to have them in charge of these affairs. Xu, Changzhi, 17th century, *Po Xie Ji* [Eliminating evil] (Wuxing, Nangong publishing house, vol 2, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

615 Wei Yuan, *Hai Guo Tu Zhi* [Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms], (Pingqingjinggu, official press, 1876), preface, collected in Waseda University Library. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

616 Shi, Jianlie and liu Jizeng, *Ji Xian Cheng Shi Shou Ke Fu Shi Mo* [Fall and Recovery records of Wuxi County] *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

including almost all temples and the majority of the buildings in the Jichang Garden.

Under the impact of internal and external conflicts, Wuxi society began a rapid modernization process.

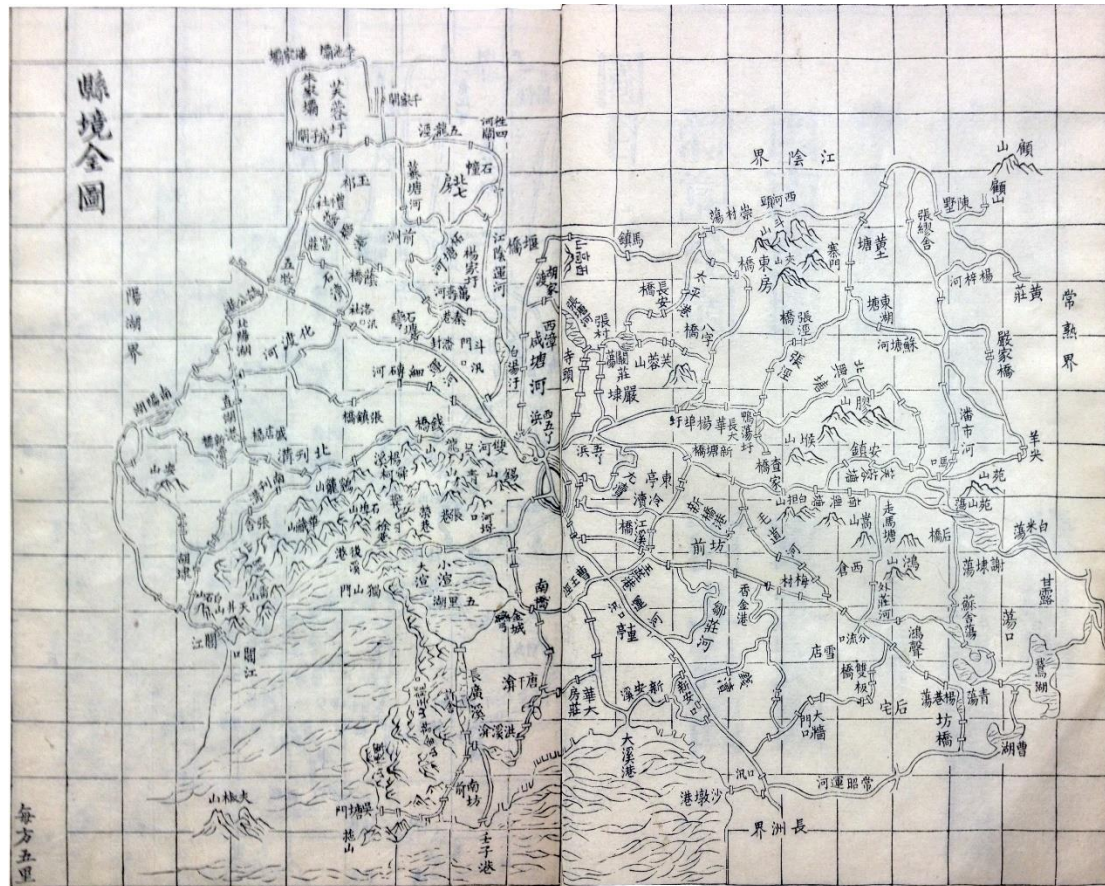


Figure 89: the map of Wuxi area in 1881(The square is 3072m*3072m)

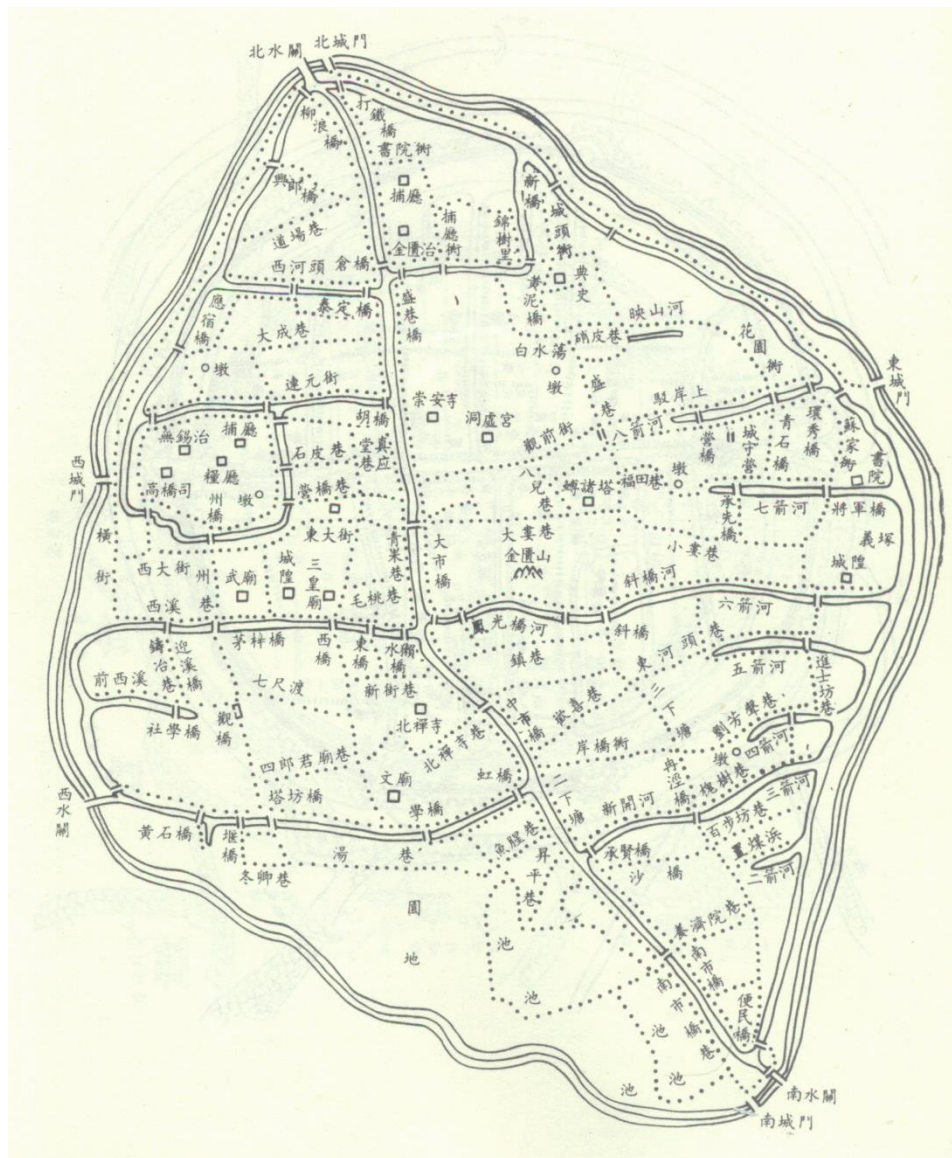


Figure 90: the map of Wuxi area in 1881(restored by Wuxi Planning Bureau)

Afterwards, from the late Qing Dynasty to the mid-Republic of China period, Wuxi was relatively free from war. To facilitate transportation and the development of industry and commerce, some city walls were sporadically demolished and rebuilt.



Figure 91: historic map of Wuxi city area in 1911 (Data from Wuxi Bureau of Surveying and Mapping)

Economic: Prior to the 20th century, the Chinese economy was almost exclusively rooted in the agricultural sector or closely related to it.⁶¹⁷ The intolerably high grain tax and the reform of substituting money for grain tax during the Ming Dynasty resulted in the cultivation of crops with higher economic value, such as cotton and mulberry, gradually replacing food crops in the Taihu Lake area.⁶¹⁸ The profitability of cash crops remained consistently more than twice that of food crops, even in unfavourable years.⁶¹⁹

617 Fairbank, John K.; Kwang-Ching Liu, *The Cambridge History of China* Volume 11 Part 2 Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

618 Chang, Jianhua and Clan Fields, 'Charity Fields, and Kinship in Ming Dynasty Southern Jiangnan'. *Nankai Journal (Philosophy, Social Sciences Edition)*, 2(2022): 115-125.

619 Zhang, Lvxiang (Ming Dynasty), *Bu Nong Shu* [Supplement to Agriculture Book], Qinding Siku Quanshu,

This shift caused the grain production zone to migrate toward the middle reaches of the Yangtze River.⁶²⁰ In Wuxi, however, approximately 85% of the land was dedicated to rice cultivation, indicating a relatively slow transformation in the agricultural planting structure until the late 19th century after the Taiping disaster.⁶²¹

The increasing population and limited arable land, which led to near-complete land development since the mid-Ming, resulted in a shortage of grain. Simultaneously, women in Wuxi were particularly diligent in textile production.⁶²² Villagers became reliant on rice imported from other regions, which they exchanged for cotton cloth annually.⁶²³

Wuxi developed into a trading market for grain and cloth early on due to its advantageous water transportation system during the Ming Dynasty. The establishment of the Rice Transshipment Office in Wuxi significantly improved the city's status. Mulberry trees were still relatively scarce in Wuxi in 1855, and the widespread promotion of their cultivation occurred in the 1860s and 1870s.⁶²⁴ The change in crop

(Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

620 湖广熟天下足 When Huguang provinces are harvest prosperous, the whole world is well-fed. Xiao, Shi, Qing Dynasty, *Yong Xian Lu* [History in Qianlong Period], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

621 Wang, Shejiao. 'Grain Production and Shortage in Taihu Basin of the Ming Dynasty'. *Chinese Historical Geography Collection*. 3(1998):117-131

Huang Ang (Qing Dynasty), *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

622 邑中女红最勤纺织其出东亭者尤缜密胜于他处 The women in the town are most diligent in spinning and weaving, particularly those from Dongting, whose work is especially meticulous and superior to that from other places. Pei, Dazhong et.al, 1881, *Wuxi Jinkui Xian Zhi* [Chorography of Wuxi and Jinkui in Guangxu Period], *Zhongguo Difang Zhi Jicheng* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 1991) vol custom

623 Huang Ang, Qing Dynasty, *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

624 Yan Ziqing bought three thousand mulberry seedlings from Jiaxing and planted them in the field in front of his residence in 1871. He was setting an example for promoting sericulture in the region.

During the 1870s, large-scale mulberry orchards began to emerge, and extensive rice fields were also converted to

types may have been a response to emerging opportunities in foreign markets.⁶²⁵ The demand for silk rose as the national textile industry thrived after the Taiping Rebellion in the 1860s, and new technologies for dry silkworm cocoon drying and silk reeling dramatically increased the profits for silk producers.⁶²⁶ As part of the rural handicraft industry, the spinning industry among farmers experienced both absolute and relative declines, leading to a partial reconfiguration of non-agricultural income sources in response to this decline.⁶²⁷ The destruction of old farming plants during the war provided an opportunity to plant new mulberry trees and breed silkworms.⁶²⁸

After the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in the 1860s, Shanghai rapidly rose to prominence. As a treaty port, it was forced to become the forefront of global powers for trade, investment, concession construction, and cultural dissemination.⁶²⁹ The decline

mulberry tree cultivation. Hua Lunyi, a landowner in Wuxi, wrote a letter to his son-in-law Qin Guangjian in 1873. He had purchased 15 mu of land and planted over 3,000 mulberry trees. At the time, cultivating mulberry trees was at least four to five times more profitable than growing grains. From Zhang, Kai. 'Jiangsu Sericulture in History (Continuation 2)'. *Sericulture Science and Technology*, 03(1979):53-56.

625 Fairbank, John K.; Kwang-Ching Liu, *The Cambridge History of China* Volume 11 Part 2 Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

626 同治末，无锡产桑宜蚕，西商购茧夺民利，寿考求烘茧法，倡设烘灶，及机器缫丝法，育蚕者利骤增
At the end of the Tongzhi period, Wuxi's mulberry production was well-suited for silkworm rearing. Western merchants purchased cocoons, depriving local people of their profits. Shoukang sought methods for drying cocoons and advocated the establishment of drying stoves and the use of machines for reeling silk. As a result, those who raised silkworms saw their profits rapidly increase. Zhao Erxun, 20th century, *Qing Shi Gao* [Draft History of the Qing Dynasty], vol89 Ritual, Chinese Studies Classical Books. The ritual system in the Qing continue to use the Ming Ritual at first.

627 Fairbank, John K.; Kwang-Ching Liu, *The Cambridge History of China* Volume 11 Part 2 Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

628 经乱田荒 人多植桑饲蚕 辄获奇羨 其风始胜延及于各乡 After the turmoil, when fields lay desolate, many people planted mulberry trees and raised silkworms, reaping substantial benefits. This trend began to flourish and spread to various villages. Pei, Dazhong et.al, 1881 *Chorography of Wuxi and Jinkui in Guangxu Period*, from *Zhongguo Difang Zhi Jicheng* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 1991)

629 Zhang, Li, 'Peasant Household Economy under the Influence of International Trade, Industrialization, and Urbanization: A Case Study of Wuxi Peasants' Response to Economic Opportunities, 1860s- 1940s', (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Unversity of California, 2002)

of Suzhou after the rise of modern China mainly lies in the ascendancy of Shanghai, based on Myrdal's theory of the 'Diffusion effect' and 'Echo effect' (Return effect).⁶³⁰ As a new commercial centre, Shanghai prevented Suzhou from returning to its previous status and will continue to play a dominant role.⁶³¹ This theory can also explain why Wuxi was unable to develop as an economic and cultural centre in the vicinity of these two major regional centres during the feudal era.

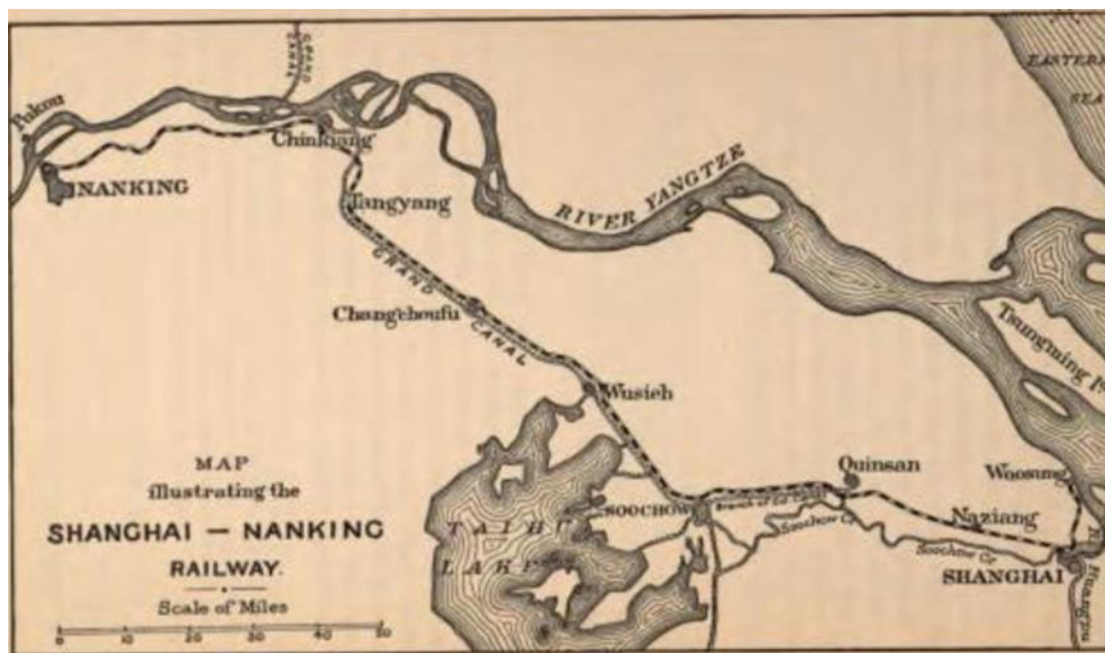


Figure 92: Shanghai- Nanjing railway (map from Percy Horace Kent, *Railway Enterprise in China- An Account of its Origin and Development* (with maps), (All rights reserved), London: Edward Arnold, 1907, p 127)

⁶³⁰ Myrdal, Karl G. *Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions*. (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1957).

⁶³¹ Lu, Yunchang. *Suzhou Foreign Customs Historical Materials: 1896-1945*. (Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 1991) pp.79.



Figure 93: The railway station of Wuxi in 1912 (photo collected in Wuxi Library)

Based originally on its canal infrastructure, Wuxi was known as a hub for rice, cloth, silk, and financial transactions. With Shanghai's rise as an international gateway, both the agricultural economy and canal transportation faced challenges. The development of industry and commerce, along with the improvement in urban status, was closely related to the emergence of new modes of transportation, including the advent of railways.⁶³² New railways were constructed through Shanghai, connecting Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hebei, Henan, Shaanxi, and other provinces during 1908-1916, which increased the speed of transportation and capital turnover (Shanghai-Nanjing Railway Figure 92 Figure 93), Goods from lower administrative units and the northern part of the Yangtze River, previously within Changzhou's economic sphere, began to be transported to Shanghai through Wuxi.⁶³³ Wuxi became connected to the extensive market circulation across the country and even globally, replacing Changzhou and

632 Huang Ang (Qing Dynasty), *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983)

633 吾常之附庸地，而今均为无锡夺去。The fiefdoms that once belonged to us (Changzhou) have now all been taken by Wuxi. Xi, Zhuqing Wujin City Chronicle, from *Geography*, 4.4(1931):1-3.

Wan, Ling, *Changzhou's Road to Modernization: A Case Study of the Modernization of Non-Treaty Port Cities in the South of the Yangtze River*, (Hefei, Anhui Education Press, 2002), pp.175.

Wu, Chengming. *Modernization of China: Market and Society*. (Shanghai: Joint Publishing, 2001) pp.194, pp.488.

Suzhou as an industrial, commercial distribution, financial, and information centre in southern Jiangsu.⁶³⁴ Estimates indicate that Shanghai annually procures approximately 1.5 million Shi (equivalent to 14.4 million tons) of rice from Wuxi, which constitutes 33.71% of Wuxi's total rice production, excluding dispersed distribution.⁶³⁵ Shanghai's silk traders purchase roughly 20% to 30% of Wuxi's silk output.⁶³⁶

The railway shortened the travel time between cities along its route. The journey from Suzhou to Shanghai, which previously took four or five days by boat, was reduced to a round trip in just two hours on the same day.⁶³⁷ In the 1930s, the proportion of workers from Wuxi in Shanghai's silk-related factories ranged from 31% to 91.5%.⁶³⁸ Merchants from Wuxi established factories in both cities. Building on the pillar industries of rice, grains, and textiles from the Ming and Qing dynasties, the number of light industrial factories in Wuxi grew rapidly, offering a wide variety of products. Wuxi ranked among the top in the country in terms of the number of workers and output value.⁶³⁹ (Figure 94 Figure 95. Table 11 and p510)

634 Zheng, Zhong, 'Economic Links between Regional cities in Modern China - Based on an investigation of the interaction between Shanghai and Wuxi'. *Jianghai Journal*, 03(2011):173-180.

635 Yang, Jicheng. *Investigation of Wuxi Rice City*. Social and Economic Survey Institute press, 1935, pp.10.

636 International Trade Bureau, Ministry of Business of the Government of the Republic of China, *China's Industrial History . Jiangsu Province*, (Press by the Ministry of Business International Trade Bureau, 1933) Vol. 4, Chapter 2

637 Bao, Tianxiao, *A Hundred Years of Changes in Basic Clothing, Food, Housing, and Transportation*, (Hong Kong: Dahua Publishing House, 1974), pp.134, p.138.

638 Edited by Qian, Yaoxing, *Wuxi Silk Industry Chronicle*, (Shanghai, Shanghai People's Publishing House ,1990) page 398.

639 Cai, Jing. 'The Development of Wuxi' s Ethical Industry and Wuxi' s Industrial Architecture'. *Architecture and Culture*,07 (2009),106-109.

Zhu, Qiang, 'Industrial Heritage Corridor Construction of the Jiangnan Part of the Great Canal', (unpublished Doctorial theise, Peking University, 2007)

Chen, Zhen, *Materials on Modern Chinese Industrial History (Fourth Series)*. (Beijing: Life, Reading and New Knowledge- Sanlian Publishing House, 1961)

Gu, Yufang, *Wuxi Industry and Commerce Collection*. (Nanjing, Industry Association Press, 1933)

Wang, Jingyu. *Materials of Modern Chinese Industrial History (Second Series)*. (Beijing: Science Press. 1957)



Figure 94: Maoxin flour factory in 1915 Zhenyi Reeling factory in 1915 Baoxin flour factory in 1915 Yeqin textile factory (all photos collected in Wuxi Library)

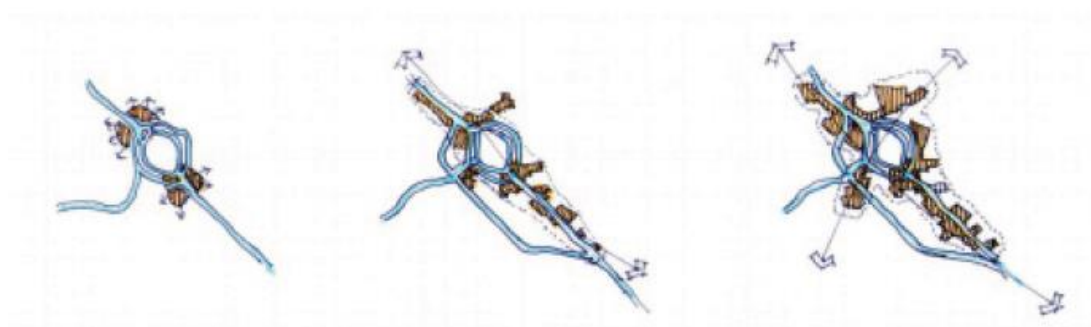
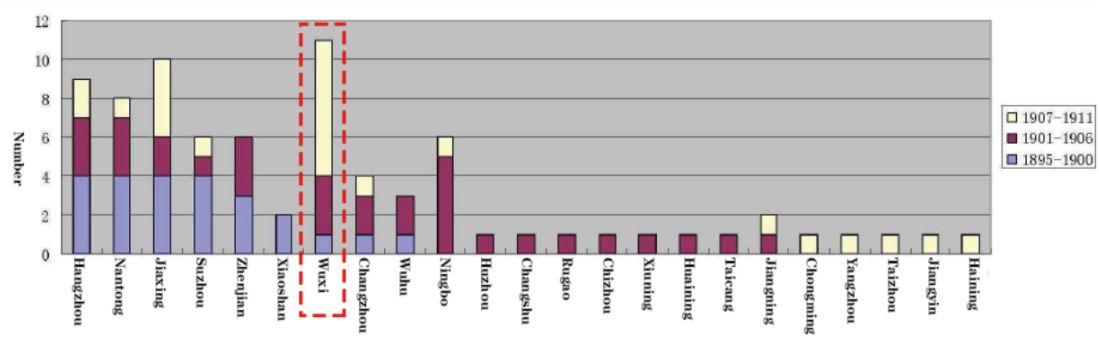


Figure 95: Distribution and development of industrial and commercial plants area in the Republic China⁶⁴⁰

Table 11: The establishment time and regional distribution of modern private enterprises in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River from 1895 to 1911⁶⁴¹

⁶⁴⁰ Cai Jing. 'The Development of Wuxi's Ethical Industry and Wuxi's Industrial Architecture'. *Architecture and Culture*, 7(2009):106-109.

⁶⁴¹ Zhu, Qiang, Industrial Heritage Corridor Construction of the Jiangnan Part of the Great Canal, (Doctoral thesis:



The profound influence of Wuxi's economic development directly shaped the urban development of the 20th century (Figure 96).



Figure 96: historic map of Wuxi city area in 1916, 1948, 1956, 1963, 1974, and 1982 (Data from Wuxi

The changing structure of the global trade market led to an increasing number of individuals establishing light industry factories and engaging in trade in Shanghai, thereby coming into contact with global culture. Given that Wuxi was not a port city, this influence on garden culture in Wuxi was mostly indirect. Until the 1930s, approximately 70% of handicrafts remained in Wuxi.⁶⁴²

The development of modern commerce and industry in Wuxi differed from that of Shanghai in several aspects. Wuxi's capital market had relatively limited participation from foreign capital. Although it did not emerge as a major port city during the modern period, it achieved remarkable economic success by relying on local gentry and prominent families to raise private capital for investment and business operations. Six families, in particular, played a prominent role, serving as the backbone of the city's economic development. These families included the Yang, Rong, Xue, Zhou, Tang-Cai Group, and Tang-Cheng Group. Their notable contributions were particularly evident in the food and cotton textile industries, where they controlled two-thirds of the industry's capital and nearly its entirety.⁶⁴³

A significant number of industrial and business garden owners, occupying nearly 80%, primarily those involved in the construction of modern light industry factories, emerged as the new local elite. They played a pivotal role in carrying forward the modern-era garden culture in Wuxi.

gentry and public power: The role of the gentry in resolving disputes was implemented through ceremonial systems. This practice can be observed in the Lü Shi

642 Fairbank, John K.; Kwang-Ching Liu, *The Cambridge History of China* Volume 11 Part 2 Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

643 Gao, Fan, 'Study on Modern Gardens of the Yang Family in Wuxi', (unpublished Master's dissertation, Beijing Forest University, 2016)

Xiang Yue 吕氏乡约 ‘Lüshi Township Regulations’ during the Song Dynasty.⁶⁴⁴ Local gentry began to exercise the power of local self-governance, resulting in the emergence of regulations similar to local laws. The Charity Estate established by Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 represented an administrative endeavour undertaken by local gentry within the framework of kinship and geographical relationships. Similar examples happened in medieval Europe, with the development of industry and commerce, cities gradually acquired distinct and independent administrative powers.⁶⁴⁵ In the early 19th century, local elites expanded their roles in the public sphere and pursued their own interests in various cultural practices, including the construction of gardens.⁶⁴⁶ The economic significance of cities and towns in the Jiangnan area increased, becoming absolutely superior compared to their political and military significance during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. In response to the rapid development of local power, the government has made corresponding policy changes. The division of urban units, or the ‘Fu Guo County

⁶⁴⁴ 同约之人各自省察，互相规戒，小则密规之，大则众戒之。不听，则会集之日，值月以告于约正，约正以义理诲谕之。谢过请改，则书于籍以俟。其争辩不服与终不能改者，皆听其出约 The people bound by the agreement should each introspect and admonish each other. For minor issues, offer discreet advice; for major issues, provide public admonishment. If someone does not heed the advice, during the monthly meeting, report it to the leader of the agreement, who will then use reason and principles to instruct and admonish the individual. If the person acknowledges their fault and asks for a chance to change, it will be recorded in the register and monitored. Those who argue and do not comply or ultimately cannot change will be allowed to leave the agreement Lv, Dazhong, et.al, *Lv Shi Xiang Yue* [Lüshi Township Regulations], Guan Zhong Cong Shu, (Xi'an: Shaanxi Tongzhi Printing House, 1934) vol 1, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁶⁴⁵ Pirenne, Henri, *Medieval Cities : Their Origins and the Revival of Trade* (Princeton (N.J.): Princeton University Press, 1969)

⁶⁴⁶ Peterson, Willard J., *The Cambridge History of China*. Volume 9. Part 2, The Ch'ing Dynasty to 1800 [electronic Resource] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016)

(一) 本城镇乡之学务：(二) 本城镇乡之卫生：包括公园、(三) 本城镇乡之道路工程 等 Educational affairs of the town and villages. Health affairs of the town and villages, including parks; Road engineering of the town and villages. Government document: Yikuang, 1908 *Cheng Zhen Xiang Zi Zhi Zhang Cheng* [Self-government of City, Town, and Village], National Digital Library of China, <<http://mylib.nlc.cn/OutOpenBook/OpenObjectBook?aid=892&bid=266067.0>>

附郭县’ policy became a common practice in the Qing Dynasty.⁶⁴⁷ Wuxi was divided by the Jiangnan canal in the middle, and the split was not unified until 1912. The dismantling of power in Wuxi is actually favourable proof of its actual power expansion. With the loss of power of the Qing government and the promulgation of the constitution of autonomy, the public power of the gentry in local autonomy was expanded and legally recognized.

With the resurgence of industry and commerce and the collapse of the Qing government, there was a noticeable decline in the manifestation of Confucian thought. As a result, Ma Min proposed that, in contrast to the term ‘Confucian merchants’ used to describe elites in the Ming and Qing periods after the development of handicrafts and commerce, the elites during this phase are commonly referred to as ‘gentry-merchants 绅商.’⁶⁴⁸

The policy control of the agricultural economic era was no longer sufficient to constrain the expansion of urban administrative power. These gentry-merchant families in Wuxi began seeking to play a greater role in local society.⁶⁴⁹ After the idea of ‘Learn from foreigners and subdue foreigners’ was proposed by Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794–1857), not only technology but almost all aspects of the Western world were introduced.⁶⁵⁰ ‘Freedom’ and ‘Equality’ played a more significant role in the public sphere, paralleling the last two stages of self-cultivation that Confucianism aspires to: governance and achieving peace throughout the world. Therefore, the acceptance of democratic ideas

647 Jin, Runcheng, and Yu Shuangyuan, ‘Limitations of Suzhou City-political Zone’ s in Qing-Dynasty’, *Journal of Tianjin Normal University (Social Science)*, 3(2010):38-42

648 Ma, Min, *Between Officials and Merchants: The Modern Gentleman-Merchant in the Midst of Social Transformation*, (Tianjin, Tianjin People's Publishing House, 1995) pp.94-95

649 Song, Jiannu. ‘Family Networks, Powerful Elites and Local Politics’ (unpublished master Dissertation, Fudan University, 2008)

650 师夷长技以制夷 Wei Yuan, *Hai Guo Tu Zhi*[Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms], (Pingqingjinggu, official press, 1876), preface, collected in Waseda University Library. Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

was swift for garden owners who embraced Confucian thought. Democracy started to replace centralization.⁶⁵¹

Due to the fact that the sect founded by Hong Xiuquan was based on Christian doctrines, Paul believed that ‘the new sources of regional and local power that came into being in the course of the suppression of the insurgency weakened the central power permanently.’⁶⁵² This shift allowed for the rise of local power during the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic era. The Cheng-Zhen-Xiang-Zi-Zhi-Zhang-Cheng 城镇乡自治章程 ‘Self-government of City, Town and village’ made the role of gentry in grassroots governance public.⁶⁵³

The scope of autonomy included education (academies and schools), public health (including public garden construction), roads and municipal engineering, agricultural, industrial, and commercial affairs (including plant nurseries), as well as welfare services (such as public garden), among others.⁶⁵⁴ Before and after the promulgation of the autonomy document, multiple guilds representing different industries and the Wuxi Autonomous Committee were successively established.⁶⁵⁵ This represented gentry

651 Mizuno Rentaro(Japanese), *Defang Zizhi Jingyi*[Core of Self-Government] (Shanghai, Commercial Press, 1910)

652 Cohen, Paul A., *Discovering History in China : American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), pp20

653 由地方公选合格绅民受地方官监督办理 To be handled by locally elected qualified gentry and commoners under the supervision of local officials. Government document: Yikuang, 1908 *Cheng Zhen Xiang Zi Zhi Zhang Cheng* [Self-government of City, Town, and Village], National Digital Library of China, <<http://mylib.nlc.cn/OutOpenBook/OpenObjectBook?aid=892&bid=266067.0>> p5.

654 Government document: Yikuang, 1908, *Cheng Zhen Xiang Zi Zhi Zhang Cheng* [Self-government of City, Town, and Village], National Digital Library of China, <<http://mylib.nlc.cn/OutOpenBook/OpenObjectBook?aid=892&bid=266067.0>>

655 In 1899, the Wuxi Grain Depot was established.

In 1904, the Xijin Academic Affairs Association was founded.

In 1905, the Wuxi Chamber of Commerce and the Xijin Farmers Association were established.

In 1907, the Embroidery Workers Training Association was established.

In 1908, as part of the constitutional reform planned by the Qing Dynasty, the business, agricultural, and educational organizations of Wuxi and Jinkui counties formed the Gentry-Merchant Association, responsible for local affairs.

autonomy rather than citizen autonomy.

Xue Fucheng's residents and garden—open eyes to see the world

Many scholars of that era underwent a transition from traditional education to embracing new culture as a means to save the country. Xue Fucheng 薛福成(1838-1894), a prominent diplomat of modern times, hailed from Wuxi and was among the representatives of progressive thinking among government officials in China during the 1860s and 1870s. He was born into a traditional gentry family. After experiencing the Taiping Rebellion and the two Opium Wars, he, along with Feng Guifen, Wang Tao, and others, developed an interest in foreign knowledge and skills.⁶⁵⁶

Xue gained the admiration of Zeng Guofan 曾国藩 and Li Hongzhang 李鸿章. During the Self-Strengthening Movement 洋务运动, they established the 'Jiangnan Machinery Manufacturing Bureau' and a translation institute, which made significant contributions to advancing world-class scientific and technological knowledge. In May 1889, the Qing court appointed him as the Minister to Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium. He was also granted the authority to construct the high-profile residence known as the 'Ambassador Residence.'

Before his departure, he first returned to Wuxi to honour his ancestors.⁶⁵⁷ The act of

The following year, the Gentleman-Merchant Association was renamed as the Wuxi City Autonomous Public Office. In 1910, the Wuxi City Council and the Wuxi City Autonomous Public Office were established separately. In 1911, the Xijin Chamber of Commerce formed an armed commercial group.

Chronicle of Wuxi, 1994, vol 1, pp26

656 是以时文不废，则实学不兴；西学不重，则奇才不出。Therefore, if traditional writing is not abandoned, practical learning will not thrive; if Western learning is not emphasized, extraordinary talents will not emerge. Zheng Guanying, 1893, *Sheng Shi Wei Yan*[Aphorisms], collected in Tianjin Museum, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

657 Xue Fucheng, *Chu Shi Si Guo Ri Ji*[Ambassador Dairy to British, France, Italy, and Belgium], collected in Tsinghua University , Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

ancestral worship not only conveys the significance of honouring the family lineage but also serves as a means to report one's actions to ancestors, expressing respect and seeking blessings. Despite voluntarily giving up the imperial examination system, his traditional elite identity remained deeply ingrained.⁶⁵⁸

After over a month of turbulent sea travel, Xue, leading a diplomatic mission, finally arrived in the port of Marseille, France, on March 6, 1890, officially commencing his diplomatic career. He attended banquets, tea parties, music and dance performances, visits, and sightseeing in various European countries, forging close connections and extensive interactions with notable figures from the outside world.⁶⁵⁹ In his view, the arrival of foreign technology 'really opens up a situation that has not been created in the ages.'⁶⁶⁰ Going further than the thinkers of the late Ming, he believed that the reason for China's backwardness lay primarily in the differences in its systems.

658 Zhao Erxun, 20th century, *Qing Shi Gao* [Draft History of the Qing Dynasty], bibliography of Xue Fucheng, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

659 Xue Fucheng, *Chu Shi Si Guo Ri Ji* [Ambassador Dairy to British, France, Italy, and Belgium], collected in Tsinghua University, Electronic, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

660 editor of compilation. Fairbank, John K. and Liu, Kwang-Ching, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 11 Part 2 Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

实开千古未创之局 Xue Fucheng, *Yong An Hai Wai Wen Bian* [Compile of Foreign Books] (Yijing House Press, 1896) collected in University of Xinjiang library, vol 3 pp8.



Figure 97: Clothes of Xue Fucheng and his wife (photo by author in May,2020)

Xue chose to build his residence within the city and personally designed it, with his eldest son Xue Nanming overseeing the construction during his diplomatic mission. This garden was among the highest-ranking estates of the old-era nobility in the Jiangnan region. The surviving portions of the first construction include the central axis buildings and the East Garden (Figure 98, Figure 99), which are well-preserved.

According to Liu and Huang's assessment, in the early stages of this period, despite their exposure to international cultural expansion, their inner sense of self-identity still primarily revolved around being members of the bureaucratic elite or maintaining the characteristics of the agrarian-based old era.⁶⁶¹ Similar to the attire he wore during his diplomatic missions, which adhered entirely to Qing Dynasty styles and ranks, only a

⁶⁶¹ Liu Shanshan, Huang Xiao, 'From Private to Public: A Socio-cultural Study on the Transformation of Modern Gardens in Wuxi', *Landscape Architecture*, 27 .2 (2020) 20-25.

sash indicated his connection with the West. (Figure 97)

The residence, from south to north, consists of the Entrance Hall, Sedan Hall ‘Xiyao 西轺 West-Tour Hall,’ main hall ‘Wuben 务本 Keep-the-original-intention Hall’ for social affairs, inner hall ‘Huiran 惠然 Happiness Hall’ for family affairs or madam gatherings, and the H-shaped architecture, with gardens laid out in the courtyards. It reflects his illustrious diplomatic experience, such as the naming of the sedan hall and the 11-room-width H-shaped architecture. The main hall symbolizes the essential connection to the land. During the same period, Yang Zonglian 杨宗濂, with similar experiences of accepting new culture, built his garden and called it Liugeng House 留耕草堂 ‘Keep Farming,’ with a similar intent, both representing remnants of agricultural economies. The South Garden in the East Garden consists of a stage, a pond, a flower hall, and a side hall, where one can enjoy music, theatre, tea, and scenery. These activities also bear the hallmark of traditional literati culture. It was through their garden style that they shaped their identities, and established and showed their status to others. The garden culture in Wuxi retained agricultural concepts until the late 19th century.

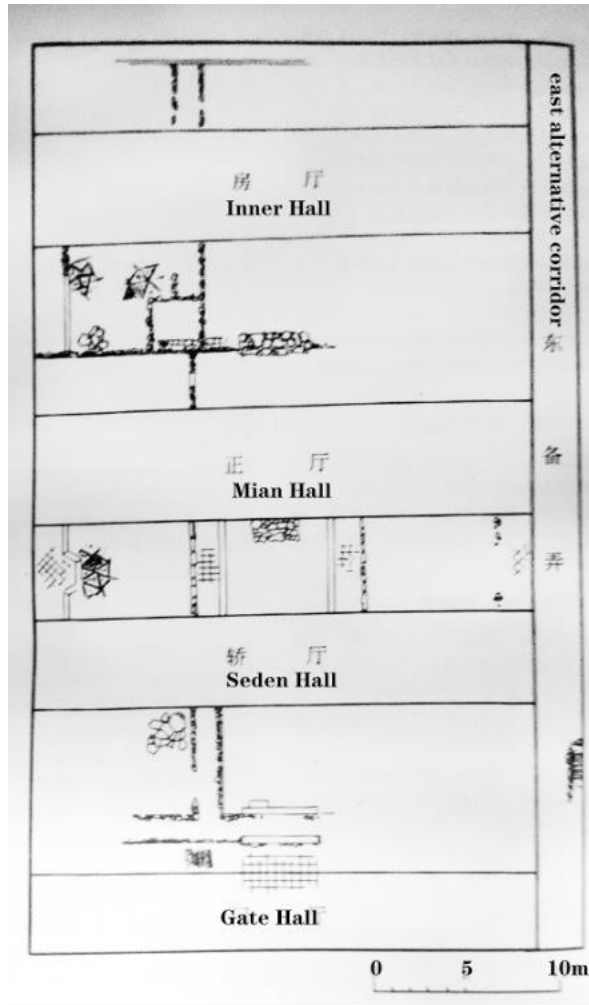


Figure 98: Excavation Report of the central line of Xue Fucheng Garden (redrawn by author based on Internal Document in Wuxi Museum, drawn in 1999)⁶⁶²

⁶⁶² Wuxi Cultural Relics Management Office. 'Brief Report on Exploring the Foundation of Xue Fucheng's Residence', Wuxi Wenbo, 4(1999), 2-5 internal Journal



Figure 99: The H-Shaped Building in the central line (photo by author in May, 2020) and performance stage in east garden of Ambassador Dwelling (old photo in 1950s provide by Wuxi Library)



Foreign elements are reflected in the details, with the railings of the second-floor corridor in the main H-shaped building made using advanced lathe processing techniques of the time. Although the dwelling was built with the aim of celebrating Xue Fucheng's sixtieth birthday, this was not realized as he died suddenly after completing his diplomatic mission.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶³ Zhao Erxun, 20th century, *Qing Shi Gao* [Draft History of the Qing Dynasty], bibliography of Xue Fucheng, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook.

They saw and began to try to embrace the world. The closing curtain of the old era marked the beginning of a new chapter in Wuxi's modern garden culture.

Public gardens and private gardens open to the public⁶⁶⁴

The primary characteristic of gardens during the Republican era was their public nature. This encompassed not only the deliberate construction of urban public gardens but also the opening up of newly constructed private gardens. Traditional Chinese gardens often sought personal enjoyment without desiring public attention.⁶⁶⁵ During the late Ming dynasty, there were partial openings of private gardens. Unlike earlier gardens, which were deliberately open only to specific groups, modern gardens were generally open to the public.

The use of all citizens

With the rise of gentry merchants' autonomy and the establishment of their responsibilities, the construction of Wuxi's first public garden began in 1905, three months after the establishment of the Chamber of Commerce (Figure 100). Due to the

⁶⁶⁴ In this section, the concepts of public and private gardens are primarily defined based on land ownership and the funding sources for their construction. A 'private garden' is built on land purchased and funded by an individual, while a 'park' is developed on public land managed by the government and funded through taxation. Due to the unique circumstances of the modern era, parks entirely funded by public taxes and freely accessible to everyone were not truly established. Therefore, the word 'park' does not adequately explain modern gardens. This necessitates the inclusion of qualifiers in the descriptions to differ from previously established definition.

Modern gardens in Wuxi are categorized as follows:

Public Gardens: These are established on public land. Early construction was funded by donations from local gentry, and they are open to the public without charging an entrance fee.

Modern Private Gardens: The land and funding for these gardens come from individuals. There are three usage scenarios for these gardens: 1) The entire garden, excluding the private residence, is freely accessible to the public (e.g., Plum Garden). 2) The entire garden, excluding the private residence, is accessible to the public for a fee (e.g., Li Garden). 3) The garden is only open to relatives and friends, similar to private gardens during the feudal period.

Schools: privately or government run, built with both private and government funds. They are open to the public through an examination-based admission process.

⁶⁶⁵ Chen Congzhou, *Zi Shi Yu Mo* [Chen Congzhou's Essays] (Beijing: Life Reading, 1999) pp.170

rapid urban development and increased population mobility in Wuxi, various sectors including politics, education, industry, and commerce were bustling throughout the day, and there was a lack of recreational spaces for rest. In response to this, scholars from the education sector proposed the establishment of a park in the city centre. Wuxi Public Garden was initially funded and constructed by local gentry, likely driven by economic considerations. It retained several existing private gardens, which were simplified and transformed into a public garden. According to a memorial submitted in October 1906, the Qing government accepted the proposal put forth by military minister Dai Hongci and others, instructing each province to establish public gardens, which was an unprecedented move in Chinese history.⁶⁶⁶

From the perspective of the feudal society's self-awareness development, the main governing ideology adopted Confucianism had put forward the world for the public in early Qing Dynasty. (Footnote504) The background of a Confucian scholars determine the class represented by their thoughts. Under the premise of economic development, the extensive construction of academies and the printing industry in the mid-Ming Dynasty enabled more people at the bottom to record and spread their thoughts. Patricia indicated that rituals were always double-edged: they manipulated people but also benefited them.⁶⁶⁷ As an important means of maintain social order, spokesmen or local gentry actively based their thoughts and abilities on educating the people around them. Their development of power and demand for autonomy came from the growth of their inner strength. However, under the consistent feudal system, they never truly abandoned loyalty to the sovereign. Western ideas provided them with ample reasons and clearer methods to unlock the clearly crumbling shackles in the late dynasties,

⁶⁶⁶ Zhu, Zhenjun, et al. 'On the Historical Status of Modern Gardens in Wuxi,' *Landscape Architecture*, 33.10 (2017): 47-51.

⁶⁶⁷ Patricia, Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China: a Social History of Writing About Rites* (Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1991) p28

choosing change rather than perfection. It can be seen as learning from the West, and likewise, it can be seen as a qualitative change caused by quantitative changes in cognition over hundreds of years.

Perhaps in response to policy changes or to showcase the achievements of the new era, public gardens underwent expansion in the early years of the Republic of China. Among those who supported the later construction were a diverse array of individuals, including the county magistrate of Wuxi, traditional Chinese painters, literati skilled in depicting flowers and stones, and scholars from the late Qing period. This diversity fostered a collective sense of pluralistic consciousness within the garden landscape.⁶⁶⁸



668 Luo, Xinghai, and Liang Mingjie. 'The Public is the public: Garden Landscape Debate in the initial stage of Wuxi Public Garden (1905-1949)'. *Chinese Garden*, 39.1 (2023): 139-144.



Figure 100: Photo of Wuxi City Public Garden in 1911 (photo from Wuxi Cultural and Historical Materials, Volume Three (internal documentation), Wuxi Daily Printing Factory, 30 August 1981 and View of Wuxi⁶⁶⁹)

Under the supervision of County Magistrate Qin Yuliu 秦毓璠(1880-1937), who hails from the Qin family, the public garden predominantly adopted a Japanese-style approach based on Chinese traditional garden elements (such as Yuhuang Palace 玉皇殿, symbolizing the palace of the Lord of Heaven and Earth in Taoist legends) and natural landscapes (like Baishui Pond). As construction progressed, while the large-scale buildings and overall layout remained in the Chinese style, small-scale structures, lawn styles, and plant varieties introduced Japanese elements. This influence was likely due to his experiences at Waseda University in Japan. The garden's designer also originated from Japan, and a significant number of cherry blossoms, Japanese maples, and banana trees were introduced into the garden.⁶⁷⁰

669 Yang, Jinghuan, *Wuxi Feng Jing* [View of Wuxi], (Shanghai, Commercial press, 1920)

670 Wuxi Municipal Office of Local History, Wuxi Municipal Archives Bureau, Wuxi Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Liang Xi Ji Hen [Wuxi Modern Cultural and Scenic Tour Compilation], (Beijing: Fangzhi Publishing House, 2006), pp. 131-132

In 1931, the southern gate of the public garden (Figure 101) underwent a transformation in its gate and enclosure, overall adopting a Japanese style influenced by Western elements. Japan was initially a primary destination for Chinese international students exploring the world at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. However, following the Japanese invasion of China, national sentiments rapidly shifted, and the Japanese-style design of public gardens faced criticism. By around 1949, the overall style of the public garden had been reconfigured into a Chinese design.⁶⁷¹ The Wuxi city public garden served as a space in modern Wuxi history where the county magistrate could showcase their personal identity and experience, but more significantly, it was influenced by the national sentiments of residents. The influence of ethnicity emotion on public gardens was significant. Private gardens, however, did not show a very obvious impact.



Figure 101: The south gate of Wuxi City Public Garden, from the Luo, Xinghai, Liang Mingjie. 'The Public is the public: Garden Landscape Debate in the initial stage of Wuxi Public Garden (1905-1949)'.

671 Luo, Xinghai, Liang Mingjie. 'The Public is the public: Garden Landscape Debate in the initial stage of Wuxi Public Garden (1905-1949)'. *Chinese Garden*, 39.1(2023): 139-144.

During modern times, a more representative and notable development was the varying degrees of openness of private gardens.

Some of them were accessible free of charge. Operating factories and engaging in business provided the primary economic resources to develop public gardens and other facilities as public amenities. From its inception, Rong's Plum Garden adhered to the principles of no walls, no admission fees, open year-round, and shared public enjoyment, as expressed in the couplet at the main hall of the Plum Garden (Figure 102),

Spreading fragrant blossoms for heaven and earth, planting ten thousand plum trees; Roaming and enjoying with everyone, opening the garden to the vast empty mountains.⁶⁷²

This couplet reflects the philosophy of making the garden accessible to all, emphasizing communal enjoyment and connection with nature. From the map of 1930, public lavatory for men and women were built.

672 Sha, Wugou et al, *Rong Shi Mei Yuan Shi Cun*[collection of Historic documents of The Plum Garden of the Rong's family] (Suzhou, Gu Wu Xuan Press, 2002)

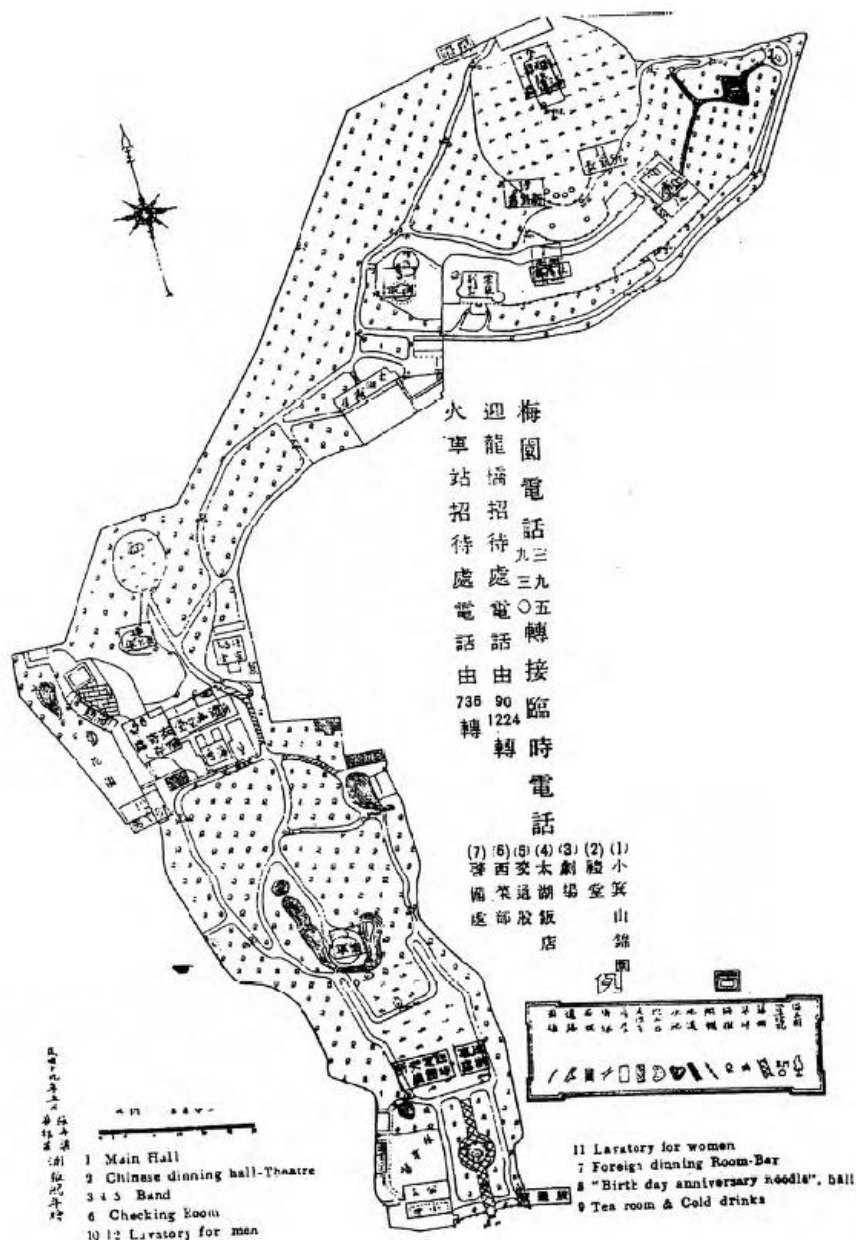


Figure 102: Map of the Plum Garden in 1930⁶⁷³

Special utilities were designed and built to accommodate more visitors from all over the world. The Plum Garden gradually constructed long embankments and planted weeping willows on both sides to facilitate the movement of rickshaws and local

673 Guo Mingyou, 'On Aesthetic Characteristics and Historical Value of Rong's Mei Garden in Wuxi', *Chinese Gardens*, 12 (2004), 91-94.

villagers. Houses were also built to serve as hotels for long-distance travellers. Four automobiles were provided for transportation between Yinglong Bridge (in the city centre) and the Plum Garden (Figure 103).⁶⁷⁴ During the early 1930s, the Plum Garden only closed three days in advance of the 1932 celebration of Rong Zongjing's 荣宗敬 (brother of Rong Desheng 荣德生) 60th birthday, and English labelling was added for the convenience of foreign guests. Apart from that, no other restrictions were imposed on visitors. The garden is equipped with both male and female toilets, with the inclusion of female facilities symbolizing a significant elevation in the status of women.

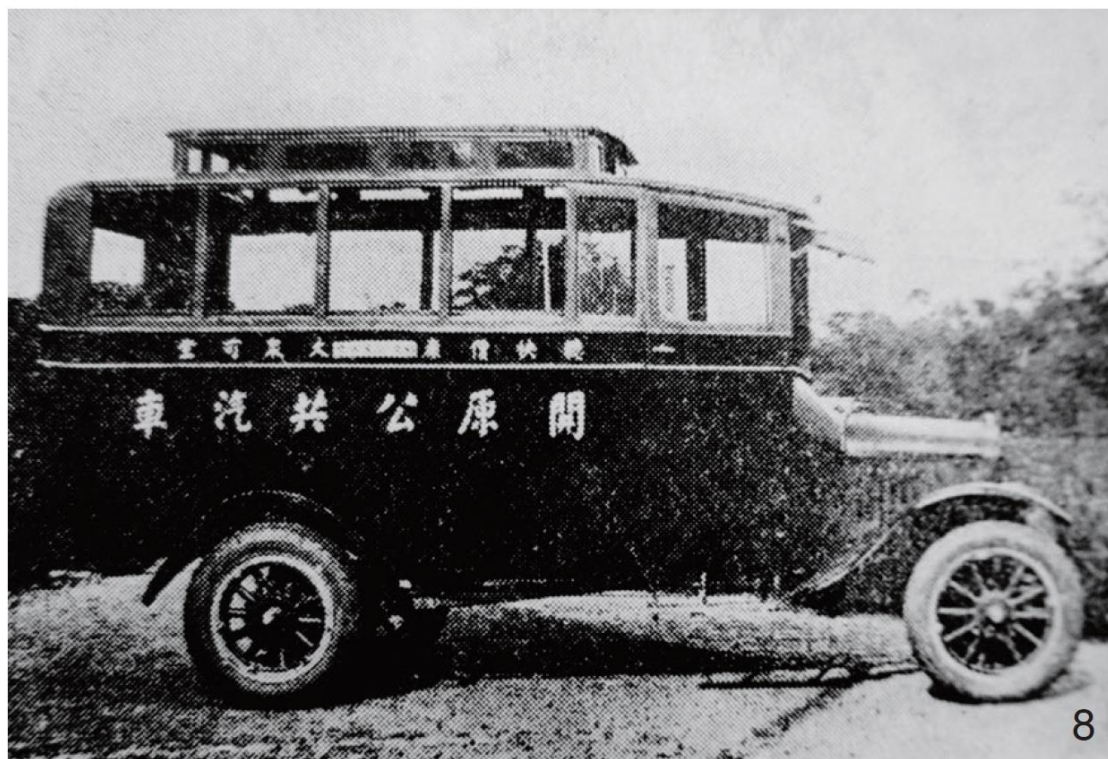


Figure 103: Photo of bus for transportation between Yinglong Bridge (in the city centre) and the Plum Garden⁶⁷⁵

674 Wuxi Chorography Chorography Office. *Xue Mingjian Wen Ji* [Xue Mingjian's Collected Works]. (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2007.)

675 Liu Shanshan, Huang Xiao, 'From Private to Public: A Socio-cultural Study on the Transformation of Modern Gardens in Wuxi', *Landscape Architecture*, 27.2 (2020) 20-25.

The extent of the openness of gardens in Wuxi in the early 20th century can be understood from a newspaper article:

The public gardens and private gardens in our town do not charge any fees to visitors. However, Li Garden was the first to introduce ticket sales. Visitors entering the garden are required to pay fifteen copper coins... This has led to dissatisfaction among many tourists, who question why the Wang family, having already spent a considerable sum to build this renowned garden, must haggle over every fifteen copper coins with the visitors.⁶⁷⁶

This excerpt highlights the contrast between free access to most gardens and the introduction of ticket sales at Li Garden, which sparked discontent among visitors.

Due to its full openness, there were also instances where visitors with poor behaviour caused disappointment. Many visitors come from various places. It is regrettable that uninformed visitors often pluck and damage the flowers and trees.⁶⁷⁷

Activities

Activities in public gardens significantly reflect a dominant focus on cultural entertainment and the nature of public space. Many activities aimed to broaden the residents' horizons. To enrich the scenery, the newspaper 'Xin Wuxi' (November 5, 1918) mentioned:

A collection of fine chrysanthemum varieties was gathered in the garden for the Chrysanthemum Exhibition, providing a delightful experience for visitors. It

676 1930 年《锡报●副刊》登载评论称：“本邑公私各园，对游客概不取资，独蠡园则首创售票之举。游客入园，须纳资铜元十五枚...以是游者颇致不满，咸谓王氏既耗巨金，筑斯名园，何必斤斤于十五铜元，与游客较锱铢乎” Newspaper collection in Wuxi Library

677 Rong Desheng, *Le Nong Zi Ding Xing Nian Ji Shi*[Self- made Bibliography of Rong Desheng], *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

truly represents a refined and leisurely pursuit. It is said that there were over four hundred pots of renowned flowers, comprising more than two hundred varieties.

This excerpt highlights how public gardens served as venues for cultural events and exhibitions, enhancing the leisure and cultural experiences of the visitors. In the subsequent years, the Plum Garden Chrysanthemum Exhibition became a regular event.⁶⁷⁸ Li Garden, on the other hand, combined the Rhododendron exhibition with a ‘Spring Delivery’ banquet.⁶⁷⁹ Additionally, the main hall of Yuxue public garden was equipped with a ‘popular education hall’ where citizens could read books and periodicals, making knowledge more accessible to the common people compared to the academies of the Ming and Qing dynasties.⁶⁸⁰

These two gardens also incorporated more activities and facilities introduced from the West. For example, Plum Garden featured a tennis court, botanical greenhouse, golf course, billiard room, café, and exhibition halls.⁶⁸¹ Li Garden built a dance floor equipped with amplifiers for playing music, surrounded by neon lights, and provided coffee and ‘Western snacks.’ And, a swimming pool was located on a platform in the southern part near Hanbi Pavilion, measuring 27 meters in length and 11 meters in width, with water pumped in from Taihu Lake. Modelled after Shanghai’s Hongkou Park, it was Wuxi’s first modern swimming pool (Figure 104).⁶⁸²

678 Wuxi Chorography Office. *Xue Mingjian Wen Ji* [Xue Mingjian's Collected Works]. (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2007.)

679 August 6, 1930. Xishan News: The Republican Daily, extracted from Bo Cai [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2011, pp. 132, 145-146

680 Jiang Shidong et al, *Yang Shoumei's Self-report*. Xijin Youxiang and other white report journal

681 Rong, Zongjing, Wuxi’s Future, Sha, Wugou et al, *Rong Shi Mei Yuan Shi Cun* [collection of Historic documents of The Plum Garden of the Rong’s family] (Suzhou, Gu Wu Xuan Press, 2002)

682 Huang Maoru's oral information



Figure 104: Swimming pool and dance floors in the Li Garden (from Wang, Yuanyuan, and Song Luxia. *Business Genius Wang Yuqing*. (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technological Literature Publishing House, 2011), and Song Luxia. *Shanghai's Small Businesses*. (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2013))

The welfare of citizens in public gardens stems from the broadening of their perspectives and the increased accessibility to knowledge. It expands the platform for social interaction, facilitating individuals' emergence from insular households into public environments. This can be seen as local elites adopting patterns reminiscent of historical precedents, where personal social status is enhanced through the strengthening of public space. Compared to arches and ancestral halls, public gardens exhibit higher levels of public engagement.

For merchants, gardens can also serve as profitable venues, with these benefits often remaining inconspicuous. This includes the construction of roads leading to the gardens, hotels within the gardens, and various new activities and facilities, all of which can attract tourists and facilitate accessibility.

Located between Shanghai and Nanjing, Wuxi frequently attracts political dignitaries and elites from both cities who visit for leisure and relaxation during holidays. Utilizing gardens as a means to network and expand trade possibilities is highly suitable in such a context. The New Wuxi reported that Yao Yizhi, a secretary from the Finance

Department, visited Wuxi for sightseeing and stayed at the Yi'an estate within Li Garden. Additionally, prominent literary figures from the coastal regions, such as Zhou Shoujuan, Chen Xiaodie, and the renowned painter Hu Boxiang, also frequented these gardens.⁶⁸³

Li Garden was constructed on Rong's suggestion as a component to promote urban tourism development. The admission tickets for activities at Li Garden, such as those at Plum Garden provided as a welfare benefit to citizens, further highlight its commercial profitability. The use of gardens showcased different social statuses and personal ideals in the modern period.

The economic strength and attitude of the garden owner toward public affairs directly determine the extent of the garden's openness. Rong Zongjing (1873-1938) and Rong Desheng (1875-1952), brothers who established factories in both Shanghai and Wuxi, saw the production capacity of Rong's Flour Factory account for approximately one-third of the national production capacity of similar factories.⁶⁸⁴ Mao Zedong once praised the Rong family as the foremost household of Chinese national capitalists, exerting significant influence both domestically and internationally.⁶⁸⁵

In comparison, the owner of a garden that charges fees, Wang Yuqing (1879-1965), came from a poor family and went to Shanghai to work as an apprentice. In 1903, he joined Maoxin Company, established by the Rong brothers in Shanghai, and became a

683 Gong Jinxian. *Xishan Old News: A Collection of Republican Era Local Newspapers*. (Shanghai, Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2011. pp. 239)

684 Cotton spinning factories had developed to 9 factories, 7 of which were located in Shanghai by 1931. There were 12 flour mills and more than 300 mills that belonged entirely to the Rong family enterprise by the 1920s. The production capacity accounted for 31.4% of the production capacity of the national capital flour mills, and accounted for 23.4% of the production capacity of all flour mills in the country (including foreign investors in China)

Wang Xiaohua, Li Zhancai, *The Difficult Extension of the Republic of China Railway*, Zhengzhou: Henan People's Publishing House, 1993, p208.

685 Ji, Honggeng, *Rong Yiren*, (Beijing, Central Literature Publishing House, 1999), pp.149

trusted assistant. With sponsorship from the Rong brothers in 1914, he became a shareholder and co-founded Fuxin Flour Mill. His flour mill expanded to eight locations and generated substantial profits, allowing him to build his own private garden.⁶⁸⁶

The ideological foundation of Rong Desheng is rooted in the concept of benefiting the local community in Wuxi. He further cited Confucius's saying, 'one establishes oneself at the age of thirty,' emphasizing the importance of fulfilling obligations to society and the local community.⁶⁸⁷ Rong believed that charity organizations represented a passive approach, whereas providing job opportunities could not only alleviate poverty but also stimulate various industries in the local area. He chose to produce flour and cotton yarn because he believed that clothing and food were the two most basic needs of people, and addressing these needs directly could effectively solve problems.⁶⁸⁸ Rong dedicated

686 Wang, Yuanyuan, and Song Luxia. *Business Genius Wang Yuqing*. (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technological Literature Publishing House, 2011), pp.362-368.

687 每年的农历三月十四日，锡俗是晚有‘乡会’，相传谓之‘报娘恩’，提倡忠孝节义，亦隐喻劝孝之意。因思古人云‘三十而立’吾人须对社会地方稍尽公益义务之责，会族中先觉，群起提倡新学，将原有私塾改称公益小学，筹集经费，予兄弟附焉，是为创设学校之始 Every year on the fourteenth day of the third lunar month, there is a local custom in Wuxi called the Village Gathering in the evening, which is traditionally known as Repaying the Kindness of Mothers. This event promotes loyalty, filial piety, integrity, and righteousness, implicitly encouraging filial piety. Reflecting on the ancient saying ‘At thirty, one stands firm,’ we must fulfill our duties to society and the local community. By convening the enlightened members of our clan, we collectively advocated for new education, transforming the existing private school into a public primary school, raising funds, and supporting our brothers in this endeavor. This marked the beginning of the establishment of the school. Lenong Historical Materials collation research group. *Rong Desheng and social welfare undertakings*. (Shanghai, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2004.)

688余以为创办工业，积德胜于举善。慈善机构周恤贫困，尚是消极救济，不如积极办厂兴业。一人进厂，则举家可无冻馁；一地有厂，则各业皆能兴旺。余以后对社会尽义务，决定设厂兴业。余年虽老，雄心未死，惜世局未平，不能大举创业，他日时平若健，此志不改。I believe that founding industries and accumulating virtue surpasses merely performing charitable acts. Charitable organizations that aid the poor provide passive relief, which is not as effective as actively establishing factories and promoting industry. When one person gains employment in a factory, their entire family can avoid hunger and cold; when a factory is established in a region, all trades can prosper. In my commitment to fulfilling social duties, I have resolved to set up factories and promote industry. Although I am old, my ambition remains undiminished. Regrettably, the current state of the world is unsettled, preventing me from undertaking large-scale entrepreneurial endeavors. However, if peace prevails and

his entire life to practicing his patriotic ideals, constructing roads, planting trees, and connecting gardens to attract tourists and enhance local wealth.⁶⁸⁹ From around 1930, he began engaging in various social endeavours such as municipal affairs, education, and the development of gardens and tourism.⁶⁹⁰

In the strategic positioning of gardens, Rong viewed Plum Garden as the spatial foundation for developing the Taihu Lake scenic area and promoting local tourism development. In contrast, Wang viewed his gardens merely as one component of his business operations. Therefore, different degrees of openness emerged. The Wang family's perception of garden space is notably reflected in the activities conducted within the gardens.

Public gardens resemble the development of public landscapes based on natural

I remain healthy in the future, I will not abandon this aspiration.

Sha, Wugou et al, *Rong Shi Mei Yuan Shi Cun*[collection of Historic documents of The Plum Garden of the Rong's family] (Suzhou, Gu Wu Xuan Press, 2002)

Lenong Historical Materials collation research group. *Rong Desheng and social welfare undertakings*. (Shanghai, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2004.)

689 Lenong Historical Materials collation research group. *Rong Desheng and social welfare undertakings*. (Shanghai, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2004.)

690 闲暇至园视察花草树木之种植，与工人商量造桥、造路、各种社会事业 In my leisure time, I inspect the planting of flowers, trees, and plants in the garden, and discuss with the workers the construction of bridges, roads, and various community projects. Lenong Historical Materials collation research group. *Rong Desheng and social welfare undertakings*. (Shanghai, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2004.)

职工之恃以举火者，亦数十万人。推而及于地方公益者，若公学、公路、公园、兴图书馆诸务，无役不从，无废不举。The livelihoods of tens of thousands of workers depend on these endeavors. Extending this to local public welfare, such as public schools, roads, parks, and libraries, there is no task they do not undertake and no project they leave undone. Maoxin Fuxin Shenxin Corporation. *Corporate 30th Anniversary Commemorative Book*. (Shanghai, Shanghai World Bookstore, 1929)

事业之成，必以人才为始基也，人才之盛衰，实关国运之隆替，余有鉴于斯.....所以办学校；无图籍参考，故建立图书馆 The success of any enterprise fundamentally depends on talent. The rise and fall of talent directly impact the prosperity and decline of the nation. Recognizing this, I am committed to establishing schools. Lacking reference materials, I have thus founded a library. Lenong historical data collation research group. *Rong Desheng and Promoting Learning and Cultivating Talents* (I). (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2003.)

surroundings on the outskirts of cities, akin to the Erquan Spring since the Tang Dynasty. The construction of Erquan was driven by feudal government officials seeking personal enjoyment alongside the people, educating the masses, and showcasing their official achievements. Crucially, it also aimed at preserving human life and transforming the natural environment for agricultural water management. However, comprehensive entertainment was still lacking.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, garden activities expanded from earlier literati gatherings to include more entertainment, such as temple fairs and Kunqu opera performances. The establishment of public gardens was rooted in the social welfare of the populace, building upon agricultural foundations, and aimed to enhance spiritual well-being beyond mere survival.

Wuxi emerged as a prominent industrial and commercial centre in modern times, and its gardens diverged from traditional Chinese gardens by introducing new activities. Many garden owners in Wuxi had experience in establishing factories in Shanghai or traveling abroad. This facilitated the introduction of various new activities suitable for public, especially the modern merchants, supported by close economic and trade relations with Shanghai.

New garden spaces were developed with guest rooms, reading rooms, sports fields, billiard rooms, dance floors, swimming pools, baths, and dining halls to cater to visitors' needs.⁶⁹¹ In addition to serving as living quarters for family members, many halls were open to the public for various social purposes, such as hosting silk technology training classes and private schools. Xue Huidong even briefly operated a hospital in his residence.

691 Wuxi Chorography Office. *Xue Mingjian's Collected Works*. (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2007).

New site and the enlarge of garden culture

In modern times, particularly in the early 20th century, there was a clear tendency in garden site selection, primarily along the northern bank of Taihu Lake. They did not opt to build upon the abandoned foundations of the old gardens in Mount Hui, the city center, and east family settlements. The choice of an entirely new site was most probably made to facilitate the construction of completely new activity spaces.

According to Zhu et al., business owners, having early exposure to foreign civilizations and lifestyles, had demands for their residential environments beyond modern comfort and convenience. They also required places for social gatherings and entertaining guests.⁶⁹² The traditional classical courtyard gardens were evidently no longer sufficient to meet their broader and diverse social activity needs. For example, dance floors are located in relatively flat areas, while swimming pools are situated along the lakeside (Figure 104). The densely built-up area of Mount Hui had been established for centuries, making it challenging to acquire large plots of land. With the primary mode of transportation shifting from canals to trains and automobiles, the transportation advantages of the Mount Hui area were no longer as pronounced. The development of entirely new locations also served as an emphasis on one's status. As a result, they began constructing in other locations with extensive natural landscapes.

Considering the environmental evolution, early residents in this water-rich plain initially settled at higher elevations near the mountains for safety and water access. After the Tang Dynasty, the level of effort put into flood control began to decrease. While the construction of gardens often involved managing water environments, it was no longer attributed to flood control efforts. Local residents also ceased to establish ancestral halls to commemorate individuals for their contributions. This may

692 Zhu Rong, Wang Wenji, Wang Chen, 'Analysis on Construction Character of Wuxi Modern Gardens Landscape' *Architecture History*, 1(2017):109-114.

foreshadow the increasing population and agricultural development making the water-rich plains more suitable for cultivation. Consequently, the originally low-lying areas on the southern side of the city and along the Taihu Lake shore became suitable for garden construction. The ability to control nature might have been perceived as having improved to some extent.

One favourable condition for constructing gardens based on natural landscapes is that they do not require extensive civil engineering efforts to achieve the highest aesthetic level expected in traditional gardens, often described as ‘as if created by heaven,’ emphasizing naturalistic design.⁶⁹³ The business culture in Wuxi developed early, and the efficiency-driven construction aligns closely with the logic of merchants seeking maximum returns for their efforts.

Combined design

As traditional feudal powers gradually declined, many bureaucratic gentry members shifted from politics to business, distancing themselves from the feudal ruling class. Liu and Huang argued that in their commercial interactions with Shanghai, foreign culture and lifestyle were also regarded by society as symbols of civilization and progress. The gardens and residences of the emerging bourgeoisie served as venues for conducting business negotiations and hosting business partners, showcasing new stylistic characteristics. They no longer concealed themselves under the traditional Chinese facade but actively exhibited foreign features, highlighting their connection to new fashions.⁶⁹⁴ The degree of acceptance of foreign elements showed an overall increasing trend. Their economic strength grew continuously with the development of industry and commerce, leading to a demand for shaping their social identity and class

693 Wang, Wenji, ‘A Research on Modern Gardens in Wuxi’, *Landscape Architecture*, 28.4(2012): 88-91.

694 Liu Shanshan, Huang Xiao, ‘From Private to Public: A Socio-cultural Study on the Transformation of Modern Gardens in Wuxi’, *Landscape Architecture*, 27 .2 (2020) 20-25.

status. One of the means was the creation of gardens.⁶⁹⁵

The layout and architectural forms of gardens are the most prominent indicators of the extent to which modern gardens have absorbed foreign cultures.

In terms of overall layout, the Plum Garden is built according to the natural terrain, with the exception of the entrance landscape (Figure 102). Due to its relatively large size, it often adopts a scattered and naturally dynamic sequential layout pattern, utilizing winding pathways to connect various scenic spots.

In the case of Li Garden, which was constructed in the 1920s, the initial phase of the project maintained a certain degree of naturalistic layout. In the second phase of construction (the eastern garden), a noticeable symmetrical garden layout approach was employed (Figure 105).⁶⁹⁶

695 Liu Shanshan, Huang Xiao, 'From Private to Public: A Socio-cultural Study on the Transformation of Modern Gardens in Wuxi', *Landscape Architecture*, 27 .2 (2020) 20-25.

696王亢元自述: 造园时青祁虞循其主张要古式, 王亢元则要求新式, 虞拗不过园主, 就说不管了, 随你们去。故后来做的都带洋式, 设计师是在日本留过学的陈工程师, 绍兴人, 对日本很熟悉, 园里种的杜鹃花就是他弄来的。Wang Kangyuan recounted: During the construction of the garden, Yu Xun advocated for a traditional style, while Wang Kangyuan insisted on a modern style. Unable to persuade the garden owner, Yu Xun gave up and said, "I don't care, do as you wish." As a result, the later constructions all followed a Western style. The designer was Engineer Chen, who had studied in Japan and was familiar with the country, being from Shaoxing. The azaleas planted in the garden were brought by him. From Huang Maoru oral information

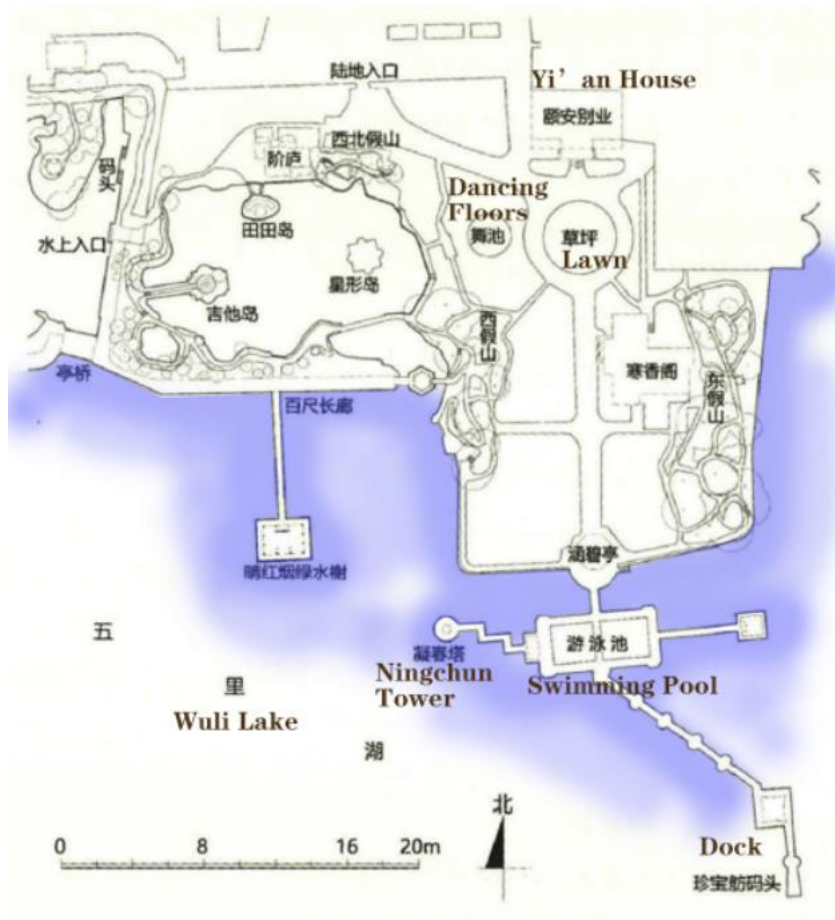


Figure 105: the layout of the Li Garden (redrawn by author based on Ge Yiyang, Bi Yuming, Chu Yiwei from Huang Xiao, Liu Shanshan, Research of Li Garden in Modern Wuxi)⁶⁹⁷

In terms of architecture, the influence is even more evident. According to Zhu et al.'s collection, the foreign architectural styles that appeared in modern gardens include Baroque, Spanish, English, American, French, as well as classical Greek columns and colonnades, among others. New materials and technologies, including reinforced concrete, coloured glass, ironwork, exterior galleries, arched doors and windows, and columns, have contributed to the diversification of architectural styles and forms in modern gardens in Wuxi. The majority of these styles were still primarily rooted in

⁶⁹⁷ Huang, Xiao, and Liu Shanshan. 'Research on Modern Wuxi Wang's Li Garden'. *Journal of Chinese Architectural History*, 2017(01): 321-340.

traditional classical designs or manifested in a "foreign exterior and Chinese interior" form.⁶⁹⁸

For instance, the design of the Plum Garden is a remarkable combination of Chinese and foreign styles. The Songbin Hall, constructed with nanmu wood, exemplifies the early Qing Dynasty architectural style. The Xiang Xue Hai in front of the Songbin Hall and the Lenong Villa on the eastern side have wooden beam frames, brick and stone walls, traditional Chinese roofs, dome-shaped gates, and arched windows, representing a more recent period of architectural synthesis blending Chinese and foreign elements.

698 Zhu Rong, Wang Wenji, Wang Chen, 'Analysis on Construction Character of Wuxi Modern Gardens Landscape' *Architecture History*, 1(2017):109-114.

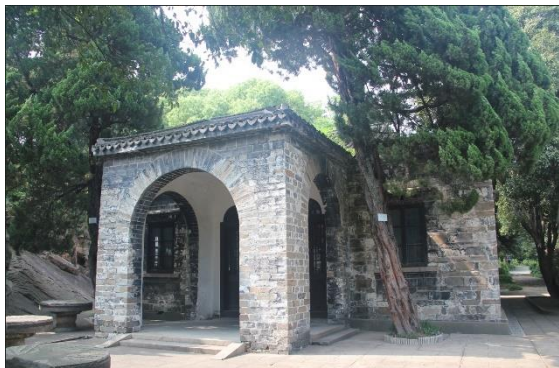


Figure 106: Top: The Songbin Hall (photo by author in May 2020)

Middle: Xiang Xue Hai (sweet snow sea) (from Xue Mingjian, Wuxi landscape)

Bottom left: Lenong Villa and flower arbour corridor (photo by author in May,2021)

The garden owners neither abandoned Chinese traditional culture nor rejected the acceptance of new culture. Some of the introduced technologies have gone beyond the realm of aesthetics; for instance, the application of cement-based materials. Gao believes that compared to wooden structures prevalent in building mechanics, the use

of concrete is better suited to withstand the humid climate of Jiangnan.⁶⁹⁹

Regarding this combination of Chinese and foreign characteristics, Zhu et al. believe it stems from Wuxi's deep engagement in foreign exchanges while simultaneously maintaining a commitment to Chinese tradition. It is seen as a proactive and conscious fusion.⁷⁰⁰ On the contrary, Gao presents a different perspective. He contends that modern architecture in Wuxi was designed by architectural firms from Shanghai but constructed by local workers with limited knowledge. Their understanding of foreign architecture often remained at the level of imitation in terms of style. Thus, it was challenging to create purely foreign-style buildings. They often localized foreign architectural components using traditional construction techniques, resulting in a blend of Chinese traditional foundations and foreign elements. Gao suggests that this was due to objective limitations in their capabilities.⁷⁰¹ Regardless of the floor plan or façade, their designs should not be seen as a promotion of foreign culture.

As businessmen, constructing gardens could be viewed as a means to showcase their wealth and provide a better environment for business exchanges to expand their trade. The perspective on the fusion of Chinese and foreign elements should be discussed in terms of its intended use and goals.

Wuxi's wealthy merchants, in addition to their architectural endeavours, paid particular attention to the areas where they welcomed and entertained guests. They required more space to provide upscale and trendy leisure activities that catered to the upper echelons of society, thereby creating more opportunities for business trade. Perhaps they did not

699 Gao, Fan, 'Study on Modern Gardens of the Yang Family in Wuxi', (unpublished Master's dissertation, Beijing Forest University, 2016)

700 Zhu Rong, Wang Wenji, Wang Chen, 'Analysis on Construction Character of Wuxi Modern Gardens Landscape' *Architecture History*, 1(2017):109-114.

701 Gao, Fan, 'Study on Modern Gardens of the Yang Family in Wuxi', (unpublished Master's dissertation, Beijing Forest University, 2016)

place a strong emphasis on specific architectural forms, given the financial resources of Wuxi businessmen at the time. For instance, the Rong family had an entire nanmu hall transported from Anhui to Wuxi and employed craftsmen from Shanghai to construct a completely authentic foreign-style building, which was not a difficult task for them. The choice to adopt a combination of Chinese and foreign elements might have been an active decision. Whether this was driven by a commitment to their own traditions should be examined on a case-by-case basis.

In the early years of the Republic of China, many garden owners had received traditional Confucian education. For instance, Rong exhibited a clear sense of self-imposed responsibility for governing and saving the country, while Wang Yuqing, after achieving success in business, deliberately praised his family's ancestors. Considering that they only needed to demonstrate their vision and capabilities by showcasing new fashions, local workers, even if lacking in technical expertise, could achieve the desired results through imitation. This was the most cost-effective approach.

In the context of the time, these industrialists and businessmen worked diligently to expand the horizons of the public. To achieve this, they hosted exhibitions and constructed innovative and impactful new architectural structures. This not only facilitated business expansion but also elevated their status. In comparison to the old era where family influence was closely tied to the imperial examination system, Liu and Huang suggest that emerging industrial and business leaders were more eager to shape their social identities and class positions.⁷⁰² As a result, they actively promoted garden construction to improve participation, including the functional use of the gardens themselves, regularly updated and enriched garden exhibitions, and further processing of garden outputs. Along with leisure activities and labor associated with

702 Liu Shanshan, Huang Xiao, *From Private to Public: A Socio-cultural Study on the Transformation of Modern Gardens in Wuxi*, *Landscape Architecture*, 2020, 27 (2): 20-25.

processing outputs, this approach was more conducive to increasing renown across various social strata in the relatively turbulent social environment of the time.

The adoption of this combination of Eastern and Western approaches also reflects the complexity of societal forms. This can be observed through a thorough examination of two distinctively valued Chinese-style gardens. For the old literati during this period, they were also influenced by the new fashion. Some of them did not pay much attention to it, while others, after attempting to embrace it without achieving the expected results, went on to establish entirely traditional gardens, such as Pijiang Garden and Yi Garden (Figure 107).



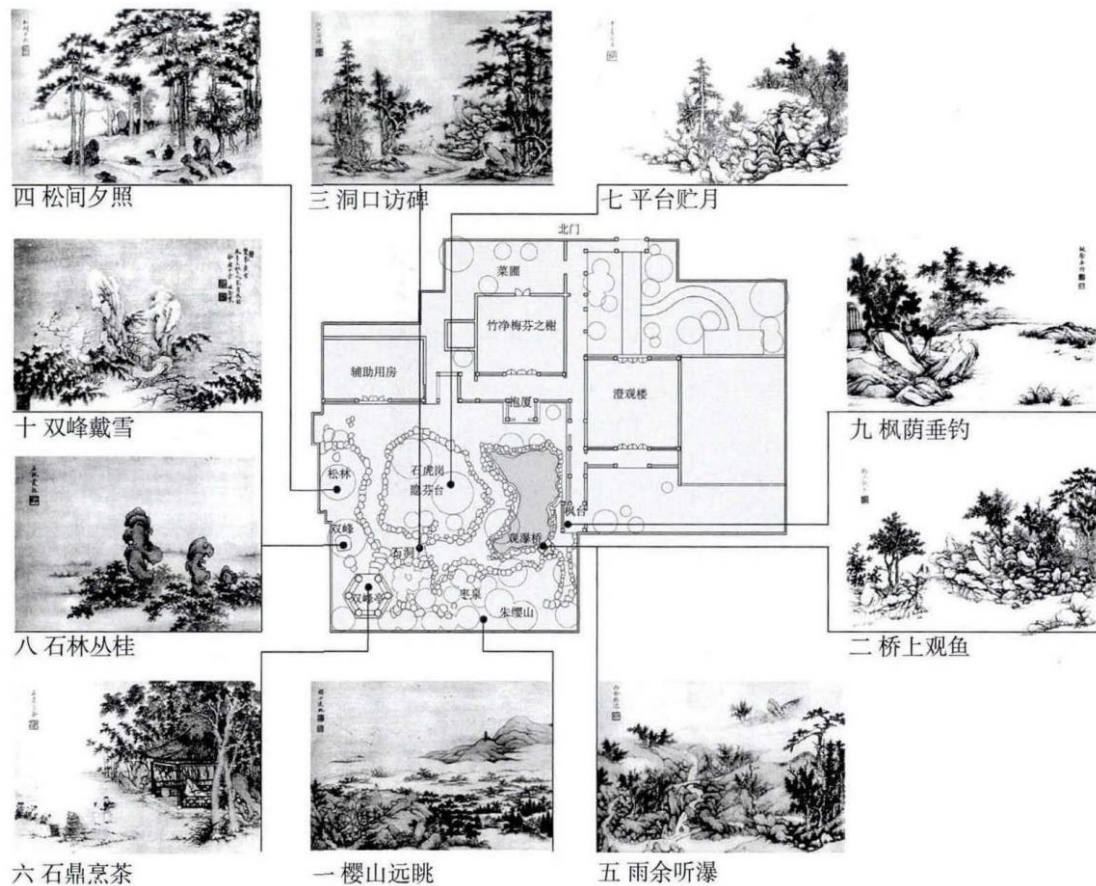


Figure 107: Pijiang Garden⁷⁰³ and Yi Garden⁷⁰⁴

Gu Pijiang's Garden was created to commemorate ancestors and did not contain foreign elements.⁷⁰⁵ The Yi Garden 佚园 was established during the late period of democratic

703 Yang Zhilian, *Pi Jiang Yuan Shi Wen Hui Chao*[Poem in the Pijiang Garden], (1911-1949) *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

704 Huang, Xiao, and Liu Shanshan. 'Analysis of Modern Wuxi Qin Yuliu's Lost Garden'. *Architectural History*, 2017(02): 150-159.

705 昔顾辟疆以名园甲吴中，事载晋书世说。唐人诗多咏歌之，予戚友顾子康伯，梁溪风雅士也，承涇阳先生家学...慕乃祖辟疆之为，而因以剔废基，筑精舍，疏泉凿石，种竹养花，为娱老课孙计。In ancient times, Gu Pijiang was renowned for his exquisite garden in Wu region, as recorded in the *Shi Shuo Xin Yu* of the Jin Dynasty. Many Tang poets sang praises of it. My dear friend Gu Kangbo, a refined gentleman of Liangxi, inherited the scholarly tradition of Master Jingyang. Admiring the character of our ancestor Gu Pijiang, he cleared the old foundations, built a refined dwelling, excavated springs, carved rocks, and cultivated bamboo and flowers, creating delight for his old age and instructing his grandchildren. Notes of Pijiang Garden written by Zhang Zhongzuo in Chang, Rongchu et al, *Liang Xi Gu Yuan* [Gardens in Wuxi], (Beijing, Fangzhi Publishing House, 2007) p370

reforms. It was planned by Qin Yuliu in 1921, and construction was overseen by his nephew Gong Baocheng. In February of that year, Qin went to Suzhou to study gardens and seek inspiration. By October, the garden was completed. During the construction, Qin Yuliu's cousin, Qin Tongpei, served as the principal of a public Female school located at the former site of the Wuxi City Temple. The temple had features such as a stage, a well pavilion, and old bricks and stones. Qin Tongpei requested the county government to sell the building's bricks and stones to raise funds for renovating the classrooms. Qin Yuliu obtained materials for the garden from this source, and the main hall in the southern part of the garden, called 'Zhujing Meifen Water Pavilion,' was originally the well pavilion of the City God Temple.⁷⁰⁶

Qin Yuliu had studied in Japan during his youth and participated in the Xinhai Revolution 辛亥革命 under Sun Yat-sen 孙中山. The first public garden in Wuxi, including its Japanese-style design and plantings, was introduced and constructed under his supervision during his tenure as county magistrate. From 1911, he spent 20 years in seclusion, experiencing five appointments to government positions and five dismissals, feeling helpless in the turbulent situation of modern China. Qin Yuliu died at the beginning of the comprehensive invasion of China by Japan. Clearly, during the construction of the garden, he harboured a deep attachment to the inadequate old era.

706 Xijin Daily Newspaper February 1921 《锡金日报》《县女师变卖戏台旧料之原呈》载有秦同培 1921 年二月向县署提请的呈文，提到：“查校中旧屋。如戏台井亭，本已破败不堪，且亦不合校用，听其风雨剥蚀，亦自可惜，及今将其拆卖变价，即以为改造教室之用，似一举两善。戏台至少折价三百元，井亭至少折价百元，合计四百元，其有不足，再由案中酌贴三百元，为数不多，事自易集，不必全仰公家，较之掷破台败亭于无用之地，其得失为何.... records Qin Tongpei's February 1921 submission to the county office, stating: "Upon inspection, old structures in the school such as the theater and pavilion are already dilapidated and unsuitable for use. Allowing them to deteriorate further in the weather is regrettable. Hence, it is proposed to dismantle and sell them for conversion into classrooms, benefiting in two ways. The theater alone is valued at least 300 yuan, and the pavilion at least 100 yuan, totaling 400 yuan. To cover any shortfall, an additional 300 yuan from the case can be considered, which is a small sum easily collected without relying entirely on public funds. Compared to leaving the broken-down theater and pavilion unused, the gains and losses are clear... Newspaper collection in Wuxi library

Many aspects of the old era were not completely abandoned. In fact, during a period when Western and traditional influences were blending, the gentry who were born and educated in the old era could not ignore the influence of their youth. Although most of their life experiences involved encountering new elements, they primarily saw these as tools to solve China's problems. This aligns with the traditional Confucian view of technology, where natural sciences and technical skills were considered means and tools, while guidance for social progress or stability came from Confucian thought. Despite the upheavals at the end of the Ming and Qing dynasties, which heightened their appreciation for science and independent thinking, they never strayed from the Confucian principle of 'cultivating oneself and then governing the state.'

This ideology resonates with the interpretation of French scholar Jacques Blanc-Garin, who posits that with the rise in the number of local urban social elites, the range of social welfare activities they undertake has also expanded.⁷⁰⁷ Engaging in social welfare affairs stems from a strong desire for social openness and modernization, which they believed could contribute to saving the country.

The stable Confucian system cracked when the imperial examination was abolished and the Western educational system introduced. The ensuing Western influence shook the Confucian ritual system at an ideological level. In the expression of gardens, there was gradual acceptance and imitation based on local traditional architecture, leading to the creation of numerous modern gardens with Western elements in their buildings and layouts.⁷⁰⁸ More foreign elements were introduced into the concept of garden design.

707 Marie-Claire Bergère, *L'âge d'or de la bourgeoisie chinoise, 1911-1937*, (Paris: Flammarion, 1986) translated by Zhang Fuqiang, Xu Shifen, *The Golden Age of China's Bourgeoisie*. (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1994)

708 Zhao Anqi, 'the Study of the Origins and the Evolution Track of Chinese and Western Architecture in Modern Wuxi', (Unpublished Master dissertation, Jiangnan University, 2017).

New schools

During this period, schools were also influenced by the new environment. A new teaching system was introduced, leading to changes in the educational content. Additionally, under the influence of egalitarian ideals, the inclusion of women and the reduction of hierarchical structures within the school space brought about corresponding changes in the spatial layout and ritual systems of schools. These changes also exhibited a combination of Chinese and Western characteristics. However, it is evident that the influence on the traditional Chinese ritual system led to the disintegration of the traditional societal structure.

Modern schools

With the continuous introduction of science and technology, numerous enlightened individuals in China vigorously advocated for modernization. They sought to incorporate both methods and establish new schools as a strategy for strengthening the nation. In this context, in 1898, the Qing government mandated the transformation of provincial academies into schools combining Chinese and Western learning. Provincial academies were to be converted into higher schools, prefectural academies into intermediate schools, and district academies into elementary schools. Local charity schools and community schools were to follow the same model.⁷⁰⁹

Reading during the feudal era was never an easy endeavour, despite the widespread construction of academies and the establishment of family schools in the mid-Ming

⁷⁰⁹ 诏改直省各属书院为兼习中西学校。以省书院为高等学，郡书院为中等学，州县书院为小学。其地方义学、社学亦如之 The decree mandates the transformation of the academies in various directly governed provinces into institutions that combine Chinese and Western studies. The provincial academies will be elevated to higher education institutions, the prefectural academies to intermediate educational institutions, and the district and county academies to primary schools. The same applies to local charitable schools and community schools. Zhao Erxun, 20th century, *Qing Shi Gao* [Draft History of the Qing Dynasty], bibliography of Xue Fucheng, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook. Vol24

period, which promoted the possibility of commoners receiving education (chapter 4). In February of 1898, Yang Mo 杨谟 from Wuxi, along with Qin Qianpei 秦谦培 and others from the same locality, established the Sishi School (now Lianyuan Street Primary School) at Shangshou Chan Temple 上寿禅院 on Lianyuan Street 连元街 in the city. This was the earliest school founded in the Wuxi area.⁷¹⁰ Many schools in Wuxi are built year by year on the basis of old courtyards. The Rong family established charitable institutions to assist those in need from the family to the village, county, and prefecture, with special emphasis on the education of women. They founded more than ten educational institutions, including public schools and Female schools.⁷¹¹

In 1903, the Qing government promulgated the Guimao Education System 癸卯学制, stipulating that education includes female education. This provision opened the door for the establishment of female schools with social significance. Although the presence and activities of women in private gardens were often overlooked, traces of their involvement could still be found. However, in educational spaces, especially in higher-level educational garden, academies, that determined social status and public affairs participation, women were almost entirely absent. Both Liang and Hou believed that in order to mobilize broader societal forces, the establishment of education and the

⁷¹⁰ Ding, Fubao(1917), *Si Shi Xue Tang Zui Chu Zhi Li Shi* [The Originate of Sishi School], collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

⁷¹¹ 治家立身，有余顾族及乡，如能有力，即尽力社会。以一身之余，即顾一家；一家之余，顾一族一乡，推而一县一府，皆所应为。恭人念女学之重，淳淳焉谕宗锦、宗铨，创设女校，由家塾而推至乡邑，是为竞化女学之始(唐文治在《荣母石恭人家传》中记载) To manage one's household and establish oneself, one should, with any surplus resources, consider the well-being of their clan and community, and if capable, devote their utmost efforts to society. Utilizing personal surplus, one can first tend to their family; with the family's surplus, one can care for their clan and community, and subsequently extend this care to the county and prefecture as circumstances dictate. Madam Shi's contemplation on the importance of female education led her to earnestly advise Zong Jin and Zong Quan to establish a girls' school. This initiative, starting from private family schooling and extending to the local community, marked the beginning of the transformation of female education. (As recorded by Tang Wenzhi) Lenong Historical Materials collation research group. *Rong Desheng and social welfare undertakings*. (Shanghai, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2004.)

liberation of women’s feet were the first two steps toward women’s emancipation, forming the dual foundation for enhancing knowledge, skills, and physical fitness.⁷¹²

The content of education also underwent significant changes. New curricula were introduced, shifting from a focus on Confucian classics to a Western educational system. New subjects such as English, mathematics, and science were added. At the same time, as society was in a period of transformation, efforts were made to retain some elements of cultural tradition. For girls' schools, this also included courses specifically designed for females, such as domestic affairs and handicrafts.

Table 12: the change of subject from the Song dynasty (960-1127) to early 20th century.

Dynasty	Song	Ming and Qing		Late Qing and Republican Era	
Type	division school	Confucianism Classics	Female education before the Modern era	Modern education system	
Representative Schools or Instructional Books	Academies in Suzhou and Huzhou	Donglin Academy	Nü Ze 女则 Admonitions for Women	Donglin Primary School	Female School ^[27]
Study subject	Classical studies, agriculture, water	Classical studies	Self-cultivation, female crafts	Chinese, English,	Morality, Chinese, geography, history,

⁷¹²梁启超在《变法通议·论女学》中指出：中国积弱之根本在于占人口一半的女性由于“不学”而至“不官、不士、不农、不工、不商、不兵”，导致“不能自养，而待养于他人”。 in ‘A Comprehensive Discussion on Reform: On Women's Education,’ Liang Qichao pointed out that the fundamental weakness of China lies in the fact that half of its population, the women, are unable to serve as officials, scholars, farmers, workers, merchants, or soldiers due to a lack of education. This leads to their inability to support themselves and their reliance on others for sustenance. Liang, Qichao, *Liang Qichao Quan Ji*[The Complete Works of Liang Qichao] (Volume 1), (Beijing: Beijing Publishing House, 1999) p30.

Hou Hongjian noted the failure of general education to thrive in our country can be attributed to the lack of widespread women's education, which is essential for establishing maternal education. From Jiang, Chun, Hou Hongjian and Jing Zhi Female School, 2017 <<https://daj.wuxi.gov.cn/doc/2017/07/03/2425517.shtml>>[accessed by 18 January 2024]

conservancy, military, astronomy, calendrical calculations, etc.	(sericulture, weaving, sewing), etiquette, household management, child- rearing, management, hospitality, poetry, painting, etc.	arithmetic, self-cultivation, history and physical geography, drawing, physical education, etc.	English, mathematics, science, drawing, physical education, domestic affairs, crafts, self-cultivation, horticulture, livestock and poultry breeding, etc.
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Donglin Primary School had over 200 students. In addition to regular courses, students participated in morning exercises and recess exercises daily, and a weekly talent show where students performed various programs. Additionally, students were often organized to go on excursions during the spring and autumn festivals. The curriculum and extracurricular activities at Jingzhi Female School and Qin Family Public School were similar.⁷¹³

Due to the increase in the varies of courses, the time allocated to Chinese-related subjects in students' daily schedules has been reduced compared to before. Taking Sishi School as an example, the morning is dedicated to Chinese subjects (including history, geography, and moral education), mathematics is scheduled from two to three in the afternoon, followed by English after three, and evening classes are devoted to reviewing. Referring to the example of the Donglin Academy, which, during the Qing Dynasty, held monthly exams as an official school, mathematics at Sishi School has quarterly exams.⁷¹⁴ This shift accelerated the decline of Confucian classics, which were replaced

⁷¹³ Zhu, Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan Congtan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing: Chronicle Press, 2013),p481

Qin's Public School in Wuxi (1919). *Qin Shi Gong Xue Ji Nian Kan* [Memorial of Qin's Public School]. Lead type Printing. (Wuxi: Xicheng Printing Company.) collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

Jingzhi Female School (1935). *Jing Zhi Nv Xiao Jian Xiao San Shi Nian Ji Nian Kan* [Thirty Year Commemorative Journal of Wuxi Private Jingzhi Female School]. Printed, (Wuxi, Jingzhi Female School). collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

⁷¹⁴Ding, Fubao (1917), *Si Shi Xue Tang Zui Chu Zhi Li Shi* [The Originate of Sishi School], collected in Wuxi Wenku

by science and engineering subjects more conducive to technological advancement.

Simultaneously, changes occurred in the examination system to match the evolving educational system. The Qing government ordered officials and subjects both domestically and abroad to recommend specialized talents in fields such as manufacturing, mechanics, acoustics, optics, and electricity for government service. In 1901, the government further mandated the establishment of agricultural, industrial, and military schools in each province. This marked the near abolition of the imperial examination system, which had been in place for over a millennium since the Tang dynasty.⁷¹⁵

By the time of the Republic of China, policies encouraged education without gender restrictions, leading to a notable increase in student enrolment and frequent expansions of school facilities. Coupled with the adoption of new architectural technologies, educational buildings and dormitories often took on multi-story forms, with structures such as Wuxi First High School reaching up to four stories.

Curriculum design similarly influenced the spatial organization of schools. A significant change was the introduction of new courses and the establishment of supporting facilities, resulting in an expansion of school premises and a more nuanced functional division. This included the development of gardens and playgrounds to meet the demands of horticultural education and beautification (adjust illustration accordingly). This new layout represented a departure from the simpler arrangement's characteristic of temple schools and academies during the feudal period.⁷¹⁶

[Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

⁷¹⁵ Zhu, Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan Congtan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing: Chronicle Press, 2013),p479

⁷¹⁶ Zhang,Baixi,et,al.Zou Ding Xue Xiao Zhang Cheng[Draft the School Charter] in CHEN, Xuexun. *Zhong Guo*

Jin Dai Jiao Yu Shi Jiao Xue Can Kao Zi Liao[Materials on Teaching of Modern Chinese Educational History
(Volume 1).(Beijing, People's Education Press,1986)p532-551.

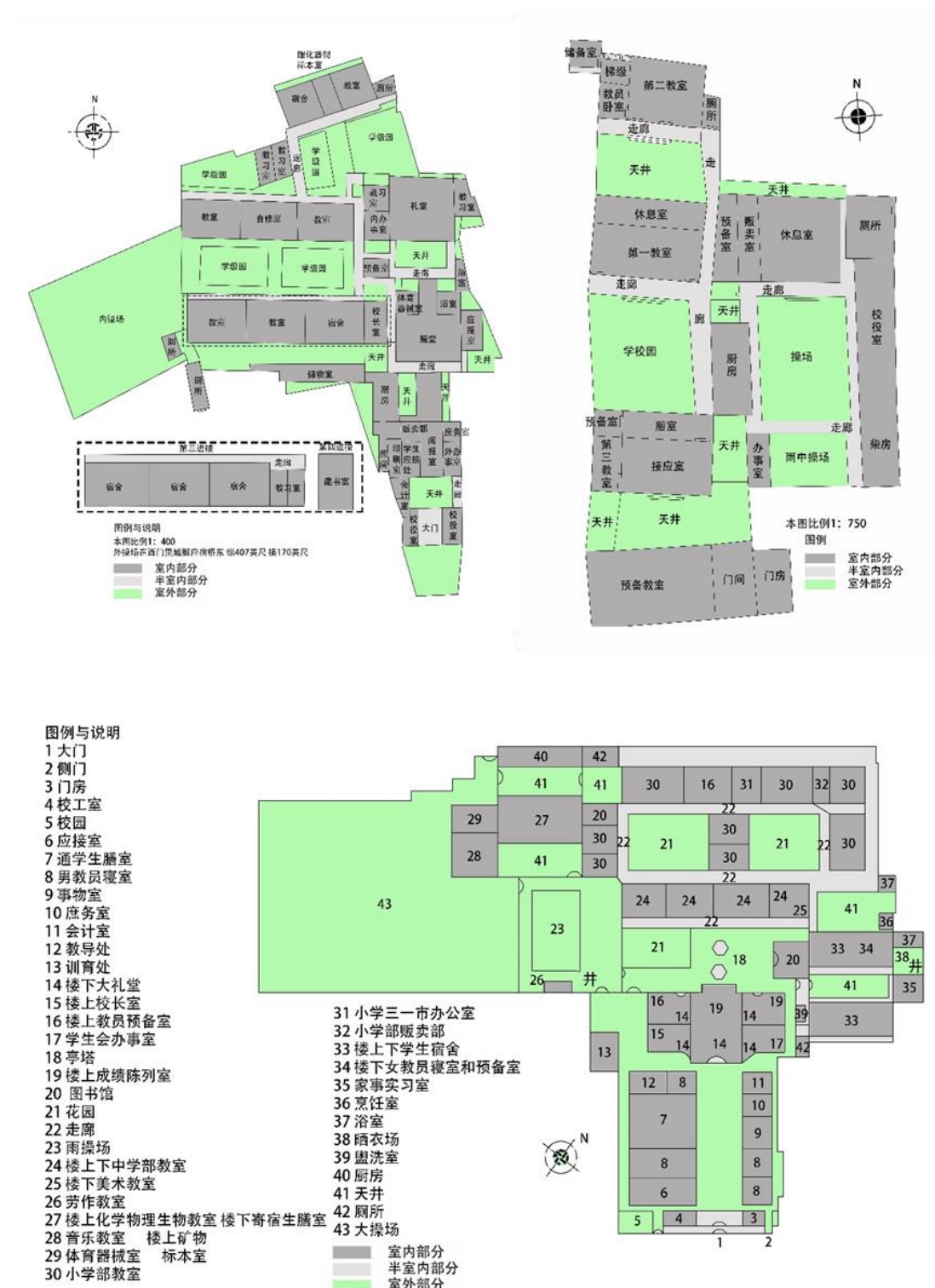


Figure 108: The floor plans of Wuxi No. 1 Higher Primary School (top left), Qin Family Public School (top right), and Jingzhi Female School. During breaks, caregivers would take the students to their

respective rooms for rest.(These plans were redrawn by the author based on materials from the 1930s.)^[28, 29, 30]

In modern school construction, many buildings have been renovated from existing structures, thus retaining their old layouts. However, from a functional or usage perspective, the distinctions based on gender or rank have gradually diminished, striving for civic equality. Schools still maintain the tradition of paying tribute to Confucius during entrance ceremonies and on Confucius' birthday, but the venue has shifted from the orthodox Confucian temple to the assembly hall representing public opinion. Admissions are conducted openly. Three schools, founded around 1900, are closely linked and located near each other, often coordinating their student admissions. They publish posters in local newspapers announcing the number of students to be admitted, examination times, dates, and locations. Subsequently, each school conducts its own exams and makes admission decisions accordingly.⁷¹⁷

In the traditional historical garden spaces of Wuxi, areas designated for women were often remote, difficult to reach, and ancillary with separate gate and routine.⁷¹⁸ This arrangement, under the guise of strict protection, reflected a denial of 'independent person' and a marked gender hierarchy. Regardless of whether it was a coeducational or an female school, the layout of the schools did not emphasize gender differences. Gates, serving ceremonial purposes, emphasized formality and status. The previously common corridors, Bei Nong 备弄, used by women and servants during the Ming and Qing dynasties in Jiangnan, no longer appeared. Men and women entered schools through the same gates, and classrooms were not segregated by gender, breaking down gender isolation. Women had access to all public spaces (except for male dormitories,

⁷¹⁷ Zhu, Wenjie, *Donglin Shuyuan Congtan* [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing: Chronicle Press, 2013),p484-485

⁷¹⁸ Qiu,Qiaoling, Li, Haoyang, 'How Chinese Ancient Female Affect Chinese Private Gardens', *Chinese Landscape Architecture*, 8,(2013):40-44.

baths, and toilets). Although there was mention of gender differences in the use of restrooms, there was no indication of differences in accessibility or space dimensions due to gender, nor was there a traditional layout tendency of ‘women inside’ in the design.⁷¹⁹

New designs have emerged based on changing functional requirements and the introduction of new material technologies, resembling the modern gardens established during the same period (as discussed in the previous section). There is a varying degree of integration between traditional and new concepts. For instance, in the case of Jingzhi Female School, the decorative elements on the school gate, doors, windows, flower corridors, and railings feature ironwork and arches, distinguishing them from traditional architectural materials and design elements. Simultaneously, traditional Chinese patterns are still retained, such as the woven patterns on the pavilion grids and the vertical bars on the railings (Figure 109).

⁷¹⁹ Qin's Public School in Wuxi (1919). *Qin Shi Gong Xue Ji Nian Kan* [Memorial of Qin's Public School]. Lead type Printing. (Wuxi: Xicheng Printing Company), collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

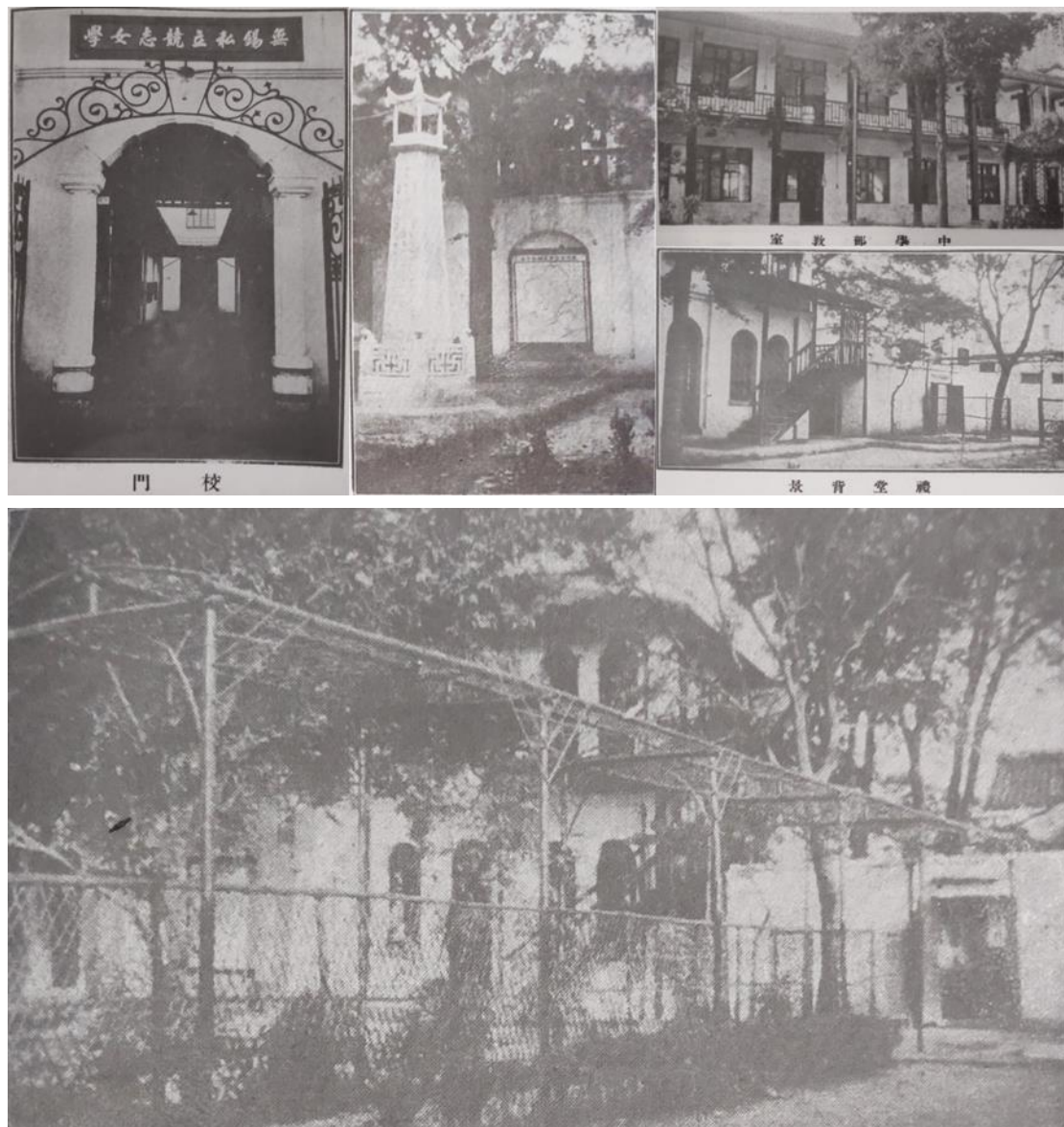


Figure 109: the old photos of Jingzhi School in 1935⁷²⁰

School rituals

Traditional rituals did not completely disappear. At Shishi School, on the establish of school, all teachers and students performed the grand ceremony of three kneelings and

⁷²⁰ Jingzhi Female School (1935). *Jing Zhi Nv Xiao Jian Xiao San Shi Nian Ji Nian Kan* [Thirty Year Commemorative Journal of Wuxi Private Jingzhi Female School]. Printed, (Wuxi, Jingzhi Female School). collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

nine kowtows in front of the statue of Confucius and participated in a teacher-student greeting ceremony. The latter might have been similar to the traditional Shu Xiu 束修 ‘Meeting Teacher Ritual’ (a ritual involving presenting a bundle of dried meat as a gift), though specific details of the two were not mentioned.⁷²¹

Similarly, at Qin’s Public School, an annual ceremony honouring Confucius was held in the assembly hall, with the timing varying between September and October. The more importance sacrificial ritual is on the first of every month, the school’s board chairman, principal, and students with the surname Qin paid respects at the ancestral hall of Qin family). However, none of the records provide specific details of the process, suggesting it might have been simplified or deliberately omitted.⁷²²

Confucian rituals have less need to exist in modern time. In their place, there are commencement ceremonies at the beginning of the school year and recess ceremonies before the summer break, typically featuring speeches by the county magistrate to inspire students to strive for excellence.

Commemorative events at schools were particularly elaborate. For example, the 20th anniversary celebration of Donglin School was held on New Year’s Day and lasted for two days (Table 13).⁷²³

Table 13: the arrangement of the 20th anniversary celebration of Donglin School

Day One	Visiting Hours	content
Morning	9:00 - 11:00	Exhibition of achievements

⁷²¹ Ding, Fubao (1917), *Si Shi Xue Tang Zui Chu Zhi Li Shi* [The Originate of Sishi School], collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

⁷²² Qin's Public School in Wuxi (1919). *Qin Shi Gong Xue Ji Nian Kan* [Memorial of Qin's Public School]. Lead type Printing. (Wuxi: Xicheng Printing Company), collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

⁷²³ Zhu, Wenjie, Donglin Shuyuan Congtan [Discussion of Donglin Academy], (Beijing: Chronicle Press, 2013),

Afternoon	1:30 - 5:00	Commemoration ceremony at 2:00 (not open to the public)
Evening	7:00 - 9:30	Students celebrate on campus with lanterns
Day Two	No group visits accepted	
Morning	9:00 - 11:00	Exhibition of achievements
Afternoon	1:30 - 5:00	Artistic performances
Evening	7:00 - 9:30	Performance of Donglin's school history stories

The rooms within the school are adorned with congratulatory couplets and messages from former and current faculty members, alumni, and various sectors. There are three dedicated memorial rooms: one commemorating the first principal, another displaying annual work charts and handbooks, and a third showcasing students' academic achievements across various subjects over the past decade. The arrangement is orderly.

The ceremony invited the county magistrate, county and provincial education officials, former staff and alumni, as well as guests from other regions. Among the hundreds of attendees were notable figures such as the principal of Southeast University's affiliated primary school. The procedure included the following ten steps:

1) bell ringing to convene the meeting, 2) salutation to each other, 3) sing national anthem, 4) sing school anthem, 5) sing commemorative song, 6) a report by Principal Xin Baisen, 7) speeches from officials (including congratulatory and encouraging remarks), 8) speeches by representatives of former and current faculty and students, 9) speeches by notable individuals, and finally, 10) bell ringing to adjourn the meeting.

Although etiquette is still emphasized, such as at Qinshi Public School where students are instructed to bow to each other and to teachers upon entering the classroom, and to stand at attention and bow when meeting visiting guests, who are also to be served tea in an orderly manner, as part of regular training, discussions on politics and state affairs have diminished compared to the late feudal period. The education and ritual system, when compared to schools within the context of the imperial examination system, places a greater emphasis on the significance of education rather than the pursuit of

political power. Furthermore, the preservation of commemorative activities, as opposed to sacrificial rites, reflects the ‘pride and promotion’ by industrial and commercial leaders in their philanthropic efforts to establish schools. This shift signifies the decline of the Confucian system and scholars, alongside the rise of merchant power.

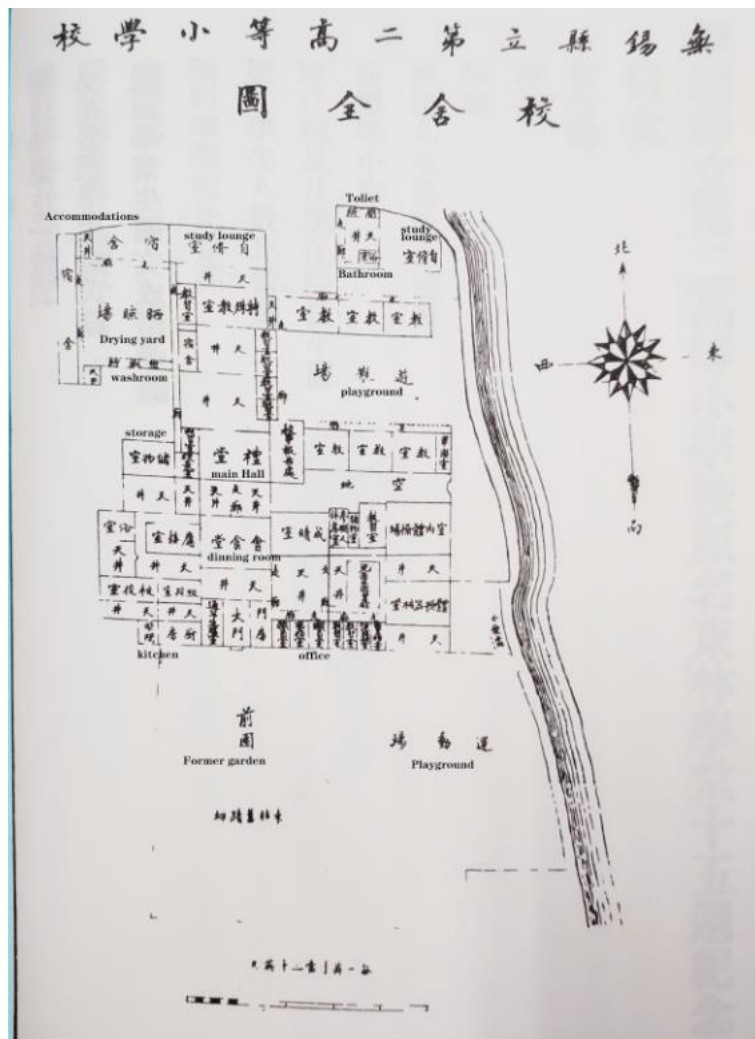


Figure 110:Public primary school changed by Donglin academy from Wuxi City Second Primary School Commemorative Publication

The female in modern times

The weakening or even disappearance of rituals posed a challenge to Chinese traditional. The status of women attained a certain level of improvement.



Figure 111: Staff in Jingzhi Female middle School, photo in 1930 from Wuxi Jingzhi Female middle School Commemorative Publication

In modern times, the elevation of women's status is reflected in their active participation and control over the use, construction, and management of gardens. In the male-dominated narrative system, women are often observed and metaphorically represented; it is common to express relationships using the female voice to compare husbands and wives to rulers and subjects or superiors and subordinates.⁷²⁴ In pre-modern times, the private garden spaces that women could use or appear in were limited. They were users and managers of garden spaces reliant on the male head of the household, and they generally avoided sharing private spaces with men other than their husbands or male

⁷²⁴ Wang, Shizhen, Ming dyansty. *Yan Zhou Xu Gao* [Yanzhou Continuation]. Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986). Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

relatives.⁷²⁵

The establishment of modern coeducational schools significantly increased the proportion of female students, with female enrollment in Wuxi reaching 37%. Women were no longer isolated from social spaces.⁷²⁶

Additionally, women gained independent identities, no longer living solely under the titles of someone's wife, mother, or daughter. Even the relatively conservative Wanfen Hall was named after Zhang Wanfen 张畹芬 herself. Furthermore, the urgency of modern circumstances propelled women out of domestic spaces to establish schools, thereby becoming pivotal in patriotic practices. After the outbreak of war, the Wuxi Red Cross set up several women and children relocation centers. The third center was located at the County Female Normal School, with Ms. Zhu Xixian 诸希贤(1882–1953) as the principal. The eighth center was at the Rongshi Female School, with Ms. Zhang Wanfen as the principal.⁷²⁷ These women transitioned from caring for their families within the home to caring for society, becoming the 'Female citizens and the mothers of nation.'⁷²⁸

The operation of garden spaces for women was fundamentally supported by their involvement in and management of financial investments. For example, Zhang's Peach Garden was funded by her personal dowry and inherited estate.⁷²⁹ The funds for Jingzhi

⁷²⁵ Qin, Zhihao, *Xishan Qinshi Jichangyuan Wenxian Ziliao Changbian* [Complie of All Historical Data of Jichang Garden of the Qin's Family in Wuxi], (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2009)

⁷²⁶ Jiang, Chun, Hou Hongjian and Jing Zhi Female School, 2017 <<https://daj.wuxi.gov.cn/doc/2017/07/03/2425517.shtml>>[accessed by 18 January 2024]

⁷²⁷ Yan, Zhihai. "Red Cross Society" and Local Society: A review of the Modern Red Cross Movement in Wuxi', *Wuxi Museum*, 12, (2020), 77-89.

⁷²⁸ Huang, Chunxiao. *Cheng Shi Nv Xin Kong Jian Yan Jiu*[Research on Urban Women's Social Space]. (Nanjing: Southeast University, 2008).

⁷²⁹ Narrated by Zhang, Huanfen, Recorded by Jiang, Xianji: Rong's Female School and Peach Garden (1963)[A], Wuxi Historical Records Office Archives 32-3 (1)

Female School primarily came from the assets of the Hou 侯-Xia 夏 couple and the collected tuition fees, supplemented by donations from the autonomous government and society.⁷³⁰ Consequently, the establishment of gardens, which demanded substantial economic expenditure, was first realized by upper- and middle-class women through their independent cognition and garden practices.⁷³¹

Except for the upper class, the lower- and middle-class women significantly contributed to the overall improvement of women's status. In fact, it was the broad-based economic and intellectual advancement of these women that provided the essential support for upper- and middle-class women's involvement in social practices. The rapidly developing textile and silk-reeling industries in Wuxi, traditionally associated with female domestic roles, facilitated a swift increase in the number of female workers. The expansion of employment opportunities and income enabled women to step out of their homes and enter broader societal spaces, thus providing an economic foundation for their increased presence in the public sphere (Figure 112Figure 113).⁷³²

⁷³⁰Jingzhi Female School (1935). *Jing Zhi Nv Xiao Jian Xiao San Shi Nian Ji Nian Kan* [Thirty Year Commemorative Journal of Wuxi Private Jingzhi Female School]. Printed, (Wuxi, Jingzhi Female School). collected in Wuxi Wenku [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

⁷³¹ Yu, Youman. Wuxi early female educator. (2014-9-15) <<http://daj.wuxi.gov.cn/doc/2014/09/05/2425359.shtml>>[accessed by 19 January 2024]

⁷³² Cai, Jing. 'The Rise of National Industry and Commerce and Industrial Architecture in Wuxi'. *Architecture and Culture*,07,(2009):106-109.



Figure 112: Female Workers Forming Groups in Silk Factories (Selected from "Illustrated Recent Records of Women," Volume 5, Illustrated by Ms. Nanpu Huizhu, Published by Shanghai Xin Xin Novel Publishing House, 1911)⁷³³



Figure 113: Old photograph of female workers from the Rong family factory during the Republican

⁷³³ Nanpu, Huizhu (1911). *Nv Jie Xian Xing Ji* [Drawing of the Recent Emergence of Women (Episode 5)]. Printed. Shanghai: Shanghai Xinxin Novel Society, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

period, collected at Wuxi Plum Garden (photographed by the author at the Lenong House).

Left: During the 1927 Spring Festival, Factory Director of Shenliu awarded female workers for excellent production performance.

Right: Female workers in uniforms from the Shanghai Shenxin No. 2 Textile Factory.

Simultaneously, widely accepted ideas advocating for ‘equal and free’ family and social rights became the social foundation of female empowerment. The awakening of women’s status in modern times was driven by the societal need for national salvation and survival, expanding with the global process under the premise of ‘independent’ and ‘individual’ thoughts. Even women from the lower social strata were inspired. For example, in the novel *Nv Xue Sheng* 女学生 ‘Female Student,’ the rural orphan Xiaolan 效兰 studies new subjects and calls on the public to work together, not only to rescue women from darkness but also to establish female schools and a female national army, hoping the nation could save itself (Figure 114). The expansion of women's space was no longer confined to specific social classes nor emphasized familial belonging, but rather women entered the public sphere and discourse in their own names.



Figure 114: Ringing the Liberty Bell and Opening Parliament (Illustration from 'Illustrated Recent Records of Women,' Volume 4, by Ms. Nanpu Huizhu, published by Shanghai Xin Xin Novel Publishing House, Xuantong Year One).⁷³⁴

However, their independent status and capabilities were relatively less recognized compared to men. In photographs, female staff at Jingzhi female School are shown alongside male staff, demonstrating their individual identities as teachers and their enjoyment of the same educational authority as their male counterparts (Figure 115).⁷³⁵ Despite this equal status, an inherent, invisible pressure objectively persisted.

⁷³⁴ Nanpu, Huizhu (1911). *Nv Jie Xian Xing Ji* [Drawing of the Recent Emergence of Women (Episode 4)]. Printed. Shanghai: Shanghai Xinxin Novel Society, Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

⁷³⁵ Jingzhi Female School (1935). *Jing Zhi Nv Xiao Jian Xiao San Shi Nian Ji Nian Kan* [Thirty Year Commemorative Journal of Wuxi Private Jingzhi Female School]. Printed, (Wuxi, Jingzhi Female School). collected in *Wuxi Wenku* [Wuxi Resources] (Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House, 2011)

The photograph reveals that while the number of female staff is equal to that of male staff, the space occupied by women on the right side of the photograph is noticeably smaller, with a higher degree of physical overlap. Whether due to the collective or individual characteristics of women, or their cautious approach as newcomers to the public sphere, women's spatial presence was still subject to a certain degree of invisible compression.



Figure 115: Photo of All Staff of Jingzhi Female School (From the Jingzhi Female School 30th Anniversary Commemorative Publication, 1935).

In modern times, women have gradually transformed into primary users, builders, and managers in terms of economic strength and cognition. Their female identities and full names are recorded, forming distinctive individual characteristics. Consequently, this has enriched the historical culture of women in gardening. With a core ideology of social responsibility and the premise of freedom and equality in garden construction and usage, new dimensions have been expanded into modern education, public recreation, and therapeutic treatments for national salvation. It is noteworthy that the

degree of these new influences has not consistently increased, closely related to the experiences, perspectives of female garden owners, and the degree of social autonomy, highlighting the complexity of transition between old and new.

Women's gardening practices remain in an early stage, sparse in number and concentrated among the upper social echelons, primarily focusing on educational purposes. Despite gaining independence in thought and cognition, women faced greater challenges in accessing funding quickly in broader social spaces and social strata due to disadvantages in inheritance rights. Therefore, objectively, physical gardening practices by women continue to be largely overshadowed by men.

Plants

Gardens in the Jiangnan area, particularly in Suzhou, underwent a transition from primarily serving utilitarian functions to purely aesthetic ones, becoming luxurious spaces with distinct aesthetic characteristics around the 17th century.⁷³⁶ This transformation is exemplified by specific gardens like Jichang Garden, which developed from the 16th century into the early 17th century.

When examining gardens in Wuxi, a secondary city, over an extended period, it becomes evident that the majority did not undergo such a transformation. Unlike Suzhou's gardens, those in Wuxi remained closely tied to daily life and did not solely focus on luxury. Even during peak development periods of Jiangnan gardens, such as the middle and late Ming Dynasty, as well as modern times, gardens in Wuxi emphasized practical use and the concept of providing protection and shelter for the family.

736 Clunas, Craig. *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996)

Guo Mingyou, 'History of Suzhou Gardens in the Ming Dynasty' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Soochow, 2011)

In comparison to previous periods, there was a noticeable increase in the emphasis on plant diversity during this phase. This manifested in two main aspects. Firstly, there was significant effort in introducing various tree species. Prominent species introduced during this period included Japanese cherry blossoms, iris, rhododendrons, Japanese black pine, and crape myrtle, among others. Additionally, several cultivated horticultural varieties were imported, such as fir, mountain maple, narrow-leaved firethorn, and giant bamboo, with one or two of these species becoming focal points in specific gardens.⁷³⁷

The unprecedented increase in these new species substantially enriched the plant diversity in Wuxi's gardens. This was likely facilitated by highly favourable collaborative relationships in foreign trade. The introduced plants primarily originated from Japan, which, being geographically closer to China, likely contributed to higher survival rates. As a nation that had earlier exposure to Western culture, Japan often acted as an intermediary for the exchange of both Eastern and Western cultural elements. Despite a temporary decline in Japanese-style design and construction due to wartime conditions, efforts were made to preserve these plants in gardens.

The second aspect involved the establishment of botanical gardens and specialized botanical sections, focusing on species diversity and groupings of plant landscapes. During the flowering seasons, various types of flower exhibitions were held at appropriate times. For instance, the chrysanthemum exhibition at Plum Garden showcased more than two hundred varieties.⁷³⁸ Along with enhancing plant diversity, these exhibitions also heightened the aesthetic appeal of the gardens and effectively modulated seasonal scenery.

In Rong's self-made biographical timeline, it is noted that in 1912, discussions on social

⁷³⁷ Wang, Wenji, 'A Research on Modern Gardens in Wuxi', *Landscape Architecture*, 28.4(2012): 88-91.

⁷³⁸ Newspaper 'Xin Wuxi' (November 5, 1918) in Wuxi library

undertakings took place with Uncle Jiren and Esheng. They decided to purchase land in the east mountains and plant plum trees. The total cultivated area reached 150 Mu, accommodating three thousand plum trees alongside other flowers and plants that remained evergreen throughout the four seasons.⁷³⁹

Collective planting of one or two species is often associated with agricultural production. The original meaning of ‘Yuan 园’ or ‘Pu 圃’ (garden) refers to an enclosed area with a fence or ridge where fruit trees, vegetables, melons, and flowers are planted. Based on Plum Garden, the Rong family also established a processing line for agricultural products. The plums and peaches from their gardens were sent to the Sanle Food Factory for preserved fruit production and shipment to Shanghai (Figure 116).⁷⁴⁰ In the gardens of merchants, there is a pronounced contemporary business atmosphere.



Figure 116: Packaging of Preserved Plum with Tangerine Peel

Large-scale cultivation of seedlings was required for extensive planting, a significant

739 Rong Desheng, *Le Nong Zi Ding Xing Nian Ji Shi* [Self-made Bibliography of Rong Desheng]

740 The Republic of China era — Founded by Rong Boyun: Produced by Sanle Agricultural Society in Wuxi, Jiangsu
Sanle Brand 'Chu He' Sanle Preserved Tangerine Peel Plum < <https://7788tq.997788.com/s41/31988852/> > [accessed 6 April 2021]

aspect explained by gardens during the Republican era. Yanjia Pond in the southwest corner of the city had become a hub for cultivating gardening species.⁷⁴¹ Zhouxing Town established a base for growing dragon claw sophora, while several gardens on Yuantouzhu Isle also served as nursery stock bases. The large-scale production of plants could potentially play a pivotal role in the city's tourism development, offering opportunities for extensive cultivation.

Summary

This chapter analyses the garden culture of Wuxi during the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic period, a time marked by internal strife and external threats.

Through an examination of the domestic and international contexts from 1860 to 1949, it becomes evident that as the Qing Dynasty's power gradually waned after 1860, and within the dual context of global economic trade, the rituals and ceremonies of the feudal period gradually declined. Instead, indirect influences of foreign culture, especially through Shanghai, were embraced. The Wuxi gentry expanded their role in the public sphere, leading to the emergence of new design styles that incorporated foreign elements and the concepts of freedom and equality into garden designs. From decorative elements to activities, the deepening influence of the West gradually transformed gardens from details to the overall structure. In addition to private garden activities being influenced by the West, gardens gradually took on the nature of public welfare for residents, including the establishment of public park systems, the opening of private gardens, and reforms in the education system. The concept of equality became most apparent from a gender perspective, resulting in the further elevation of women's status and the development of modern garden culture characterized by a sense

741 Huang, Ang, Qing Dynasty, *Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu* [Records of Wuxi and Jinkui], from *Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu* [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taipei: Chengwen Press, 1983) vol 3

of social responsibility among women.

Local gentry were deeply committed to the stability and development of their country, and the introduction of foreign science and democratic ideas provided an opportune moment. Not directly experiencing the turmoil of external conflicts, officials in the early stages of Wuxi's quest for national salvation amidst societal turbulence still operated within the long-standing inertia of the Confucian and imperial examination system context. They began incorporating international cultural elements into their garden designs, reflecting a conflicted desire to adopt foreign ways while preserving their identity. As industry, commerce, and democratic ideas advanced, later garden culture in Wuxi became more open to foreign influences, with private gardens transforming into public parks that integrated new formal designs and activities. The Confucian education system was abandoned, impacting the Confucian garden rituals of the feudal period, including both daily activities and ceremonies in private gardens, which were no longer valued. Nevertheless, global wars and subsequent unrest later led some gentry to question foreign influences. Despite substantial foreign impact, traditional garden design retained prominence, with elements often incongruously combined. By the period's end, traditional Chinese garden culture remained vital and was even more emphasized during global unrest and ethnic conflicts, leading to a composite garden culture rather than a complete replacement by foreign styles.

Conclusion

After China independent from a situation of semi-colonial state and restored its economy over 30 years, the core of the national five-year plan included the protection and utilization of traditional culture to enhance national confidence and pride. The response to central policies across various regions also spurred more local research efforts. Gardens, as a cultural form spanning multiple domains, possess rich connotations and are a key focus in the study of traditional culture. Moreover, continuous economic development and urban expansion inevitably conflict with material heritage from historical periods, leading to the coverage and disappearance of these relics, and resulting in a depletion of the cultural connotations of gardens. In this context, the in-depth understanding of garden connotations becomes the objective of this study.

The thesis reviews extensive research on historical gardens and culture in the Jiangnan region, including garden appreciation articles, compilations of garden directories and materials, spatial analysis and utilization of current situations, simple historical overviews, etc. General characteristics and vague historical contexts, which can no longer meet the needs for garden protection and heritage activation in terms of garden cultural connotations, especially in non-core cities where common sense may not be fully applicable. Wuxi serves as an example of an ordinary city in the development of garden culture, with singular research objects, generalized connotations, and influence primarily local. Exploring Wuxi can provide a reference for more non-core cities to encourage broader research.

To achieve a profound interpretation of garden connotations, understand its development, and expand the research area, this study draws on the five fundamental perspectives from Clunas' research on Chinese garden culture in the Ming Dynasty. The data types required for these five perspectives include: socio-political context and the

experiences of garden owners, economic policies and urban development and family inheritance, aesthetic development and the relationship between humans and nature, garden plant records, and Feng Shui and folklore. The first two items pertain to regional and urban development history, preserved in forms such as dynastic official histories, imperial annals, compilations of institutions and policies, and local chronicles, addressing Research Question 1: How have socio-economic and political aspects influenced the garden culture in Wuxi.

The latter three are primarily based on local records and literary works, summarizing the expression of fashion in garden spaces across different periods, addressing Research Question 2: How did fashion affect design and material culture.

Due to the specificity of the city and the extended research timeframe, not every stage can fully demonstrate all five aspects of garden culture. Additionally, some perspectives not covered by Clunas appear in Wuxi. Given that this study views gardens as used spaces rather than static art forms and spans a long period, not limited to existing garden spaces, the use of gardens is examined, focusing on the decisive influence of social thought and official ceremonies on early Wuxi garden culture, as well as the influence of foreign elements and new activities in modern garden spaces, addressing Research Question 3: What do garden and open spaces reveal about use and ritual.

By answering these three questions, it can be concluded that, as an example of Chinese garden culture research, garden culture evolves with the development of urban productivity and changes in social context, with the artistic and economic attributes within garden connotations increasing, while ideological and institutional attributes decrease. The definition of ‘tradition’ is not static (Section One). The first contribution of this study to the knowledge of Chinese garden culture is the analysis and interpretation of more garden cultural connotations, avoiding generalized perceptions.

This thesis challenges the commonly held belief among local scholars that Wuxi

gardens originated from Buddhist temples. Through in-depth analysis, it argues that early settlements in the Mount Hui area, due to their relatively high elevation and abundant living resources, formed ritual commemorative gardens before the construction of Buddhist temples. When selecting sites, Buddhists made the same choices as local residents, suggesting that the concentration of gardens in the Mount Hui area was more closely related to safety and living conditions. However, during the 6th to 12th centuries, as Buddhism rapidly developed with official support in Jiangnan, temples acquired large tracts of land. Over time, these lands gradually became private property and were converted into private gardens. Although there is spatial overlap between private gardens and temples, temples were neither the earliest gardens nor the decisive influence on garden development.

The thesis further incorporates the development of Confucianism and its changing ideologies across different periods, connecting their relationship with garden culture through state institutions, rituals, the imperial examination system, natural concepts, and garden presentation. It meticulously aligns Confucian influence with garden culture across various periods rather than offering a generalized summary.

Economic benefits are often deliberately overlooked in historical garden studies. Clunas purposefully links the concept of property with gardens. Unlike the frequently cited prosperity of Jiangnan during the Southern Song and Ming-Qing periods, Wuxi gardens first appeared as an economic space during the Yuan Dynasty. Economic policies during this period promoted the commodification of artworks, giving gardens a marketable attribute.

The influence of institutions and rituals on post-Ming-Qing gardens is often overlooked amid economic and cultural prosperity, yet it is closely tied to garden preservation. Wuxi gardens that have been well-preserved typically became ancestral halls, symbolizing family heritage. The probability of preserving these properties was higher due to the collective efforts of families.

Because tradition varies across different periods, more dimensions of cultural connotation are revealed, providing a multifaceted display of Wuxi garden culture. In the second section of the conclusion, which discusses opinions on protection and utilization (last research objectives), the core support lies in this thesis' contribution to local practice and preservation efforts. Given the development of urban garden culture, this article emphasizes the importance of public participation and localism in response to the sense of social responsibility held by local officials since the Ming and Qing dynasties. The geographical position of Wuxi, which has long been a dependent area, necessitates careful attention to avoid simplistic homogenization and to deepen research, thereby expanding its influence.

By meticulously sorting out Wuxi garden culture and analyzing its relationship with gardens in Suzhou and Beijing, it can be concluded that Wuxi garden culture exhibits lag and hybridity; economic and cultural development acts as a double-edged sword, both limiting its development and buffering the impact of fashion, preserving more connotations and presenting different development trajectories and prominent aspects of garden culture compared to core cities (Section Three). This underscores the significance of research in non-core cities and constitutes the second contribution of this study to the knowledge system.

In Section Four, 'Thought' is given special status as a part of the socio-political context. Due to the long research span on Wuxi, the early elements of Buddhism and Confucianism, the confluence of the three teachings in garden construction, as well as ideas of equality and freedom introduced from foreign countries in modern times, which are tacitly aligned with lower-middle-class Confucian values, played a crucial role. They belong to the ideological part of the social context, significantly influencing early social status, especially before the Song Dynasty. In modern times, they also encouraged more public gardens, becoming prototypes of the modern park system and an important part of Wuxi's urban garden system. Clunas focused more on the material

culture of gardens, paying less attention to ideological aspects, which mainly impacted the periods before the Yuan Dynasty and in modern times, not the primary time frame of Clunas' research. Thus, the discussion of social thought becomes an important aspect of discussing Chinese garden culture. Particularly for early gardens, modern interpretations from the material perspective alone are insufficient; it is also essential to return to the contemporary ideological system. Notably, modern foreign influences encompass both ideological and material aspects, part of the changing social context. Although categorized separately (thought, foreign influences and other aspect), some overlap is obvious. Due to the isolationist policies of the Ming and Qing dynasties, leading to relatively independent domestic and foreign development trajectories, making the short-term impact significant. The author believes this should be separately addressed. Despite changing attitudes towards foreigners based on national strength and emotions, it is undeniable that 'foreign' are a concise summary in the fashion influencing garden culture. Thus, the discussion of social thought and foreign influence in garden culture becomes the methodological contribution of this study.

A changing tradition

Clunas contends that during the exceedingly lengthy pre-modern period, Chinese society exhibited a relatively stable and minimally fluctuating system. Consequently, he chose to conduct his research on Chinese garden culture by selecting a representative stage and region for in-depth examination. In this study of Wuxi, it can be concluded that terms such as 'traditional' or similar expressions used to describe the constancy of Chinese society in the context of gardens and garden making can be questioned. There has been sometimes slow progress and development that can be measured over longer time spans rather than the shorter periods we have become accustomed to considering.

Garden culture in Wuxi can be traced back to the Han Dynasty, a period characterized by relatively low agricultural productivity. Residents formed public spaces for social activities, which held significant religious status. Garden making in Wuxi began in the

Mount Hui area, one of the earliest gathering points, which had advantages in both water security and resource availability.

During the Sui and Tang Dynasties, under imperial governance, an institutional influence prevailed. This facilitated the spread of aesthetic awareness and Buddhist elements that found their way into garden culture in Wuxi. Documented early gardens were built by officials or influenced by the policies of the country. These influences may have originated from the dissemination of garden culture from the capital city, possibly through travel, official appointments, missionary activities, and other means. The compounds of temples, schools, and public scenic areas were common forms of gardens, signifying the fusion of Buddhist and Confucian thought. Initial constructions were based on the natural landscapes of mountains and rivers. Early builders believed that the beauty of nature was only truly achieved through alterations acknowledged by humans. Although a nationwide transportation network had developed, materials such as stones and plants for gardens were primarily sourced locally. Artistic judgments of stones and plants were influenced by legends and Buddhist aesthetics.

The advent of the examination system and the reform of the economic system, transitioning from the manorial economy to the equal-field system during the Tang Dynasty, facilitated the transformation of an aristocratic society into a civilian one. Simultaneously, various rituals were adopted by common people, and aristocratic (or official) garden culture disseminated to the common folk. The emergence of garden culture in civilian society in Wuxi initially centered around the commemoration of local Confucius and Confucian officials, which were an extension of early familial memorial halls. By incorporating spaces for sacrifice within gardens, garden culture became associated with Confucian culture.

Officials and Confucian scholars were among the earliest groups in common society with the potential to attain relatively high political status. Thus, the imperial examination system became one of the important foundations for the gradual expansion

of private garden culture in Wuxi. The composition of gardens, including features like plants and ponds, became a focus for Confucian scholars to emphasize their social status, affirming self-awareness, and contributing to public affairs. This marked the zenith of Confucian self-confidence. Deliberate neglect of leisure and aesthetic appreciation underscored the emphasis on Neo-Confucianism's presentation of the Heavenly Way and the restraint of human desires.

Due to the ease with which gardens can disappear and their remnants can be covered, early-stage analysis relies heavily on textual records. Literature from secondary cities lacks systematic documentation and is often fragmented, mixed with numerous judgments and speculations from later editors. National-level literature on political, institutional, economic policies, and ideological evolution can provide social contexts and general trends. However, due to the authoritative influence on literature during editing, it is difficult to assess the true extent of Wuxi's regional response to national-level trends in practice.

This situation has posed challenges for understanding gardens, as there is an expectation to avoid oversimplification and generalization. In the future, increasing the practice and analysis of archaeology could mitigate the limitation.

During the Yuan Dynasty and early Ming Dynasty, garden culture in Wuxi was briefly suppressed as the country was under foreign rule. The temporary suspension of the imperial examination system hindered political avenues for potential advancement, particularly with reduced relevance to Confucian culture. In an environment favouring commercial endeavours, garden owners gained social status through extensive social networks and artistic prowess rather than political standing. Their primary objective was the appreciation of nature, and the commercialization of art sometimes transformed their gardens into centres for economic activities such as art trading markets.

The social upheaval caused by the change in dynasties at the end of the Yuan Dynasty

and the subsequent period of societal recovery during the early Ming Dynasty led to the construction of gardens intertwined with refuge and agricultural cultivation activities. Garden culture in Wuxi began to develop from the vicinity of Mount Hui-City towards the eastern suburban areas, where numerous prominent families had gathered. Many of these families had migrated south during the late Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) and gradually accumulated extensive land holdings, typically displaying greater resilience to adapt to turbulent times.

The revival of the imperial examination system partially restored the status of Confucian scholars. The Beijing-Hangzhou Canal was revived as a major transportation route. Situated along this canal, Wuxi became a hub for rice and cloth trade, prompting local families to rapidly accumulate wealth through agricultural commerce. The trend of garden making spread among literati, influenced by literati from both Suzhou and the capital cities (Beijing and Nanjing).

Due to economic development and the rising status of merchants, a phenomenon known as 'the convergence of scholars and merchants' emerged. In the late Ming period, this trend contributed significantly to the expansion of garden culture in Wuxi, evidenced by the proliferation of densely constructed gardens and the diversification of garden owners' professions. Building upon foundations laid during the late Yuan Dynasty, a new concentrated region for garden making emerged in the eastern areas where prominent families had gathered in Wuxi.

The convergence of scholar-officials and merchants, coupled with the widespread construction of private academies, signaled that high social status was no longer exclusively dominated by scholar-official families. During this period, local elites displayed intricate occupational identities, such as Confucian merchants, where social status could rapidly change through investments in imperial examinations and business

endeavours.

Local elites continuously expressed their aesthetic preferences and social status through the construction of gardens, showcasing a diverse garden culture. This period witnessed a trend where the extravagant consumption habits of merchants gradually influenced the design of literati gardens. Simultaneously, intense social competition underscored the importance of gardens as inheritable property.

Merchant gardens, serving as displays of wealth and enjoyment, challenged Zhu Xi's Confucian interpretation of gardens. Gardens became a means for merchants to showcase their economic status. This pursuit of luxury and indulgence, intertwined with the identities of garden owners, influenced the culture of literati gardens.

Confucian-merchant gardens emphasized garden design and the transformation of nature within the natural environment to achieve the most aesthetically pleasing views with minimal expenditure. There is a significant emphasis on large and old trees in these gardens, considered manifestations of the design standard of 'emulating nature.' Aesthetic awareness in gardens increased, accompanied by recreational activities and the introduction of more precious elements such as rare plants, arranged stones, and artificial mountains. Folk activities like Kunqu opera were also incorporated into the gardens.

Nevertheless, agricultural and land production attributes continued to permeate Wuxi's gardens, and practices related to agriculture were not completely excluded. Confucian-merchants were the most active group engaged in garden culture practices, retaining the Confucian scholar's commitment to serving the public good as a means of elevating their social status. Consequently, gardens had a degree of openness and supported the construction of numerous public facilities and landscapes. Religious and Feng Shui elements were included in folk culture, though often not documented, they remained widely prevalent.

The garden spaces emphasized the importance of clans and maintaining social status, featuring memorial halls and ancestor halls. Large and old trees also highlighted the significance of lineage and heritage, symbolizing outstanding or exemplary family members, typically males, within the family context. Rituals and patrilineal blood relationships formed a strict hierarchy, with adult males holding the highest rank within gardens. Their mothers, wives, and concubines were subordinate to them, occupying positions similar to servants if they lacked blood ties.

The transition of male family members from their mothers' side to their fathers' side, along with the elevation of their status, marked their growth within the family structure. The increase in female ancestral halls and archways indicated a further decline in the freedom and social status of women.

Scholar-officials' gardens during this period, represented by private academies, became centres for practical political discourse. Scholar-officials had a higher starting point and were more radical in implementing the Confucian 'Xiu-Qi-Zhi-Ping' ideology. The proliferation of private academies facilitated commoner education and increased the influence of local gentry through familial, marital, and geographic connections. These local elites, aiming to gain more power and status, sought to expand their influence through educational spaces and gardens.

The increase in admonitory sections of rituals and the addition of pavilions symbolizing imperial authority within Confucius temples hinted at intensified thought control. The power and influence of academies gradually expanded, posing a threat to the authority of the central government. Consequently, private academies came under strong pressure and were incorporated into official state-sponsored education during the late Ming and Qing dynasties.

Garden culture also became more conservative during this time and gradually declined with the fall of the Qing Dynasty. Gardens were maintained as shared family properties,

supported by income from the families' other land holdings.

The occurrence of the Opium War opened up Qing China's connections with the world, leading to interactions between traditional bureaucratic families and foreign technologies and ideas. Simultaneously, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom movement prompted changes in Wuxi's agricultural planting structure, providing raw materials for modern industry. The construction of the Beijing-Shanghai Railway increased Wuxi's economic ties with Shanghai and, through Shanghai, with the global market. Wuxi's urban status gradually surpassed that of Changzhou and Suzhou, becoming the second center in southern Jiangnan after Shanghai.

A new elite class, represented by industrial and commercial owners, gained unprecedented political power in the late Qing period by combining foreign ideas of autonomy with Confucian principles of 'practical application in governance' and 'Xiu Qi Zhi Ping,' based on their social impact. Garden making in Wuxi expanded to the northern shore of Lake Tai and witnessed the establishment of numerous fully accessible public gardens. Construction continued to be based on natural landscapes, with efforts made to preserve original scenery and vegetation while expanding road infrastructure, aiming to create a tourist city.

New foreign fashions, including architectural styles, formal designs, specialized plant gardens, and activities, began to appear in Wuxi's gardens. This expansion broadened the horizons of the local population and created spaces for engagement with foreigners to promote economic and trade interactions.

Despite the introduction of a new education system and the abandonment of most Confucian rituals, Confucian thought continued to exert a strong influence on the implementation of modern public garden ideas. Additionally, some old official families still maintained their emphasis on their traditional status. The status of women saw increased freedom within the context of ideas of freedom and equality social thought,

but within certain limits.

The changes in ‘tradition’ did not cease. After 1950, the changes in garden culture may become more pronounced, especially considering the relatively better preservation of literature and the greater abundance of physical remains of gardens. Due to space limitations and some personal reasons, these will constitute the basis for research expansions.

Political institutions and the Confucian theories supporting them have been closely intertwined through prolonged interaction, thereby becoming an implicit background. Michel Conan proposes three significant questions and shifts in contemporary garden studies: from period gardens to cultural and social problems; politics and garden history; towards a critique of universalism in western culture.⁷⁴² These three questions essentially address issues concerning the scope of garden studies, necessitating attention to new findings in the fields of social sciences and cultural studies.

The concentrated construction of gardens in Wuxi under the dual-track system of urban and rural areas during China’s feudal period may have potential for future research under the theme of ‘politics and garden history’.

Recommendations for the protection and heritage activation of Wuxi’s Garden culture and heritage based on research

Considering the favorable economic, cultural conditions, and human environment of Wuxi, the following recommendations are proposed for the protection and promotion of Wuxi’s garden culture and heritage:

⁷⁴² Michel Conan, *Perspective on Garden Histories*. (Washington .D. C: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library &Collection, 1999) p21.

Emphasizing the Importance of Local Cultural Heritage and Enhancing the Recognition, Understanding, and Appreciation of Wuxi Garden Value:

Both the government and local residents should place significant importance on local cultural heritage. This can be achieved through a thorough understanding of the development process of Wuxi garden culture, beyond merely the historical trajectory of individual gardens. From the inception of the gardens, nearly 2000 years ago, the garden culture has developed multiple layers. The government and scenic spots should avoid single and directional publicity, focusing instead on multi-layered displays. It is crucial to actively promote Wuxi's garden culture to garden (park) managers, local communities, and visitors, with efforts to protect and benefit future generations. Such as:

Organize workshops and classes on traditional crafts, gardening techniques, and historical studies related to the heritage site;

Develop guided educational tours that educate visitors about the historical, cultural, and architectural significance of the heritage site;

Integrate heritage education into local school curriculums to foster an early appreciation and understanding of local culture and history;

Encourage local residents to participate in volunteer activities; and involve the community in decision-making processes regarding the preservation and activation of heritage sites.

Encouraging Localism:

Local designers, managers, and decision-makers should be encouraged to prioritize Wuxi's garden heritage as the stable core for all aspects of protection and utilization of local cultural heritage. Given the unique natural and human environment of Wuxi,

efforts should be made to enrich the local intrinsic value and connotation of the gardens. When drawing from the conservation and restoration experiences of other cities, local specificities should be considered to avoid homogenization and becoming a subsidiary. Such as establishing a robust brand identity, fostering collaborations and partnerships, and producing and marketing merchandise associated with the heritage site, including books, souvenirs, and handicrafts, to generate supplementary income.

Strengthening the sustainability:

The government and managers, based on the current social environment and the multiple functions of gardens, should appropriately encourage community events, including immersive experiences of daily rituals in garden area, cultural festivals, historical reenactments of local context, and community gatherings to maintain the traditional uses of the gardens. Public participation should be encouraged to experience, understand, appreciate, and enjoy the historically accumulated cultural traditions. This will enhance the gardens' interest and connotation while strengthening the sustainability of Wuxi garden heritage activation and management.

In addition to activities within the garden, developing thematic tours that link the gardens with other local attractions can provide a comprehensive cultural experience. It is important to promote eco-friendly tourism practices that reduce the environmental impact on heritage sites. Enhancing visitor amenities, such as information centers, rest areas, and signage, will also improve the overall visitor experience.

Promoting Scientific Research and Integration with National and Global Studies:

Researchers should be encouraged. Avoiding one-sided perceptions and purely legendary content, clearing such content to strengthen the scientific nature of Wuxi garden research, and sharing new knowledge with the public. This will advance the research of Wuxi garden culture in line with national and global standards. Managers

should balance rigorous knowledge with folklore interests when setting up exhibitions.

Technological Integration:

The material remnants of history contain vast and perishable data. New technologies can be applied to the preservation, updating, analysis, and presentation of historical garden culture information. Such as digitizing historical documents, photographs, and artifacts to make them accessible to a wider audience online; developing virtual reality or augmented reality experiences enabling visitors to remotely explore the heritage site or enrich their on-site experience; and creating mobile applications offering interactive maps, historical insights, and augmented reality functionalities.

A Research in a secondary-tier city

Since 1950, garden research has gradually expanded from the Beijing region to Suzhou and other areas in the Jiangnan region. From 1990 to the present, studies on garden remains have proliferated across various regions, with a significant focus on the gardens of Suzhou, Beijing, and the Lingnan region. Other areas in Jiangnan primarily feature general surveys. Overall, research outcomes are concentrated on the imperial gardens of Beijing and the private gardens of Suzhou, followed by the private garden studies in other Jiangnan cities such as Yangzhou, Nanjing, and Shanghai.

Cities such as Suzhou and Beijing have become preferred research hubs for garden culture due to their high renown, well-preserved heritage, and abundant literary records. Entering the second decade of the 21st century, the gardens of Wuxi have gradually gained attention along with the study of Wuxi's modern industrial and commercial development, with modern gardens becoming a research hotspot. Pre-modern studies in the region include a small number of works on the Mount Hui area, Jichang Garden, and the Donglin Academy. Secondary-tier cities are often overlooked due to their lack of distinctiveness and limited source materials.

Through an exploratory examination of a 'secondary-tier' regional city, it can be concluded that the development of garden culture in Wuxi exhibited a certain degree of lag compared to the overall progress in regional centers during that period. Wuxi primarily functioned as a recipient, adopting influences of garden culture from these regional centers. Due to Wuxi's relatively lower political status, economic conditions, and lack of prominence as a cultural hub compared to cities like Suzhou, Beijing, and Shanghai, its garden culture displayed diversity but was somewhat unremarkable in comparison in each period.

The notable lag in garden culture is primarily evident in the delayed initiation of garden space construction, the slower adoption of new policies and fashionable trends, and the organization of garden discourse. This delay can be attributed to the influence originating from core regions and gradually spreading to peripheral areas. In Wuxi, the mainstream of aesthetic practices in late Ming Dynasty gardens occurred approximately half a century later than in Suzhou. Furthermore, the construction of Wuxi's first public gardens during the late Qing Dynasty was postponed by 40 years compared to the establishment of Shanghai's inaugural park in 1868.

Several factors contributed to this delay. Awareness of aesthetic and functional considerations influenced the timing of early garden creation. Wuxi's lower city ranking delayed the expansion of its education system. The development of a national transportation network, including the shift from canals to railways, significantly accelerated communication. Merchants engaged in widespread business activities were potentially more effective at disseminating trends than literati scholars. Additionally, political and economic factors constrained the development of gardens in Wuxi. In contrast, long-lasting trends such as Confucian rituals may not have shown significant impacts.

This lag presented challenges for Wuxi's gardens in terms of exerting contemporary fashion influence on other cities. However, preserved gardens over the long term could

mitigate the effects of this delay. For instance, Jichang Garden served as a prototype for imperial gardens constructed by Qing Dynasty emperors. In Wuxi's pre-Qing dynasty garden culture, especially in private gardens, the significance of heritage and continuity was emphasized. In modern times, advancements in transportation methods have somewhat reduced this lag. However, rigorous comparisons involving multiple stages, types, and quantities are still deficient in discussions on the duration of this lag. Therefore, the discourse on the causes of this delay lacks depth and could potentially be an area for future research.

Through an analysis of three high-density areas of garden construction in different periods in Wuxi, it can be concluded that garden development in Wuxi has predominantly been distributed in suburban areas rather than within the city. These gardens are based on diverse landscape foundations, including the integration of mountainous and forested environments with springs, agricultural landscapes, and lake-mountain landscapes. The dissemination of garden culture within the boundaries of Wuxi primarily followed the development paths of urban centers and gentry settlements. Early settlement locations were determined by the natural environment, while the level of agricultural development and planting structures influenced the distribution of agricultural society settlements in Wuxi. Additionally, the relationship between settlements and transportation was closely intertwined. It wasn't until the late 19th century, with changes in planting structures and the rise of industry and commerce, that specialized roads were constructed, gradually leading to the formation of densely populated areas for garden practices along the north shores of Lake Taihu.

Through an analysis of the various professions of urban garden owners in Wuxi, it can be concluded that the garden culture of Wuxi was characterized by its diversity stemming from the purposes of its creators. At the same time, it reflected a unifying theme of preserving and transmitting assets, including property, ideas, skills, and social status, to strengthen legacies and uphold the power of the elite.

The diversity of garden owners and the purposes of their construction were influenced by an agricultural foundation and the development of the Jiangnan Economic Zone, established based on the nationwide canal system. After the Yuan Dynasty, the economy's significance in developing garden culture in Wuxi equaled that of the civil examination system and scholarly pursuits. This development encompassed a wide range of economic forms, including agriculture, the commodification of agricultural products, handicrafts, the commercialization of artisanal products, and the transition to modern industry. While the civil service examination system had a pervasive influence on social status in a broad context, its monopolistic position gradually declined. Various manifestations of social status included conspicuous wealth, official positions, exceptional craftsmanship, public service and philanthropy, and adherence to ceremonial rituals.

To provide a more comprehensive interpretation of a city's garden culture, certain types of gardens that may not have undergone large-scale construction due to their distinctive characteristics were selected. For instance, the unique artisan gardens in Wuxi. Sculptors, as garden owners, represent a more peripheral profession compared to literati, and the cultural analysis of gardens associated with specific professions may need to extend to a broader scope to obtain a more comprehensive understanding. Similarly, in the analysis of garden paintings, examining a limited number of artworks from a single city may not effectively capture the culture and its transitions. Nevertheless, Clunas, in his book, provides a profound exploration of this perspective through themes in painting, landscape composition, and the perspective of landscape appreciation, which are exceptionally clear and insightful.⁷⁴³

In secondary-tier cities, officials generally held lower status compared to those in core

⁷⁴³ Craig Clunas, *two books fruitful sites and superfluous things*

cities, and there are records of garden owners who were not literati (non-literary professionals), indicating a closer connection to the lower strata of society. However, being relatively closer to the lower strata does not equate to being entirely synonymous with it. For the gentry class and their kin, it is possible to concurrently hold roles in the four fundamental occupations of scholar, farmer, artisan, and merchant. In the context of Chinese family consciousness and local dimensions, ordinary individuals cannot be simply defined as townspeople or peasants.

The records of Wuxi gardens are associated with power; those documented in garden entries possess at least one form of economic, political, or social power, especially after the Ming dynasty, when purely political power was increasingly replaced by more diverse forms of social power. Ordinary people devoid of any social or political power face challenges in data collection, lacking clear garden detail records. Their presence is vaguely and broadly depicted in folklore records and agricultural books.

Studying one city, even if it is not a power center, makes it challenging to comprehensively and deeply understand the lower strata of society. Therefore, this may become a focal point for future research, with materials needing to be discovered and collected from a broader range of sources. Based on current research, the gardens of ordinary people are more likely to be mentioned in folklore records, agricultural policies, and the novels and poetry written by lower-middle-class literati documenting local customs and societal conditions.

An extension of garden culture

In the 1990s, Craig Clunas introduced the concept of ‘garden culture’ to emphasize the cultural context of gardens more profoundly. Through research on Wuxi, it can be concluded that the five aspects of discussion he proposed regarding garden culture can be applied to the discussion in Wuxi and extended to longer historical periods. Wuxi still retains a considerable amount of garden-related materials, including records of

garden owners, genealogies, local gazetteers, garden journals, paintings, and more. An analysis of Wuxi's garden culture over an extended historical period reveals that discussions about garden culture in Wuxi focus on aspects such as social status, property, Confucianism and ceremonial education, understanding of plants, foreign influences, art, and geomancy (in this thesis, use Feng Shui). Foreign influences primarily emerged in modern times. They rely on certain inherent forces of inertia that connect various trends together.

In Wuxi's urban context, there is no predominant political status. Therefore, a strong emphasis on maintaining social status and preserving wealth has always been the mainstream of thought. Among these, property in the form of land holds utmost importance in agrarian China. Even in the present era of public ownership, this emphasis persists, as indicated by government statistics, with approximately 600 million farmers, according to the 2015 National Economic and Social Development Statistics Bulletin published by the National Bureau of Statistics of China. This focus often emerged during periods when Confucianism held dominance within the political system.

The enduring theme in garden culture is deeply rooted in Confucian practices, which held a prominent role even before the inception of garden culture in Wuxi. This connection is closely intertwined with the ritual system. The influence of Confucianism can be discerned across multiple facets, encompassing individual expectations, property recognition and safeguarding, familial obligations, and its repercussions on the local economy, culture, tourism, and urban status. These influences emanate from the amalgamation of Confucian education with governing authority.

The relevance of Confucianism to garden culture in Wuxi is evident not only in how it encourages philosophical interpretations related to social status and property within garden culture but also in how garden culture, through its educational and ritual dimensions, reinforces the stability of the hierarchical system. This, in turn, elevates

the importance of social status and property within garden culture. This influence can be attributed to the dominance of Confucianism in education, particularly through the civil service examination system, where most historical chroniclers were Confucian scholars. As a result, Confucianism plays a prominent role in the interpretation of garden culture in Wuxi, particularly in the construction of ancestral halls and academies.

Conversely, the impact of other religions, numerology, and Feng Shui can be inferred from the limited available documentation, although their influence has been somewhat diminished due to a lack of comprehensive records. Wuxi's gardens may not serve as a primary case study for exploring religious and divination practices, suggesting that research in this area may be better suited to other examples.

The connection between the government and local elites is intimate, particularly in a city with a lower administrative level. Gardens serve as an excellent showcase space. The construction of public facilities often relies heavily on local elites. This concept aligns with Fei Xiaotong's notion of a dual-track political system, where the local gentry serve as intermediaries between the two political systems.⁷⁴⁴

Due to the challenges in acquiring power at a lower urban level, they even took proactive steps to enhance their local prominence by pursuing Confucian public projects. This departure from the aesthetic preference for nature contrasts with the clear preference for a landscape foundation in the site selection of Wuxi's gardens. In the long history of research, their attitude towards nature has undergone a transformation from reverence for nature to an appreciation of nature, ultimately leading to the belief that nature requires design to satisfy the users' longing for it.

This thesis references numerous Confucian figures and the evolution of Confucian

⁷⁴⁴ Xiang Biao and Fei Xiaotong's research

thought to demonstrate its significant influence on garden culture, particularly after the 12th century. Early studies on Chinese gardens often highlighted Daoist influences while underestimating Confucian influences. This oversight may be due to the concentration of research on garden culture hubs like Suzhou during the Ming and Qing dynasties. In these cities, the elite had the power and resources to transform their environments, creating gardens that appeared to be naturally formed, aligning closely with Daoist concepts of Wu Wei 无为 ‘non-action’ and harmony with nature. Additionally, private gardens from an aesthetic perspective were often seen as metaphors for political failure, which contrasted with the Confucian spirit of ambition and progress in political way. Consequently, when the concept of gardens was limited, Confucian influences were frequently underestimated or deliberately overlooked.

However, in cities like Wuxi, which historically lacked absolute economic and cultural dominance, the development of Confucian institutions and thought had a direct impact on the political and social context. It was one of the primary and most effective pathways for garden owners to elevate their social status. Therefore, Confucianism had a significant influence on the early construction, usage, documentation, and representation of garden culture.

This underscores the importance of considering social context over garden typology in garden studies. Ignoring the various types of gardens and emphasizing the social background is crucial for understanding the significance of garden research.

It is noteworthy that Confucianism did not exert an overall impact on garden culture. When discussing garden culture in Wuxi, there are not many purely aesthetic practices; most are closely linked to agricultural practices, including plant cultivation, up until modern times. External technologies and cultures have had a significant impact on Wuxi, with the most direct effect being the emergence of new elements and activities, a common characteristic in modern gardens in many Chinese cities. Rather than adopting foreign concepts directly, this influence often took the form of a blend of

Chinese and Western styles. The Second Sino-Japanese War led to the transformation of many gardens previously designed in Japanese styles back to Chinese styles. Although some other foreign styles were retained, this trend was short-lived and eventually interrupted. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, new concepts of garden design were adopted in an effort to break from the old era.⁷⁴⁵ Considering that this study did not include this phase in its analysis, the construction of public gardens under public ownership will be a subject for future research.

The history of urban gardens from the perspective of garden culture has not received significant attention. These discussions are specific to one city; however, there are still numerous ordinary cities awaiting exploration. Due to a lack of universal representation, the outcomes related to Wuxi are primarily accountable to the local context of Wuxi. They may yield similar or contrasting interpretations of garden culture, and the significance of different directions may vary.

⁷⁴⁵ 'Do not build totally traditional gardens' mentioned in the interview with Huang Maoru

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Evolution of Wuxi County (-1949)⁷⁴⁶

Dynasties	Year	Area	(Guo)国/Princedom 侯国(Hou Guo) as State or Kingdom, 望 (Wang) , 州县 (Xian) as 郡(Jun),道(Dao),路(Lu),省(Sheng) as Province (Zhou), 府(Fu)as Citycounty (Shi)
Tang	--	Old Yangzhou area (the world was separated into nine area and Wuxi belonged to Yangzhou)	
Yu	Approx.1559	Old Yangzhou area	
Xia	B.C.	Old Yangzhou area	
Yin	Approx.1559 - 1046 B.C.	Old Yangzh	<i>Gouwu</i> Kingdom--the capital city is <i>Meili</i> in Wuxi
Zhou	Approx.1046 —514 B.C.	ou area	Wu State
	514 B.C.		King of Wu, <i>Helv</i> , moved the capital city from cities in the north to Wuxi and then, to <i>Gusu</i> (Suzhou)
	473 B.C.		Yue State
	since 334 B.C.		Chu State
Qin	221 - 207 B.C.		Started the system of Commandry and county: <i>Kuaiji Jun</i>
West Han	202 B.C.-9 A.D.		<i>Jing</i> Princedoms since 187 B.C./ <i>Wu</i> Princedoms since 183 B.C. <i>Wu</i> / <i>Kuaiji Jun</i>
			start of the name “ Wuxi ”
			<i>Wuxi</i> Feudal Princedoms since 110 B.C.
Xin	9-25	Old Yangzhou area	
East Han	25-220	Old	<i>Wu Jun</i> since 129
		Yangzh	<i>Piling</i> Princedoms since 202
Wu	229-280	ou area	<i>Wu</i> Kingdom
Jin	265-420		<i>Wu Jun</i> in 280/ <i>Piling Jun</i> since 281/ <i>Jinling Jun</i> in 290-307
Southern Dynasties	420-589		South Xu province
			Jinling
Sui	589-618		<i>Changzhou</i> / <i>Piling</i>
Tang	618-907		<i>Jinling</i>
			Wuxi
		Jiangnan Dao/East Jiangnan Dao/West Zhejiang	Changzhou/Jinling
		Lu/Zhejiang West Dao	Suzhou 890-901
			Wuxi

⁷⁴⁶ Historical texts, Pei Dazhong, Ni Xiansheng, Qin Xiangye, et.al (Qing Dynasty), Chorography of Wuxi in Guangxue Period (1881), Zhongguo Difang Zhi Jicheng[Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 1991)

			Rebellion: <i>Wu</i> Kingdom in 902	Changzhou	Wuxi
<i>Wuyue</i>	907-978		<i>Wuyue</i> Kingdom		
Song	960-1279		<i>Liangzhe Lu</i>	Changzhou	Wuxi
			West <i>Liangzhe Lu</i> in Southern Song	Changzhou	Wuxi
			Jianghuai Xing Shangshu Province in 1276 (Yuan dynasty)	Changzhou	Wuxi
Yuan	1279-1368		Changzhou	Wuxi changed its name to Zhongzhou	
			Liangzhe Xing Shangshu Province	Changzhou	Wuxi
	1352		Wu Kingdom in 1352 dominated by Zhang Shicheng		
Ming	1368-1644		Zhongshu Sheng/south Zhili Province	Changzhou	Wuxi
Qing	1644-1911		Jiangnan Buzheng Si(province) Jiangsu Province	Changzhou	Wuxi is separated into Wuxi and Jinkui in 1724
The republic of China 1911-1949			Jiangsu Province	Mainly Xi-Jin military government	

Appendix 2: Weights and measures

Weights and measures have been constantly changing in the long history of China.

Table 14: the Value Table of Chinese Weights and Measures Units in Past Dynasties (translated by author)⁷⁴⁷

Year	Dynasty	Benchmark	
		1 <i>Chi</i> 尺	1 <i>Liang</i> 两
25-220	East Han	23.1 centimeter	15.4 gram
220-420	Three Kingdoms/Jin	24.2	17.7
420-589	Southern Dynasties	24.7	18.8
581-618	Sui	29.5	42
618-907	Tang	30.6	41.4-42
960-1279	Song	31.4	40-41.3
1206-1368	Yuan	35	40
1366-1911	Ming/Qing	32	37.3
1912-1949	Republic of China	33.3	50

⁷⁴⁷ Qiu Long, 'Value Table and Explanation of Chinese Weights and Measures Units in Past Dynasties,' China Metrology, 10(2006), 46-48, 76 DOI:10.16569/j.cnki.cn11-3720/t.2006.10.0

Raito: 1 *Li* 里=1800 *Chi* 尺; 1 *Mu*⁷⁴⁸=6000 *Chi*²; 1 *Qing* 顷=100 *Mu* 亩; 1 *Shi* 石=1920 *Liang* 两.

Appendix 3: Historic materials used in this thesis⁷⁴⁹

Type	English title	Chinese title	Author	Date and source
Official history	Records of the Historian	史记	Sima Qian 145-1 st century BC	West Han dynasty 1550 print Harvard Yenching library
	History of Former Han dynasty	汉书	Ban Gu, et al.	East Han dynasty
	History of Later Han Dynasty	后汉书	Fan Ye	Southern Dynasty - Liu Song Harvard Yenching library
	History of Three Kingdoms	三国志	Chen Shou 233-297	West Jin Dynasty Harvard Yenching library
	History of Southern Song Dynasty	宋书	Shen Yue 441—513	Southern dynasty- Xiao Liang
	History of Southern Qi Dynasty	南齐书	Xiao Zixian 487—537	Southern dynasty- Xiao Liang Print in 1595- 1606 Harvard Yenching library
	History of Southern Liang Dynasty	梁书	Yao Silian, Fang Xuanling, Wei Zheng	636
	History of Sui Dynasty	隋书	Wei Zheng et al.	636
	Old Book of Tang Dynasty	旧唐书	Liu Xu et al.	945
	New Book of Tang Dynasty	新唐书	Ouyang Xiu et al	1060
	History of Song Dynasty	宋史	Tuo Tuo 1314—1355	1345
	History of Yuan Dynasty	元史	Song Lian	1595 and 1606

⁷⁴⁸ The ratio is used during the Tang to the Qing dynasties.

⁷⁴⁹ Without special instructions, the non-local archive is in the collection of Qing Ding Si Ku Quan Shu (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1986), the local archive is in the collection of Wuxi Wenku (Nanjing: Phenix Press, 2011-2012)

	History of Ming Dynasty	明史	Zhang Tingyu 1672—1755	1739 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1974)
	Draft of the history of Qing	清史稿	Zhao Erxun	20 th century
non-official History	Jiānyān Yí lái Chāo yē Zā jì [Miscellanies after Jiānyān Period in the Song Dynasty]	建炎以来朝野杂记	Li Xinchuan 1166—1243	Southern Song
	Songshi Jishi Benmo [Chronicles of Song Dynasty]	宋史纪事本末	Chen Bangzhan 1567—1623	Ming dynasty 1604
	Song Hui Yao Ji Gao [Compiled Manuscripts of Important Song Documents]	宋会要辑稿	Xu Song 1781—1848	Qing Dynasty Print Harvard Yenching library 1936
	Yung Xian Lu [Miscellaneous History in Qianlong Period]	永宪录	Xiao Shi	Qing Dynasty
Early chronicles	Yue Jue Shu [The Glory of Yue]	越绝书	Yuan Kang	Approximately East Han Dynasty
	Wu Yue Chun Qiu [the Annals of Wu and Yue]	吴越春秋	Zhao Ye	Approximately East Han Dynasty
	Yuanhe Junxian Zhi [Chronical in Yuanhe Period]	元和郡县志	Li Jifu	813
	Taiping Huanyu Ji [Chorography of Peaceful Kingdom]	太平寰宇记	Yue Shi 930-1008	984-989
	Chorography of Jiankang (Jingding)	景定建康志	Zhou Yinghe 1213~1280 Ma Guangzu	1260-1264
	Chorography of Piling (Xianchun)	咸淳毗陵志	Shi Nengzhi	1268 (Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu, 422, Taiwan: Chen Wen Publishing Co., Ltd. 1947-76)
Local Chorography	Chorography of Wuxi (Zhizheng)	无锡志	Wang Furen	1341-1368
	Chorography of Wuxi	无锡县志 (弘治)		1494
	Chorography of Wuxi (Wanli)	无锡县志 (万历)	Zhou Bangjie, Qin Liang	1574
	Chorography of Wuxi (Kangxi)	无锡县志 (康熙)	Xu Yongnian, Yan Shengsun, Qin Songling	1690
	Chorography of Wuxi (Qianlong)	无锡县志 (乾隆)	Wang Gao, Hua Xihong	1742

	Chorography of Jinkui (Qianlong)	金匱县志（乾隆）	Wang Yunqian, Hua Xihong	1742
	Chorography of Wuxi and Jinkui (Jiaqing)	无锡金匱县志（嘉庆）	Han lvchong, Qi Yanhuai, Qin Ying	1813
	Continuation Chorography of Wuxi and Jinkui (Daoguang)	无锡金匱续志（道光）	Li Pengling, Yang Xizhi	1840
	Chorography of Wuxi and Jinkui (Guangxu).	无锡金匱县志（光绪）	Pei Dazhong, Ni Xiansheng, Qin Xiangye	1881, (Zhong Guo Di Fang Zhi Ji Cheng [the collection of Chinese Chorography] vol 24, Nanjing: Phenix Press, 1991)
	Chorography of Wuxi city	无锡市志	Zhuang Shen et al.	1995
Local records	The Complete Works of Qingbi Pavilion	清閼阁全集	Ni Zan	14 th century
	Record of Mount Hui	惠山纪	Shao Bao 1460~1527	Ming dyansty reprinted by Erquan academy in 1857
	Records of the Official School in Wuxi	无锡县学笔记	Tan Xiu	Ming Dynasty
	Xi Shan Jing Wu Lue [Record of Scenery in Wuxi]	锡山景物略	Wang Yongji	Ming Dynasty
	Hui Shan Gu Jin Kao [Research of Mount Hui]	惠山古今考	Tan Xiu	1573-1620
	Du Shi Fang Yu Ji Yao [Essentials of Historical Geography]	读史方輿纪要	Gu Zuyu 1631-1692	Qing Dynasty
	Chorography of Donglin Academy	东林书院志	Liu Yuanzhen (1571-1622) Xu Xian, Gao Tingzhen, Gao Bi	1733
	Huishan Zhulu Tuyong [Paintings and Peoms of the Bamboo Stove in Mount Hui]	惠山竹炉图咏	Edit by Wu Yue	1752
	Jiao Dong Shan Shui Zhi [Records of Scenery in the East of Jiaoshan Town]	胶东山水志	An Rui 1629-1703	Qing dynasty
	Continuation Records of Mount Hui	惠山纪续编	Shao Hanchu (1792-1864)	Printed in 1868

			edit by Shao WenTao	
	Xi Jin Zhi Xiao Lu [Small Record on the Xijin township]	锡金识小录	Huang Ang	1896, (Zhongguo Fangzhi Congshu [Collection of Chinese Chorography] (Taibei: Chengwen Press, 1983)
	Chronicles of Jichang Garden	寄畅园志	Qin Guozhang	1916 transcript
	Choronicles of Qingbi Pavillion	清閼阁志	Yang Diankui 1840-1902	1916 printed
	Chronicles of Wuxi Custom	无锡风俗志	Qian Jibo	1918
	Wu Jun Tu Jing Xu Ji [The Supplement to the Illustrated Record of Wu Commandery]	吴郡图经续记	Zhu Changwen 1039-1098	1084, Nanjing: Jiangsu Ancient Books Publishing House, 1999
	Chorography of Wu Commandery	吴郡志	Fan Chengda	1192 or 1193
	Treatise of plum	梅谱	Fan Chengda	Song
	Custom of Wu	吴风录	Huang Xingzeng 1490-1540	Ming Dynasty
	Wu Zhong Shui Li Quan Shu [The Water Conservancy of the Wu District]	吴中水利全书	Zhang Guowei	1639
	The Craft of Gardens	园冶	Ji Cheng	Ming dynasty, Ying Zao Xue She edition, 1932
	Ke Zuo Zhui Yu [Superfluous chats from the guests' seat]	客座赘语	Gu Qiyuan	1617
	Zhang Wu Zhi [Superfluous Things]	长物志	Wen Zhenheng 1585-1645	Late Ming
	Xian Qing Ou Ji [Random notes of leisure]	闲情偶记	Li Yu 1611—1680	Qing
Classic books in the History	Shang Shu [the Book of Documents]	尚书	Confucius	Pre-Qin (-221 B.C.) edit in East Jin dynasty (317-420)
	Zhou Li [Rituals in the Zhou Dynasty]	周礼	Ji Dan	Zhou Dynasty
	Lun Yu [The Analects of Confucius]	论语	Confucius and his students, edit by Kong Qiu	Spring and Autumn Period
	Li Ji [Book of Rites]	礼记	Dai De	Han dynasty

	Rituals in Kaiyuan period of the Tang dynasty	大唐开元礼	Xu Jian, Xiao Song	732
	Da Tang Liu Dian [The six bureaucratic divisions of the Great Tang]	唐六典	Zhang Yue, Zhang Jiuling	738
	Tong Dian [Chronicles of Regulations and Systems in the Past Dynasties]	通典	Du You	801
	History as Mirror	资治通鉴	Sima Guang	1084
	New Ceremonial Practices for the Five Rites	政和五礼新仪	Zheng Juzhong et al.	1111
	Diwang Jingshi Tupu The map for emperor	帝王经世图谱	Tang Zhongyou 1136-1188	Print in 1201
	Zhu Xi Family Rites	朱子家礼	Zhu Xi 1130—1200	Southern Song Dynasty
	Compendium of Rituals of the Ming Dynasty	明集礼	Xu Yikui et al.	1370
	Compendium of Rituals of the Qing Dynasty	清集礼		
	Wen Xian Tong Kao [Comprehensive investigation of documents]	文献通考	Ma Duanlin 1254-1324	14 th century
	Du Tongjian Lun [Reading the History As Mirror]	读通鉴论	Wang Fuzhi 1619—1692	17 th century
	Wu Li Tong Kao[research of Five Rites]	五礼通考	Qin Huitian 1702-1764	18 th century
Buddhism related	Shen Mie Lun [The Extinction of the Soul]	神灭论	Fan Zhen 450—515	Liang (502-557)in the Southern Dynasty
	Luoyang Qielan Ji 【Temples in Luoyang】	洛阳伽蓝记	Yang Xuanzhi	(Southern and Northern dynasty), Jianzhong temple
	Can Tiantai Wutai Shan Ji 【the Record of visiting Mount Tiantai and Wutai】	参天台五台山记	Cheng Xun	(1011-1081), Shijiazhuang, Huashan Art Press, 2008, p87/siku
	Gao Seng Zhuan 【Bibliography of Eminent Monks】	高僧传	monk Hui Jiao	Liang in the Southern dynasty
	Chanyuan Qinggui [Principles for Chan Buddhists]	禅院清规	monk Zong Yi	1106
	Chixiu Baizhang Qinggui [Principles for Chan Buddhists]	敕修百丈清规	monk De Hui	1335

	Interpretation of ‘Principles for Chan Buddhists’,	百丈清规证义	monk Yi Run	Qing Dynasty
Agriculture book	lěi sì jīng [Farming tools]	耒耜经	Lu Guimeng	880
	Nong Shu [Agricultural Treatise]	农书	Wang Zhen 1271—1368	Around 1300, print 1530, Harvard Yenching library
	Nong Zheng Quan Shu [Complete Book of Agriculture]	农政全书	Xu Guangqi 1562—1633	1573-1620
	Bu Nong Shu [Supplemented Agricultural Treatise]	补农书	Zhang Lvxiang 1611—1674	Qing Dynasty
Female regulation	NüLun Yu [Analects for Women]	女论语	Song Ruishen, Song Ruozhao	785—805
	Nü Fan Jie Lu [Female Guidance]	女范捷录	Liu	Ming Dynasty
	Nü Xue [women's textbook]	女学	Lan Dingyuan	Qing 四庫全書存目 叢書●子部二八 Jinan: Qilu Sheshe,1995
local genealogy	Genealogy of Hua [Jiajing] [Longqing] [Qianlong]	华氏传芳录 [嘉靖] [隆庆] [乾隆]	Hua Shoufang et al. Hua Cha Hua Ziheng	1532 1572 1743
	Hua Shi Yi Zhuang Shi Lue [Records of the Charity Organization of Hua's Family]	华氏义庄事略		Qing
	Genealogy of Xue	薛氏族谱采遗	Xue Fuchen	1879 (礼社 1929 未计)
		初始四国日记	薛福成	
	Genealogy of Shao	锡山邵氏宗谱	Shao Wentao	1898
	Genealogy of Ni	梁溪倪氏宗谱	Ni Cheng	1915
	Genealogy of Qin	锡山秦氏宗谱	Qin Yujun	1928
	Genealogy of Gu	顾氏宗谱	Gu Yushu et al.	1917
	Branch Genealogy of Gu in Jingli, Wuxi	顾氏分编泾里支支谱	Gu Baojue, Gu Baochen	1933
Non-local	Collection of Wuyi	武夷新集	Yang Yi	Song Dynasty 1007
	Zhaoming Wen Xuan [Selected Writings edited by the Prince Zhao Ming]	昭明文选	Edit by Xiao Tong	Liang in Southern dynasty
	Huai Nan Zi [The Notes of Liu An]	淮南子	Liu An	Han dynasty
	Collected writings of Liu Zongyuan	柳河东集	Liu Zongyuan,	Tang dynasty

	(Hedong)		edit by Liu Yuxi	
	the Collection of Lou Cheng	骆丞集	Luo Cheng	Tang dynasty
	Collected Works of Quan Zaizhi	权载之文集	Quan Deyu	Tang dynasty
	Collection of Weinan	渭南文集	Lu You	Song dynasty
	Shuang Xi Lei Gao [Collection of Wang Yan]	双溪类稿	Wang Yan	Song dynasty
	Quan Tang Shi Complete Poetry of the Tang	全唐诗	Peng DingQiu	Qing Dynasty
	Quan Tang Wen All Articles of the Tang Dynasty	全唐文	Dong Hao	Qing dynasty

Appendix 4: Three big migrations to south in Chinese history

	Background	Scale	Influence
Migration to South started in Yongjia Period (306-317)	1, The Rebellion of the Eight Princes (291-306) 2, Invasive of five northern minorities (304-439) mainly including <i>Xiongnu</i> , <i>Xianbei</i> , <i>Jie</i> , <i>Di</i> and <i>Qiang</i> . Both made the social order in the Yellow River basin more chaotic, production was seriously damaged, and residents were displaced. ⁷⁵⁰	At least an eighth of the registered population ⁷⁵¹ Almost all class. ⁷⁵²	The development of Jiangnan area and the formation of Jiangnan economic zone. ⁷⁵³ The new discovery of geography and the lasting effect on culture ⁷⁵⁴
Migration after the <i>An-Shi</i> Rebellion	The rebellions of An-Shi and serious wars in the Yellow River basin since the end of the Tang Dynasty conducted by Jie Du Shi. ⁷⁵⁶ And the comparatively peace in <i>Jiang-huai</i> (Yangtze River	Most of the gentries in central Plains ⁷⁵⁸	The population in the south started exceeding that of the north, and the center of economic gravity is gradually

750 Zhao, Changxing, and An Lu, 'Migration in Six Dynasties and the Formation of Jiangnan Economic Zone', *Journal of Northwest A&F University (Social Science Edition)* 12(2021), 144-148.

751 Tan, Qixiang, 'Ethnic Migration after Yongjia Rebellion in the Jin Dynasty' from Changshui Collection. (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1987), pp.210-220

752 Zhao, Changxing, and An Lu, 'Migration in Six Dynasties and the Formation of Jiangnan Economic Zone', *Journal of Northwest A&F University (Social Science Edition)* 12(2012), 144-148.

753 Fu, Zhufu. *Social and Economic History of Feudal China (Volume 3)*. (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1982) p.12.

754 Hu, Axiang, 'Discussion on the Impact of Population Moving South in the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties'. *Jiangsu Research Association of Six Dynasties History*. Paper Album of the History of the Six Dynasties and The Transformation of Wu Culture, 10(2007). 782-789.

756 Governor of one or more provinces in charge of both civil and military affairs during the Tang Dynasty.

758 Ma, Qichang, *Annotated collection of Han Changli*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 1986) vol.6

(755-763) ⁷⁵⁵	and Hui River) area. ⁷⁵⁷		shifting south
the Disaster of <i>Jingkang</i> (1127) 759	The invasion of Jin Dynasty (1115-1234) established by Jurchen. The government's policy of attracting and actively pacifying the population was intensified the scale and momentum of the southward migration	Royalty, military, civilians	Jiangsu and Zhejiang have become the granary of the country, the textile and commercial center. The commercial center completed the shift. The change of the economic status of Jiangnan areas lead to the rise of its status of culture, which increasingly playing a role of influencing and leading the nation ⁷⁶⁰ .

Appendix 5: Summary of newly established garden in each period (-1937)

		-589		960-1279		1368-1499	16 th	17 th	18 th	19 th	20 th
Private	Villa or dwelling garden	1		3	7	21	49	3	5	3	28
Gardens	Studio or literati Club		1	2	4	2	1				
	Family Ancestor Hall	1		1		2	5	2	1	4	?
Minority ownership	School/Academy			1			3	2			2
Religious Garden		10	6	10	6	2	3	6	2	0	1
Public garden			1								2

(The table is according to the chapters of historical sites, gardens, academies, temples, etc. in the county annals, and with reference to the summary books of Wuxi historical gardens, such as Liangxi Ancient Garden, compiled by Chang Rongchu and Wuxi Bureau of Gardens and

755 Chen, Yong, 'Population Moving Southward and Economic Development in the Lower Reaches of Yangtze River in the Late Tang Dynasty', *Journal of East China Normal University (Philosophy and Social Science Edition)*, 5(1996):84-90

757 Li, Jifu (Tang dynasty in 813), *Yuanhe Junxian Zhi* [Chronical in Yuanhe Period], Qinding Siku Quanshu, (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Printing Books, 1986) Chinese Studies Classical Books Integration eBook

759 Tian, Qiang, 'Influence of Population Moving southward in the early Southern Song Dynasty', *Academic Forum of Nan Du (Philosophy and Sciences Edition)* 18.2 (1998):28-32

760 Zhang Guanzi, Wave of Ancient Population Migration

Forestry⁷⁶¹. Due to the overlapping functions in the gardens, they are divided by ownership. It is generally gardens with appreciation value or left description. Due to the public nature of temples and the privacy nature of ancestral temples, almost all temples are listed for scenery viewing or sightseeing, while ancestral temples are rarely listed.

“?’ **Special properties**: although ancestral halls have yard and plant configuration, only a few of them have obvious garden space where to appreciate, but to pay attention to its memorial function. The quantity is for reference only.

The academic gardens: in former researches are mainly gardens with collection and self-study, which has a great difference about real “academy”, at this stage, these gardens are more like private gardens rather than an academy. Academies are those have standard layout and functions formed in the Song Dynasty, and those that do not meet the standard are divided into others group.

Religious group includes temples and Taoist temples, and completely public gardens such as Erquan Scenic spot.

Finally, due to the change of the owners and the change of the ownership of the foundation site, the history of same gardens is complicated. For example, the foundation site of Yugong Gu was abandoned and divided into new gardens and cemeteries. The statistics of gardens may be overlapped or cut according to specific circumstances, but it will not affect the overall trend).

⁷⁶¹ Chang Rongchu, *Wuxi Gardens*, Nanjing: Phoenix Press, 2013 / Wuxi Bureau of Gardens and Forestry, Wuxi Chronicle Office, *Wuxi Library, Ancient Gardens in Liangxi*, Biejing: Fang Zhi Press, 2007.

Appendix 6: Miner in Wuxi⁷⁶²

Mineral	Reserves	Mineral	Reserves
Clay	more than 50 million Tons	Limestone	1.7 billion Tons
Marble	50 million Cubic Meters	Coal	more than 40 million Tons

Appendix 7: Population of Wuxi (resources comes from Geography of official History book of Tang and Song dynasties, and several Chorography of Wuxi)

Year		Family number	population	note
Tang	8 th	16901		
Song	12 th	23314	105620	the invasion of <i>Jin</i> in the north
	13 th	37916	230567	
Yuan	14 th	72162	355754	
Ming	1377	38056	333981	
	1492	57171	279811	
	1613	59175	253670	
Qing		labor		There was no further increase in the labor tax since 1713. The labor population is fixed and separated into two counties
	1645	135308		
	1713	141004		
		Wuxi	Jinkui	
		73853	68656	
		Male population		
	1795	325066	241151	
	1830	339549	258934	
	1865	72053	138008	The Taiping Rebellion
Republic of China	1912	family	population	Combined together
		164213	829265	
	1936	252988	1218827	
	1938	129241	621441	Invasion by Japan in 1937
	1949	237983	1110806	

Appendix 8: Plants in the records of Wuxi from 9th century

Garden space	Time(century)	Plant (blank means no record of plants in this period)
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⁷⁶² Wuxi Chorography Office. Wuxi Yearbook. Beijing: Local Annals Publishing House, 2017

Huishansi	6th	Pine trees covers the Mount. Hui
	9th-14th	golden lotus (<i>Nuphar pumilum</i> (Hoffm.) DC.), Pine tree (<i>Pinus</i>), Cypress (<i>Platycladus orientalis</i> (L.) <i>Francoptmxjkm</i> sc), Bamboo (<i>Bambusoideae</i>), Warm tree (Two trees like orange), Sweet-scented Osmanthus (<i>Osmanthus fragrans</i> (Thunb.) Lour.)
	14th	A 630-year-old Ginkgo tree (still alive), golden lotus, <i>ten thousand of pine trees around the Tingsong courtyard</i> , bamboos in Zhulu house courtyard and Tingsong courtyard (明代沈贞有图).
	17 th	golden lotus , More than 200-year-old <i>Ficus pumila</i> on the first ginkgo tree (still alive),. Another 280-year-old ginkgo tree still alive. Several Cyperus in Yunqi building area
Nanchansi	6 th -19 th	
	Late 19	Foreign poplar, abelia763, Chinese hackberry, elm, willow, dozens of Chinese parasol trees, castor beans, holly, boxwood, loquat, pomegranate, hemp palm, peach, sweet osmanthus, melon, bean, vegetables in vegetable garden, flower garden
Zhituosi	6 th -14 th	
	14	Chinese parasol tree, bamboo, pine Two trees are still alive, one is a 320-year-old ginkgo, the other is a 170-year-old boxwood.
Changtaisi	6 th -15 th	
	15th	Hundreds of cypress trees and sweet Osmanthus trees A 530-year-old ginkgo is still alive
Huazangsi	12th	Two old cypresses, pine trees one of the ginkgo trees lived as far as 1980s
Jiaoshansi	6-14th	
	18	Bamboo and shoot
Qingshansi	?	Three old trees alive, one 330-year-old ginkgo, a 130-year-old camphor, and a 130-year- old hackberry
Lexi House and Suichu Studio	12	Plum, Chinese flowering crabapple (<i>Malus spectabilis</i>) , both of them more than 100 trees
Yimei Hall and Wanzhu Garden	13	Ten thousand bamboos, several plum (<i>Prunus mume</i> Siebold & Zucc.)
Yunlin House	14	Several Chinese Parasol trees, several bamboos, over 10 pear trees, cypress vine
Huilv House	14	Pine, Chinese Parasol tree, willow (figure)
Rongxi House	14	apricot blossom (<i>Prunus armeniaca</i>), bamboo forest
Xishan Shengkai building	14	Typha angustifolia L, lotus, millet, pine

763 榦, A tree with a knotted trunk that can be used as a walking stick. According to the list and location of trees in Jichang Garden in 1846 in the historical data of Jichang Garden, and the remaining plants at present, it should be Zelkova commonly used as furniture.

Wansong Garden	Early 15	conifers around the garden, weeping willow, and lotus in legendary	Flower garden in the late Qing Dynasty in the Pine Garden Lane
Pear garden	Early 15	Pear trees	
Houle Garden	15	Chinese parasol tree, cypress, poplar, willow, Chinese crabapple, peach, plum, juniper, <i>Symplocos sumuntia Buch.Ham.ex D.Don</i> , red plum, clove(<i>Syringa oblata Lindl.</i>)	
Memorial temple of Zhang Xun	15	Two 430-year- old ginkgo trees are still alive	
Bishan Club	15	Figure: pine, bamboo, Chinese parasol tree A 120-year-old Chinese pagoda tree (<i>Sophora japonica</i> 'Pendula') and a 120-year- old privet tree (<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>) are still alive.	
Rongchun House	Early 16 th	81 Precise orchids from Changzhou, lotus, bamboo path, calamus	
Zhenshang House	Early 16	Pine trees (figure)	
Bamboo Garden	Early 16	Bamboo	
Erquan Academy	Early 16	Bamboo, pine A 260-year- old ginkgo tree is still alive.	
Rencao temple	16 th	Dozens of Pine trees (figure)	
	20 th	Two ginkgo trees, one is still alive (220 years old)	
Huishan Spring	9 th -13 th	No records	
	16 th	Wen Zhengming's Painting 惠山茶会 pine trees	
	18	Painting in Chorography of Wuxi (18 th century edition), two big trees (pine)	
Hushan garden	12	Qian Shen (first owner)	
		Chen Bin (second owner) planted hundreds of plums.	
	16	Wang Wen (last owner) planted a lot of pine, juniper, lotus, and reed.	
Memorial temple of Wang Wen	Late 16	Old Pine tree, magnolia (thousands of flowers)	
Qingxi Garden	16	Climbing fig, cypress vine, orange, Grapefruit, elm, pine, bamboo chrysanthemum	
Guchuan Garden	16	bamboo	
Zhongxiang Hall and South Garden	16	Each of fragrant flowers blossoming in different four seasons is more than a hundred for changing. thousand citrons are hanging between the beams in late autumn	
Tan Kai's House and Garden	16	Pine and bamboo on three sides around the garden	
Hua's House and Garden	16	lots of sweet osmanthus fragrans trees	

Jichang Garden	1530s	Pine, <i>Usnea diffracta</i> Vain. Bamboo, squirrel, waterfowl	
	1560s	Several acres of garden, thousands of bamboos, purple water chestnuts, white lotus, vegetable garden, pine, plum, double magnolia in front of the hall, flowers, fruit, ancient trees	
	1592-1599	several camphor (still alive), one precise tree from Guangdong, plum bamboo forest, pine, osmanthus fragrans grove, ten acres of pond, dozens of peonies, dozens of peaches, pear, dates, weeping willow	
	1655	several camphor (still alive), plum including precise cultivar “Yudie(jade butterfly)”, camellia which more than six meters high with thousands of red flowers, osmanthus fragrans, banana	
	Since 1746	Ancestral temple: <i>Ulmaceae</i> Mirb. 榿 Ju (47) 764 , Chinese parasol tree(16), holly(17), camphor(16), hackberry(11), three group of sweet Osmanthus (31), cypress(32), plum garden(14), cedar(3), walnut(2), Chinese scholar tree(2), catalpa(2), <i>Melia azedarach</i> (4), <i>Photinia</i> (2), <i>Populus</i> (7), loquat(1), pine(1), sandalwood(1), Jiu Chuan Ling Shu 765 (2) , You 榿 (8) , bamboo garden 766	
West Garden	16		water chestnut, arrowhead, lotus, <i>Zizania aquatica</i>
Jiayin Garden	16	more than 20 plum, lotus, bamboo grove, old Cyperus, Chinese scholar tree, <i>Rosa banksiae</i> W.T. Aiton, crape myrtle, orange, cherry orchard, plum garden, jujube, chestnut, vegetable garden, chrysanthemum garden	
Guanlong House	16	Dozens of pine trees 惠山	
容湖庄	16		
Jiefang Garden	16	Dozens of Mu of plum	
Wuling Seclusion House	16	Pine, bamboo, plum, Chinese parasol tree, Osmanthus, Chinese scholar tree, peach, plum, elm, willow, tamarisk, <i>Abelia</i> , hibiscus hedge, vegetable garden and rice field.	
	18	the land was reduced, the buildings and the landscape were increased: 100 plum trees planted on the platform, surrounded by bamboo, mixed plants including peach, apricot, jujube, chestnut, cherry, orange, waxberry, bamboo hedge	
Dachi House	Late 16	hundreds of pines, thousands of bamboos, and dozens of osmanthus	
	20	Yanju House: Peach and willows are planted all around the large pool	
Yugong valley	Late 16	vegetation covers an area of 4 Mu (2667m² one tenth of the whole garden). Peach, plum, willow, Chinese parasol tree, orange citron, lotus. Bodhi yard: palm, more than 100 plum blossoms (analogy <i>Boswellia thurifera</i> in Buddhism), orange citron, pine and cypress. Pingjia ridge: Peach on the right and plum on the left. several old trees, an old vine	

764 Ju including Qingju and Shaju.

765 Maybe *Pterocarya stenoptera*

766 Statistics of Trees in 1846 from Collection of Historical documents of Jianchang Garden

		Courtyard (Tianjun Hall and Lotus Pond): 12 magnolia tree (one offspring remains), osmanthus fragrans grove, weeping willow, lotus, peach blossoms, Chinese fir trees, bamboo forests Pavilion: cherry, loquat, two plums, cypress: ten layers platform with more than ten tree peonies in each layer including precise “Yaohuang” and “Weizi”, two wintersweet trees Huahe Pavilion: more than 50 osmanthus fragrans trees, 3 big pine, Chinese crabapple, pomegranate, malus, azalea, purple and white plantain lily, 200 plums interval with Chinese parasol trees Inner courtyard: 2 central trees, 16 osmanthus, 2 Chinese parasol trees A 480-year-old ginkgo tree is still alive
	Late 17	Memorial temple of Hu Yuan (figure): osmanthus tree (one 180-year-old is still alive) , <i>Chloranthus spicatus</i> , <i>magnolia</i> (one 330-year-old is still alive)
Chameng Pavilion	16	Chinese parasol tree, <i>Usnea diffracta</i> Vain.
Memorial temple of Gu Dongyang	16	Old trees alive: 480-year-old ginkgo tree, <i>Ulmus parvifolia</i> Jacq, <i>Zelkova schneideriana</i> , <i>Ligustrum lucidum</i> , <i>Citrus medica</i>
Water House	Late 16	Peach, bamboo, shoots (<i>Zizania aquatica</i>), lotus, reed
Donglin academy	Early 17	Peach, two plums, apricot, bamboo, orange, willow, <i>Platycladus</i> (one 210 -year-old still alive), Chinese parasol tree, pine, orchid A 140-year-old box is still alive. Two catalpa trees are alive, one is 120 years old, and the other is 110.
Tianquan Hall	Early 17	Between the continuous wheat fields and rice fields, one osmanthus tree, ten thousand bamboos, angelica, rattan covers the sky, old trees grow along the bank
South Garden	Early 17	Peach and willow around the pool, lotus, bamboo around the house, hundreds of plum trees in the west, rice field in the east, pine in the high area
Qiyin Garden	Early 17	Plum, crabapple (<i>Malus micromalus</i>), magnolia, lotus
Huaxiao pavilion	17	Plums and precise flowers
Free life Pond	17 th	Figure, bamboo, trees
Wei Garden	17	plum
Chrysanthemum Garden	17	Chrysanthemum
Ke Garden	Late 17	A Chinese wisteria, bamboo, old trees, auspicious flowers
Old Chaoyang temple	18	Pine tree
Bamboo house	Late 18	Bamboo grove
Memorial temple of soldiers dead in the Taiping Rebellion	19 th century (1865)	Four Osmanthus trees (all alive)
Xue's House and Garden	Late 19	Old trees alive: two magnolia, a <i>Podocarpus Acrophyllus</i> , a pomegranate
Qianlu Garden	Late 19	Old trees alive: <i>Podocarpus Acrophyllus</i> , <i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>

Yi Garden	1920s	2 Mu vegetable garden, peach, plums, apricot, pomegranate, magnolia, cherry blossom, osmanthus, crabapple, willow, Chinese parasol tree. one strip of <i>Brassica rapa var. oleifera de Candolle</i>
Pijiang Garden	1927	Chinese parasol tree, loquat, pomegranate, “green sepal” plum, Osmanthus, orchid, tree peony
Orchids Garden	1930s	orchid
Fragrant garden	20	orchid
Plum Garden	20	有平面图 3000 more plum trees and more than 300 sweet osmanthus trees. Peach and cherry trees planted in peach garden. Rongguangda garden plants company, Chenpi plum(glazed plum with pericarpium citri reticulatae) in Sanle company ⁷⁶⁷ , tea
Li Garden	20	<i>Rhododendron</i> , peach and willows on the embankment, and water chestnuts and lotus planted in the lake. Plum, bamboo
Yunguo Garden	20	有平面图 willow and bamboo
Turtle head Isle	20	有平面图?
Yuantouzhu scenic spot which included several gardens built in the modern 768 China	20	Hengyun House: cherry trees from Japan, orchard
		Old trees alive: 160-year-old ginkgo, 170-year-old Chinese juniper, <i>Celtis sinensis</i> , <i>Acer buergerianum</i> , <i>Liquidambar formosana</i>
		Taihu House: peach, tea(gift)
		Old trees alive: three Chinese junipers, one is 230-year-old, the other two is 110-year-old; several german oaks, 170-year-old <i>Lithocarpus glaber</i> , magnolia, <i>L.purpurea</i> Hassk, <i>Pistacia chinensis</i> , <i>Zelkova schneideriana</i> , <i>Pseudolarix amabilis</i> , <i>Ulmus parvifolia</i> , <i>Rosa banksiae</i> ’, <i>Celtis sinensis</i> , <i>Acer buergerianum</i> , <i>Sapium sebiferum</i> , <i>Toona sinensis</i> .A.Juss, <i>Acer palmatum</i> var., <i>Cedrus deodara</i> , sweet Osmanthus, Chinese pogoda tree, <i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>
		Zhen’s Garedn: orchard, base of garden plants.
		Chen’s Garden: flowers and fruit trees of China and the West. The 100-year-old white <i>Camellia sasanqua Thunb.</i> is blooming like snow(alive), acer palmatum (alive), the king pine (<i>Pinus palustris</i> Mill.) introduced from America in 1919, two <i>Castanopsis Carlesii</i> trees (still alive), cherry (introduced but rare now because the severe insect infestation), Chengran(transliteration) flower with green multiple petals (introduced).
Zhou’s garden	20	Base of Chinese pagoda tree
Jin Garden	20	Lotus, sweet Osmanthus tree, willow. old trees alive: <i>Pseudolarix amabilis</i> , several sweet Osmanthus trees in and around the Zongjing House, <i>Pterocarya stenoptera</i> , chinese juniper, pomegrangate, camillia, <i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i>

767 This part comes from Mr. Huang Maoru and several modern garden studies

768 Wang Wenji, ‘Wuxi modern garden survey’

Tomb of Taibo		Lotus, plum, bamboo,
Tombs and memorial halls		the tombs or ancestral temple maps are always referenced to genealogies of clan. Pine, willow, or lotus are planted.
academies and Schools	19 and 20 th century	They are mainly appeared in villages and towns under the financial support of the township entrepreneurs from the late Qing dynasty after the Taiping Rebellion to the republic of China. And some of them experienced the change from academies to primary and secondary school in the western education system. Some take up former temples or existing homes, some newly established. Some old trees still alive now. They are usually ginkgo and pine, and sweet osmanthus, hackberry, boxwood, magnolia, cocobolo, etc. Some existence plants are older than the age of the school. It indicates that schools pay attention to preserving the old trees on the site in the construction, or transplanting of large trees to satisfy the needs of the landscape.

Appendix 9: Species in garden space in different centuries

Time	Speices
-14th	Pine tree (<i>Pinus</i>), Cypress (<i>Platycladus orientalis</i>(L.) <i>Francoptmxjjkmsc</i>) Chinese parasol tree (Firmiana simplex (Linnaeus) W.Wight) , willow (Salix babylonica Linn.) , Warm tree (Two trees like orange), Bamboo (<i>Bambusoideae</i>), millet (<i>Setaria italica</i>) Sweet-scented Osmanthus (<i>Osmanthus fragrans</i> (Thunb.) Lour.), plum (Prunus mume Siebold & Zucc.) , Chinese flowering crabapple (Malus spectabilis) , pear (Pyrus spp) , apricot blossom (Prunus armeniaca) golden lotus (<i>Nuphar pumilum</i> (Hoffm.) DC.), cattail (Typha angustifolia L) , lotus (<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>) cypress vine (Usnea diffracta Vain.)
15-16th	Cypress, conifers, pine, juniper (Juniperus chinensis L), Chinese fir trees (Taxodiaceae) Bamboo, rice field. <i>Cyperus</i> Chinese parasol tree, willow, tree from Guangdong, ginkgo (<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>), camphor (<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i> (L.) presl), Chinese scholar tree (Styphnolobium japonicum (L.) Schott), poplar (Populus L.), elm (Ulmus pumila L.), palm (Trachycarpus fortunei (Hook.) H. Wendl.), <i>Ligustrum lucidum</i> , Zelkova schneideriana, Ulmus parvifolia Jacq

	Chestnut (<i>Castanea mollissima</i> Blume), date (<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i> Mill.) pear, Chinese flowering crabapple, peach, plum, red plum, cherry (<i>Prunus</i> spp.), orange (<i>Citrus medica</i>), Grapefruit (<i>Citrus maxima</i> (Burm.) Merr.), citrons (<i>Citrus medica</i> L.), loquat (<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i> (Thunb.) Lindl.), pomegranate (<i>Punica granatum</i> L.) sweet Osmanthus trees, clove (<i>Syringa oblata</i> Lindl.), <i>Symplocos Sumuntia Buch.Ham.ex D.Don</i>, magnolia (<i>Yulania denudata</i> (Desr.) D. L. Fu), crape myrtle (<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i> L.), wintersweet trees (<i>Chimonanthus praecox</i> (L.) Link), purple and white plantain lily (<i>Hosta ventricosa</i> (Salisb.) Stearn and <i>Hosta plantaginea</i> (Lam.) Aschers.) orchids (<i>Cymbidium</i> spp.), chrysanthemum (<i>Chrysanthemum</i> × <i>morifolium</i> Ramat), tree peony (<i>Paeonia</i> × <i>suffruticosa</i> Andr.) including precise variation “Yaohuang” and “Weizi”, <i>Rosa banksiae</i> W.T. Aiton, hibiscus (<i>Hibiscus syriacus</i> Linn.), <i>Abelia</i>, tamarisk (<i>Tamarix chinensis</i> Lour.), azalea (<i>Rhododendron simsii</i> Planch.) lotus, calamus (<i>Acorus calamus</i> L.), reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i> (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud.), purple water chestnuts (<i>Trapa bispinosa</i> Roxb.), <i>Zizania latifolia</i> (Griseb.) Stapf cypress vine, Climbing fig (<i>Ficus pumila</i>)
17-18th	Pine, Cyperus, <i>Platycladus</i> (<i>Platycladus orientalis</i> (L.) Franco) Bamboo, wheat fields and rice fields ginkgo tree, willow, Chinese parasol tree jujube, chestnut plum, peach, apricot, cherry, orange, crabapple, Waxberry (<i>Myrica rubra</i> (Lour.) S. et Zucc.) sweet Osmanthus, magnolia Chrysanthemum, orchid, <i>Chloranthus spicatus</i>, <i>Angelica</i> golden lotus, lotus <i>Ficus pumila</i>, Chinese wisteria (<i>Wisteria sinensis</i> (Sims) Sweet)
19-20th	Pine, Chinese juniper, <i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i> (Thunb.) D. Don, <i>Cedrus deodara</i>, <i>Pseudolarix amabilis</i>, king pine (<i>Pinus palustris</i> Mill.) bamboo

	Cinnamomum camphora, ginkgo, elm, willow, Chinese parasol trees, Chinese pagoda tree, palm, foreign poplar, Chinese hackberry (Celtis sinensis) , abelia, Acer buergerianum, Liquidambar formosana, german oaks (Quercus acutissima Carruth.) , Lithocarpus glaber, I.purpurea Hassk, Pistacia chinensis, Zelkova schneideriana, Acer palmatum var., Toona sinensis.A.Juss, Sapium sebiferum, Ulmus parvifolia, Castanopsis Carlesii, Pterocarya stenoptera Plums including precise variation “green sepal” plum, apricot, loquat, pomegranate, peach, magnolia, pomegranate, crabapple, sweet osmanthus, magnolia, Lagerstroemia indica, cherry blossom, Camellia sasanqua Thunb. holly (Ilex chinensis Sims), boxwood (Buxus sinica (Rehder & E. H. Wilson) M. Cheng), tea orchid, Rosa banksiae, tree peony, Rhododendron, Chengran(transliteration) flower with green multiple petals (introduced). water chestnuts, lotus melon, bean castor beans (Ricinus communis L.), Brassica rapa var. oleifera de Candolle
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Appendix 10: Old trees over 100 -year-old in Wuxi Garden space (planted during 1390 to 1920) ⁷⁶⁹

Species	Number、 the max age		
Range of age	650-370	370-160	160-90
银杏 Ginkgo biloba L.	18、 630	26+2	8
苦楮 Castanopsis sclerophylla	2、 680	5、 230	2
香樟 Cinnamomum camphora (L.) presl	3、 430 (introduce from Jiangxi Province)	8	4

⁷⁶⁹ Sources of old trees: <http://gyj.wuxi.gov.cn/ztzl1/gsmm/index.shtml> (2021/3/8)

桂花 <i>Osmanthus fragrans</i>		3、200	44
白玉兰 <i>Magnolia denudata</i>		1、330	2
桧柏 <i>Sabina chinensis</i>		2、230	20
朴树 <i>Celtis sinensis</i>		6、220	14
柏树 <i>Platycladus orientalis</i>		1、220	
垂枝槐 <i>Sophora japonica</i> 'Pendula'		2、170	1
榉树（榎本土） <i>Zelkova schneideriana</i>		4、190	1
广玉兰 <i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>		3、190	4
麻栎 <i>Quercus acutissima</i> Carruth.		4、180	5
桑树 <i>Morus alba</i>		1、170	
石栎 <i>Lithocarpus glaber</i>		1、170 鼋头渚之前	
臭椿 <i>Ailanthus altissima</i>			1、120
黄杨 <i>Buxus sinica</i>		1、170	5、150
女贞 <i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>			4、120
枳椇 <i>Hovenia acerba</i>			1、120
紫薇 <i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>			3、140
糙叶树 <i>Aphananthe aspera</i>			2、160
五角枫 <i>Acer elegantulum</i>			3、110
石楠 <i>Photinia serrulata</i> Lindl			1、120
罗汉松 <i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i> (Thunb.) D.Don			11、130
海桐 <i>Pittosporum tobira</i>			1、120
黄檀 <i>Dalbergia hupeana</i>			4、150
龙柏 <i>Sabina chinensis</i> 'Kaizuca'			15、120
枣树 <i>Zizyphus jujuba</i>			1、120
黄金树 <i>Catalpa speciosa</i>			1、120
红籽冬青 <i>I.purpurea</i> Hassk			2、140
无刺枸骨 <i>Ilex Corunta</i> Var.fortunei			1、120
山茶 <i>Camellia japonica</i>			5、120
紫藤 <i>Wisteria sinensis</i>			1、120
山合欢 <i>Albizia kalkora</i>			1、140
山槭 <i>Acer japonium</i>			1、120
石榴 <i>Punica granatum</i> Linn			4、120
丝绵木 <i>Euonymus bungeanus</i>			1、120

小叶鸡爪槭 <i>Acer palmatum</i>			2、120
柞木 <i>Xylosma racemosum</i> (Sieb. et Zucc.) Miq.			1、120
檫木 <i>Sassafras tzumu</i>			1、100
厚皮香 <i>Ternstroemia gymnanthera</i>			1、100
木香 <i>Rosa banksiae</i> '			2、120
茶梅 <i>Camellia sasanqua</i>			1、100
黄连木 <i>Pistacia chinensis</i>			1、140
金钱松 <i>Pseudolarix amabilis</i>			1、120
榔榆 <i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>			2、120
三角枫 <i>Acer buergerianum</i>			5、140
乌桕 <i>Sapium sebiferum</i>			1、140
香椿 <i>Toona sinensis</i> .A.Juss			1、120
雪松 <i>Cedrus deodara</i>			2、120
枫香 <i>Liquidambar formosana</i>			1、120
楸树 <i>Catalpa ovata</i>			2、120
香橼 <i>Citrus medica</i>			1、120
牡丹 <i>Paeonia suffruticosa</i>			1、150
白栎 <i>Quercus fabri</i>			2、140
枫杨 <i>Pterocarya stenoptera</i>			3、110

Appendix 11: Old trees over 100-year- old out of the garden space

species	Number、the max age		
Range of age	650-370	370-160	160-90
银杏 <i>Ginkgo biloba</i> L.	3	23	12
香樟 <i>Cinnamomum camphora</i> (L.) presl		3	6+3
苦槠 <i>Castanopsis sclerophylla</i>		4、170	
桂花 <i>Osmanthus fragrans</i>		1	2
榉树 (槻本土) <i>Zelkova schneideriana</i>		3、190	7
朴树 <i>Celtis sinensis</i>		4、200	21
枫杨 <i>Pterocarya stenoptera</i>		1、170	
女贞 <i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>		1、170	
黄杨 <i>Buxus sinica</i>		1、200	
枸骨 Horny Holly		2、170	
麻栎 <i>Quercus acutissima</i>		1	2

糙叶树 <i>Aphananthe aspera</i>		1、270	1
白皮松 <i>Pinus bungeana</i>		1、200	4
罗汉松 <i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i> (Thunb.) D.Don		1、180	3
槐树 <i>Styphnolobium japonicum</i> (L.) Schott		1、200	
黄连木 <i>Pistacia chinensis</i> Bunge		1、220	
雀梅 <i>Sageretia theezans</i>		3、220	
板栗 <i>Castanea mollissima</i>			1
湖桑 <i>Morus alba</i> var. <i>multicaulis</i>			1
楝树 <i>Melia azedarach</i>			2
木瓜 <i>Chaenomeles speciosa</i>			2
石榴 <i>Punica granatum</i>			1
柘树 <i>Cudrania tricuspidate</i>			1
榧树 <i>Torreya grandis</i>			2 introduced from British
羽毛枫 <i>Acer palmatum</i> 'Dissecrum'			1
乌桕 <i>Sapium sebiferum</i>			2
小叶鸡爪槭 <i>Acer palmatum</i>			1
枫香 <i>Liquidambar formosana</i>			1
垂枝槐 <i>Sophora japonica</i> 'Pendula'			1
龙柏 <i>Sabina chinensis</i> 'Kaizuca'			5
广玉兰 <i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>			4
白玉兰 <i>Magnolia denudata</i>			1
雪松 <i>Cedrus deodara</i>			13
柿子 <i>Diospyros kari</i>			1
杜鹃 <i>Rhododendron</i>			3
香橼 <i>Citrus medica</i>			1
法国梧桐 <i>Platanus acerifolia</i>			1
皂荚 <i>Gleditsia sinensis</i>			1
黄金树 <i>Catalpa speciosa</i>			1
紫藤 <i>Wisteria sinensis</i>			1
丝绵木 <i>Euonymus bungeanus</i>			1
海桐 <i>Pittosporum tobira</i>			1

Appendix 12: Statistics of the six major industrial cities during 1911-1949⁷⁷⁰

	City	Shanghai	Tianjin	Wuhan	Guangzhou	Qingdao	Wuxi
Factory	Number	3485	1224	787	1104	140	315
	Proportion (%)	18.6	6.5	4.3	5.9	0.9	1.7
	Rank	1	2	4	3	6	5
Capitalization	Aggregate amount (10k)	19087	2420	2086	1302	1764	1407
	Proportion (%)	39.4	5.0	4.3	2.7	3.6	2.9
	Rank	1	2	3	6	4	5
Output value	Aggregate amount (10k)		7450	7329	10156	2709	7726
	Proportion (%)	45.9	4.7	4.6	6.4	1.7	4.8
	Rank	1	4	5	2	6	3
Worker	Number	245,948	34,769	48,291	32,131	9,457	63,760
	Proportion (%)	31.1	4.4	6.1	4.1	1.2	8.1
	Rank	1	4	3	5	6	2

Appendix 13: Number of Private enterprise development of Wuxi during 1911-1949⁷⁷¹

Year	1910	1920	1929	1936
Cotton textile	4	13	22	23
Silk reeling	5	15	49	51
Flour	2	5	5	6
Oil		10	13	13
Rice milling	1	2	5	8
knitting		5	8	6
Woven silk			1	1
Wool textile				1
Chemical industry		1	2	4

⁷⁷⁰ Cai Jing. The Development of Wuxi' s Ethical Industry and Wuxi' s Industrial Architecture. Architecture and Culture,2009(07):106-109. Based on Chen Zhen, Materials on Modern Chinese Industrial History (Fourth Series). Beijing: Life, Reading and New Knowledge- Sanlian Publishing House, 1961.

Wuxi Industry and Commerce Collection. Printed and edited by Jiangsu Provincial Industry Association

Wang Jingyu. Materials of Modern Chinese Industrial History (Second Series). Beijing: Science Press. 1957

⁷⁷¹ Cai Jing. The Development of Wuxi' s Ethical Industry and Wuxi' s Industrial Architecture. Architecture and Culture,2009(07):106-109.

Soap		3	2	1
Paper making			1	1
Printing		3	6	6
Food		1	5	3
Other light industry		2	5	7
Building materials		3	5	5
Mechanical repair	1	5	9	8
Road transport			2	4
Telecommunication		1	1	1
Power	1	1	4	1
Total	14	70	145	150

Appendix 14: Examples of Buddhism rituals

The Daxiong Hall is mainly used for benison the royal family, blessing nature and worshipping Buddha. They obey the regular progress: First of all, the person in charge of the activity need notify the abbot and post the poster or hang the wooden board.⁷⁷² to inform the public one day in advance or in the morning of the event day. Before the start of the activity, the site will be arranged, indoor or outdoor, the required items are fetched from special small houses or buy ahead of the time. Then, the ceremony will be held at fixed procedures: normally, the process is carried out after breakfast. The abbot is invited out and accept everyone's salutes. The ceremony begins, and bell rings, tums or tea are used as a step instruction or the node for rest. In addition to these, there is also a tribute to the abbot sometimes at the end of the rituals. At last, monks leave the ritual place and have tea in rooms to thank people and have a rest.

⁷⁷² Zhang Shiqing, Wushan Shicha Tu Yu Nansong Jiangnan Fosi, [Illustrations of 15 Chan Temples and Temples in Jiangnan area in the South Song Dynasty] (Nanjing: China Architecture & Building Press,2000)

接脚香	普請	送亡	放參	看經	誦經	香齋	入室	上堂	濯足	給戒	煎湯	淨髮	開浴	洗衣	陞座	點茶	東掛	坐堂
接腳香	迎聖	送骨	念佛	唱衣	坐禪	香說	小參	巡堂	什物僧文	掃地	洗鉢	齊前	淋淨	泡衣	行通	接官	接和尚	

The ceremony of Buddha's birthday as an example:

In advance, the responsible person giving the money for the provider purchase to the storage manager, and writing the blessings and vows. On the birthday, the storage staff are responsible for the arrangement (before the Main hall) that a statue of the Buddha is arranged in the middle in a fragrant soup basin with two spoons and other providers. After the ceremony begin, the abbot steps forward with a blessing: on the auspicious time of the Buddha's birthday, the abbot of a temple devoutly lit incense and offered providers to Sakyamuni. Your mercy protects us and we hope that our blessing will bring your merits and virtues into the world. Then sits cross-legged and says: on the 8th day in the fourth month, we respectfully meet the Buddha's auspicious born day. Leading monks and carefully preparing flowers, candles, fruit, tea and all kinds of delicious. I am the abbot (his name) hold a ceremony here to show the honor to you, collected merits and virtues to thank you for your kind and celebrate with Buddhists. After the abbot speech, he says: now preparing things to the great Buddha hall together, bath Buddha and chant sutras.

In the hall, the monks stand in order facing the Buddha. First of all, the abbot offers the incense and kowtow three times, drinks the soup (Buddhist food, tea or a mixture of ingredients) served by the waiter when the incense attendant in charge came forward to help the abbot place the incense on the table, again kowtow three times and offers incense, places the gifts given by the believers in front of the statue of the Buddha, performs the tea ceremony, and kowtow three times for the third time and picks up his seat. Then, the karma-dana salute to the public and offer incense, the public worship with kowtow nine times and the abbot kneel to the incense stove at the same time. The karma-dana says: one moon in the sky, all the water has its shadow; each Buddha is born sitting in a lotus flower. The Buddha's light illuminates all worlds (Sanskrit: trayo dhatava, the life and death worlds for all sentient animals) and sweet dew is sprinkled to all life (viviparition, oviparity, humidogene and metaplasia). Then, leading all monks sing the Buddhist verse: I am now bathing Buddhas, they are clean, omniscient, dignified, and merits collected. All the dirt has gone. Making the body and world pure. At last, reading Surangama Mantra and the karma-dana says the ending statement facing to the monks.



Rain praying

In the Qing dynasty, the process is basically the same as before. Some blessing words changed, and some details became flexible, such as the time for forbidden leave, the location of the site, etc., which is said “determined by the situation”. Some ceremonies are added several days for preparation and the site details, such as the altar built to pray for rain that it explains in more detail the size and arrangement of the site, the numbers and locations of offerings. Compared with the rain praying in Ming Dynasty, it is more

clear.⁷⁷³ These descriptions of the site can more accurately understand the site preparation of Buddhist ceremonies. At the same time, more bodhisattva birthdays have been added. Same as the Master Guolian said: “we do the blessing for all these bodhisattva birthdays now in Huazangsi”. Comparatively, as a scenic spot, the variety of rituals are incomplete in Huishansi. As Dharma Xiang said, dharma meetings do not usually invite outsiders.

Take the Gaoxiang (thurification 烧香: A ritual in which monks offer incense(Figure 26) to invite the abbot to speak or enlighten them 告香 before the summer retreat 结夏⁷⁷⁴) as an example. It is an important ritual in 14th century, without which the monks are not entitled to receive instruction from the elders. It does not appear until the 1335 edition but the rudiment of the ritual has been formed that new monk need arrange their luggage, report their names, and worship the abbot and eminent monks already in the temple using fixed etiquette: The new arrivals nominate a person who is familiar with the ritual as the principal of the activity. If all monks of the temple participate in the event, the head-seat will be the person in charge. After consulting with karma-dana, the principal led the crowd to the waiter and told him, " the newly monks want to hold the Gaoxiang ritual and listen to the instruction. Please tell the abbot." The attendant(侍者 shizhe) replied, "Please allow me to report to the abbot, and I will let you know as soon as I get the order." When the abbot agrees, he notifies the minister(Tangsi 堂司). The minister arranges the position and rehearses in advance. The monks order is according to the time of entering the temple, divided into the east and west sides, both sides are standing facing the dharma seat. The minister collected money from each monk for the

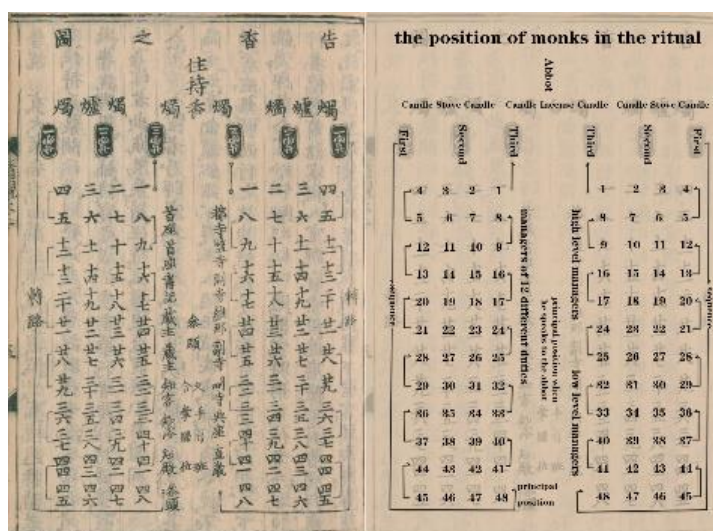
773 Historical texts: Bao Cheng(monk in Ming Dynasty),Shishi Yuanliu Yinghua Shiji [the Origin and Development deeds of Buddha] 1486block- printed edition, volume 4.

774 Ding Baofu, Fo Xue Da Cidian,[The Buddhist Dictionary] (Beijing: China Book Press, 2011) Buddhist monks stay in monasteries for 90 days without going out from the fifteenth day of the fourth month to the fifteenth day of the seventh month in the lunar calendar.

purchase of incense and paper, and paid it to the principal.



Diagram of the arrangement of three groups of
the incense (photo by candles and stoves (By author
author in 2020)



the position and sequence of Gaoxiang

On the day of the ritual, the attendants ask the waiters who serves guests(客头行者)to lay screens and chairs in the Dharma hall. There are 3 long desks to arrange 3 pairs of candlesticks, 3 stoves and a few incense as the figure 28 showed. Additionally, a piece of small worship mat is laid outside. The minister(tangsi 堂司) notified the monks one by one and hung a small board “Gaoxiang告香” in advance. The attendant wrote a notification and pasted it on the pillar of the Dharma hall, which read: "listen to the abbot, the eminent monk, the chief monk, the guest monk, you are not required to attend the ritual.” After eating the breakfast porridge, the monks gather together when listening

the hit three times in the dormitories, stand in the right place and prepare the incense box and the seats. The principal, the karma-dana, together with the attendant enter the inner room (or Fangzhang: the abbot's Room) and return their place after inviting the abbot. Then, the monks need bow and greet to the abbot three times under the leadership, the first before he sit down, the second between the principal get and insert the incense, and, the third after all monks finishing three times kowtow to the abbot. Next, as a representative, the principal steps forward to the front of the chair, salutes and asks the abbot for guidance which usually three old practices of the Chan forest to enlighten the monks. After discussing his views, he immediately returns to his position, bows to others, offers a piece of incense, and stands with folded hands(Figure 29775). The third step, according to the order in the figure, six monks (three on the left and three right) as a group stand in front of the incense stove, offer incense and greet each other. After that, walk slowly following and joining at the end of the queue. All monks join palms when they back to the original positions. The forth step, all monks kowtow to the abbot three times and the principal step forward to thank the abbot. Then, all monks kowtow three times again and the principal step forward to make a speech to blessing the abbot. At last, all monks kowtow the third time and collected the seat. The fifth step, the waiter hit drum five times, monks changed their position or orientation and start the face-to-face Buddhism chatting (Pushuo 普说). Monks move back to the original orientation after the chatting. The principal insert the incense and kowtow three times to the abbot. If the abbot said "do not give a curtesy", monks using seats hit the ground as kowtow. Then everyone says gratitude, greet to each other and leave the Dharma hall.

775 Gu Hongzhong, Han Xizai Yeyan Tu[Han Xizai's Banquet], Beijin, The Place Museum
Sculpture of a Lady in Jinci Temple in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, photo by author



Cross-hand etiquette

After the ritual, it is time to express one's thanks. First, the principal lead monks to the west side of the Dharma hall to thank the attendant and the karma-dana using seats hit the ground to represent kowtow. Then, monks show thanks to the principal using same etiquette. Two waiters prepare the invitation, arrange the desks, writing brush and ink stone in advance to invite all monks to drink tea and sign their names accompanied with the chief monk. After that, hit the drum and monks stand in his place, the two waiters give their curtesy. At that night, the abbot invited the principal, the karma-dana and waiters to have a dinner, still accompanied by the chief monk. The next morning inviting the principal to have a tea; In the middle of the morning, invites the principal, karma-dana and the waiter for refreshments.

The ritual in the Qing dynasty is no longer focus on the formally acknowledgement the abbot as new monks master. The preparation and arrangement before ceremony are as before, but the program is slightly different. That is, monks not only salute when they offering incense, but also need to swear to the Buddha. They have different oaths for different status. Basically, they swear about practice carefully, obey all precepts, and if they do not abide by the pledge, what serious retribution they will receive. After all, in my opinion, the Buddha cannot really urge and instruct their disciples like a supervisor or a head teacher, while the abbot can. So responding to the illusory guidance with an oath.

Daily practice is conducted through a standardized process based on the standard of cleanliness and non-influence on others. Articles of daily use, such as the style of furniture will change with the secular life, monks eating on the bed until high tables and chairs appeared in later dining room. Some Buddhist articles, such as the Buddhist bowl, Buddha bags, there are no much change in the style in addition to the material and technology.

Taking meal process as an example:

Seats are arranged according to the time when monks ordained. After washing their faces and rinsing their mouths, they are sitting and waiting for the three knocks of long board to get up and take the bowl which is usually put in a shoulder-level box from your own shelf. It cannot be entered (or entering the dining hall if it was separated from the dormitory) when the three knocks of the wooden fish stops. To show respect for the abbot, monks need enter through the less noble side of the front door, first with their right feet. monks who enter through the back door and sit in the upper hall, first with his left foot through the noble side of the door, and vice versa. All monks give their regards to the holy monk first and monks nearby before sitting. The process of sitting is: using the right hand hold the left sleeve and then the other side, lifting hem and sitting a bowl away from the bed edge, taking off shoes, tucking the left foot and then the right, sitting cross-legged with the left foot on the right one, and spread tucked clothes out over knees. Managers in charge of the whole temple sit in the noble room of the outer hall, managers in charge of specific areas, such as the bathroom manager and the coal manager, sit in the less noble outside hall.

When the abbot walking to the dormitory, drum three times (about 15 minutes). Managers give their regards one by one, monks stand up and the bell in front of the dormitory is ringing at the same time. The abbot gives his regards to the holy monk and others. Giving regards again after he sits down and monks could sit down. Then managers come in and give regards to others in proper order. After that, the karma-dana

(the manager guide the monks in daily affairs according to the temple rules) enters the inner hall, sends his greetings to the holy monk, burns the incense and stands beside the mallet.

Monks arrange the bowls and others. The karma-dana hits the mallet and says: Meditate three volumes of sutras of Prajna paramita. When lucky or unlucky matters happen, he would hit the mallet and say short Buddhist verse (Ji chant) after burning the incense:

Kowtow to the Buddha and Hwaomkyung (sutra). Mahayana bodhisattva's merits and virtues are incredible;

Or

Dharma and dharma-vessel are better than fertile farmland. Where there is an offering, there is a reward;

Or

the water is clear and moon appears in autumn. Pray earnestly and farmlands growing better. Only the Bodhi is the real homeward space could rely on.

If there is a letter from emperor this morning, the karma-dana reads it out to the crowd and says:

The emperor's letter has been read out in full. We are waiting for the kindness of selfless holy eyes. Let us worship and say, (a long time stop), Pure Dharmakaya.

If there is nothing happened, the karma-dana hits the mallet and says:

Admiring to all Buddhas, Dharmas, and monks

Finishing ten times "Amitabha", he hits the mallet after a long time.

The leader of monks serves out meal and sing with spirit simultaneously according to the food,

Porridge: porridge has ten advantages and is good for people. Karma goes to heaven and always be happy and goodness Or Porridge is a great medicine that could remove hunger and thirst. Giving and receiving can both gain purification and go into the great way of become Buddha together.

Food given to monks: Three virtues and six tastes are given to both the Buddha and monks. All in the Buddhism and secular worlds are blessed.

Zuanfan (鑽飯a kind of food usually arranged by monks who made mistakes): The giver and the receiver both have received benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and trust. There is no argument that they have fine appearance, spiritual satisfaction, long life, and happiness.

Once all monks received food, Xing zhe (行者A kind of monk working for miscellaneous affairs who has not been shaven) eat first unhurried and not dilatory. If not, the manager need speak again. Then the karma-dana hits the mallet once, the leader eats. The others could not begin until he had finished his meal. The karma-dana turns around behind the holy monk's



Figure 35· Eating nowadays (online photo)



Figure 36: holy monk's seat 1) online

seat(Figure 36⁷⁷⁶) and asks the leader for money and back to his seat.

The leader gives money and says:

money and dharma are with no differences. Giving is the fulfillment of all.

Then the manager in charge of warehouse and the karma-dana give money in sequence, put it on the handkerchief in front of the monk. Monks put palm together without seeing the money and collect them after meal.

The bowls should be arranged tidy quietly and the handkerchiefs should be placed over the knees to avoid food stains on clothes. All monks eat their own food with good manners, keep hands and outer edges of bowls clean, eat at the same pace and do not waste. Chatting is forbidden but monks could ask for food if not enough but could not affect others.

After a meal, monks wash the bowls⁷⁷⁷⁷⁷⁸ and other tools, dry them successively, and put them on the shelf. Then they collect the chopsticks and spoon in small bag and put it over the package with dish towel and brush (figure 37). Listening to the mallet which



Figure 37: the progress of packing up eating utensils (draw from the online photo) means leave dormitory, says finishing meal Ji(偈 Buddhist verse):

The meal has been finished. The strength is returned and we could study

776 http://www.360doc.com/content/18/0916/04/58189075_787012771.shtml

777 https://dp.pconline.com.cn/photo/3525594_6.html

778 <http://www.tuigb.com/so2tgb%E8%CB%CA%D5%CD%EB/0/1/540609034173/>

continuously to spread Buddhism. Enlightening is not in mind. All living beings attain divine power from Buddhism

The process of getting up is sitting on the edge of the bed with feet hanging down first, and getting up slowly with hand collecting sleeves and clothes. The abbot stands up first and goes outside the hall, rings the Fangcan放參 bell three times that means there is nothing arrangement after meal. If there are some study arranged, he would not ring the bell. Then he gives his regards to the holy monk and rings the Xiatang下堂 bell three times that means it is now leaving the hall. The monks could stand up until now and the process of going out is same as entering the hall.