

Research on Multiple Value Realization Paths of Border Village History Compilation— An Empirical Analysis Based on 18 Border Villages in Region Y

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Abstract: In the context of the deep integration of the new era's strategy of enriching border areas and rural revitalization, the compilation of border village histories has become an important practical vehicle for protecting border cultural memory and empowering the modernization of border governance. This paper takes the compilation project of village histories of 18 border villages in Region Y, led by the School of Marxism of Jilin University, as a case study. It comprehensively uses literature review, case analysis, participatory observation, and in-depth interviews to systematically deconstruct the value dimensions, practical paths, and current dilemmas of border village history compilation. The study finds that border village history compilation has achieved multiple value couplings of cultural inheritance, governance optimization, education practice, and industrial empowerment by constructing a school-local collaboration mechanism, excavating diverse cultural memories, leveraging digital technology, and innovating achievement transformation models. At the same time, the current compilation work faces practical challenges such as insufficient depth of memory excavation, limited effectiveness of achievement transformation, and an imperfect long-term mechanism. This paper proposes to strengthen professional support, expand integration paths, and improve guarantee mechanisms to provide theoretical reference and practical lessons for border areas to strengthen the sense of community of the Chinese nation and improve governance effectiveness through cultural practices.

Keywords: border village history; value dimension; realization path; border governance

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research background

Border areas, as the forefront of national territorial security, cultural security, and ethnic identity, are directly related to the effectiveness of the deep integration of the strategies for border development and rural revitalization. Y region, as an important gateway to Northeast my country, has 18 border villages that are not only geographically significant border nodes but also carry profound memories of the Red War of Resistance Against Japan, unique fishing and hunting heritage, and a deep sense of national responsibility for border defense and development. These precious local memories are scattered in oral traditions, old archives, and photographs, facing a serious risk of memory fragmentation and loss as elderly villagers pass away and traditional lifestyles change.

At the same time, the rural revitalization strategy places higher demands on border cultural governance, urgently requiring the transformation of scattered cultural memories into governance resources, development momentum, and identity bonds. Against this backdrop, the School of Marxism at X University in Jilin Province, based on its responsibility to serve the local community, proactively connected with the needs of the Y region government and spearheaded a project to compile the histories of 18 border villages. Through university-local collaboration, academic resources were combined with local practice, providing an innovative practical model for border cultural governance.

1.2. Research significance

At the theoretical level, existing research mostly focuses on the compilation of village history in inland villages or single-ethnic areas, with insufficient attention to the special scenario of border villages, especially lacking systematic research on the value dimension of college-led border village history compilation. This paper, based on the triple characteristics of border villages—"national defense attributes, cultural diversity, and governance particularities"—constructs an analytical framework of "memory mining—mechanism guarantee—value transformation." This enriches the theoretical system of research on border cultural governance and village history compilation, and provides a new perspective for interpreting the academic value of universities' participation in local cultural construction, filling a gap in related research.

At the practical level, through in-depth analysis of the specific paths, achievements, and challenges of village history compilation in 18 border villages in Yanbian Prefecture, it extracts replicable and scalable practical experiences, providing operational guidelines for similar cultural practices in other border areas of my country. Simultaneously, the research results help promote the transformation of border village history compilation from "textual recording" to "value release," contributing to the strategic goals of cultural border protection, border stability through governance, and border industrial development, and providing practical support for strengthening the sense of community of the Chinese nation and improving the modernization level of border governance^[1].

1.3. Research methods and case overview

1.3.1. Research methods

Through literature review, this study systematically reviews relevant literature in the fields of village history compilation, border governance, and rural cultural construction, clarifying the current research status and theoretical foundation, and providing support for the construction of the research framework. Through case analysis, using the village history compilation project of 18 border villages in Y region as a core case, this study deeply deconstructs the organizational structure, workflow, value generation logic, and practical effectiveness of the compilation process. Participatory observation method: Combining the compilation team's field investigation records, work logs, and discussion minutes, this method captures practical details and potential problems, ensuring the authenticity and relevance of the research. In-depth interview method: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with university teachers and students, local government staff, village cadres, and villager representatives involved in the compilation, collecting practical perceptions and suggestions from diverse stakeholders.

1.3.2. Case overview

This case study went through three stages: pilot exploration (months 1-6), comprehensive advancement (months 7-19), and results deepening (months 20-30), taking two and a half years to complete. The compilation team was led by teachers from the School of Marxism at Jilin X University, in conjunction with the university's Youth League Committee to form a collaborative team of teachers and students. During this period, they visited more than 300 people, including veteran Party members and local elders, reviewed more than 500 documents such as local archives, Party history materials, and genealogical records, and held 12 university-local seminars and village forums, producing a draft of more than 1.5 million words of village history, which was eventually compiled into 18 series of village history books. At the same time, the "Y Border Village Culture Digital Platform" was built, integrating resources such as text, images, and geographic information,

becoming the first digital achievement of border village history led by a university in Jilin Province^[2].

2. Core value dimensions of border village history compilation

2.1. Cultural heritage value: safeguarding the roots of frontier memory

The primary value of border village history compilation lies in systematically rescuing and protecting endangered local cultural memories. Border villages carry diverse cultural genes, including memories of the Red Anti-Japanese War, recording the fighting history of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army on the frontier and the close relationship between the army and the people; the living heritage of fishing and hunting civilizations of ethnic minorities such as the Manchu and Korean, covering intangible cultural heritage such as fishing techniques, hunting tool making, and traditional handicrafts; and patriotic stories and life wisdom of border people “guarding the border and defending the country, passed down from generation to generation”.

Through field investigation, oral history compilation, and archival verification, the compilation team transformed these scattered and fragmented memories into systematic and standardized textual records, filling the gap in the systematic history of border villages in Y region. Meanwhile, the process of compiling village history itself has become a process of cultural dissemination. Through villagers’ participation in oral history and joint review of content, it has awakened the public’s recognition and appreciation of local culture and promoted the living inheritance of traditional culture^[3].

2.2. Governance empowerment value: strengthening community consciousness

Village history compilation, by consolidating collective identity and refining governance wisdom, has become an important resource for frontier governance. On the one hand, the vivid stories of border residents guarding the border and supporting national development, meticulously recorded in the village history, vividly illustrate the patriotic sentiment that “national interests are above all else,” strengthening villagers’ national identity and national pride, and providing concrete and localized teaching materials for forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. During the compilation process, villagers effectively resolved some issues such as ethnic divisions and neighborhood conflicts by sharing memories and jointly tracing the village’s development.

On the other hand, the village history systematically sorts out traditional village rules and regulations, clan self-governance experiences, and grassroots governance practices, providing historical lessons for modern grassroots governance. At the same time, villagers enhanced their sense of participation and responsibility in village affairs through participation in storytelling, content review, and feedback, forming a consensus on “co-construction and sharing” governance, laying a mass foundation for building a border governance pattern of “Party leadership, government responsibility, social collaboration, and public participation.”^[4]

2.3. Practical value in education: expanding the field of ideological and political education

For the university faculty and students involved in the compilation, the village history project is an immersive “major ideological and political education class,” achieving an organic unity between talent cultivation and academic practice. Young students step out of the ivory tower, delve into fields and villagers’ homes to collect oral history materials and verify historical details, directly experiencing the transformation of border villages from poverty and backwardness to prosperity and stability under the leadership of the Party. They deeply appreciate the achievements of rural practice in Chinese-style modernization, significantly enhancing their sense of national identity and social responsibility.

The teaching team deeply integrates scientific research with practice, conducting research on topics such as the inheritance of border culture and border governance, realizing the academic pursuit of “writing papers on the land”. Oral history materials, field notes, research reports, etc. formed during the compilation process have enriched the teaching resources of ideological and political education. This “practice-based education” model has not only improved the quality of talent training in universities, but also strengthened the function of universities serving the local area, becoming a

successful example of university-local collaborative education.

2.4. Value in industrial empowerment: activating the momentum of cultural and tourism integration

The compilation of village history has injected cultural connotations into the development of border tourism, promoting the integration of culture and tourism and the revitalization of rural industries. The red sites, folk traditions, natural landscapes, etc. , systematically recorded in the village history have become core materials for cultural and tourism integration after being sorted and refined. It promotes the transformation of border tourism from “sightseeing” to “experience”. Meanwhile, the village history achievements also provide vivid content for public cultural services, enrich the spiritual and cultural life of villagers, and achieve a win-win situation for cultural and economic value^[5].

3. Practical paths and real dilemmas in the compilation of border village histories

3.1. Practical paths

3.1.1. Constructing a collaborative compilation mechanism between universities and local governments

The key to the success of compiling village history in Y area lies in the establishment of a multi-faceted collaborative working mechanism of “university-local government linkage, leadership leadership, expert support, and teacher and student participation. “ In terms of organizational structure, a four-level linkage system has been formed, namely “university party committee overall planning - Marxist college implementation - local government coordination - village committee implementation, “ clearly defining the division of responsibilities among all parties. Among them, universities are responsible for academic guidance, team building, and quality control; local governments provide policy support, archival resources, and financial guarantees; and village committees are responsible for mobilizing villagers to participate and coordinating specific matters such as field surveys.

In terms of team building, a composite compilation team of “teachers + students + local cultural workers + village representatives” was formed. Teachers leveraged their academic advantages to be responsible for framework design and content review; students undertook field investigations and data organization; local cultural workers provided support for interpreting local culture; and village representatives participated in oral history collection and content verification. At the same time, the team’s professional capabilities were enhanced through specialized training in oral history collection, archival interpretation, and folklore research.

In terms of quality control, a four-pronged approach to data collection was implemented: “field investigation + archival verification + oral history compilation + collective discussion.” A three-round review mechanism was established: “draft writing - expert review - villager feedback - revision and improvement, “ ensuring that the village history content is “authentic, accurate, vivid, and warm.” This multi-party collaborative mechanism not only ensured the professionalism and authority of the compilation but also fully mobilized the enthusiasm of the villagers, achieving a unity of “academic” and “mass” aspects.

3.1.2. Implementing a systematic excavation of diverse memories

In response to the problem of scattered historical materials and scarce records in border villages, the compilation team constructed a “four-dimensional” memory excavation path to ensure the comprehensiveness and uniqueness of the content. First, the excavation of red memories focused on interviewing veteran Party members, retired soldiers, and families of martyrs, reviewing Party history archives and local chronicles, and systematically sorting out heroic deeds and red stories during the War of Resistance Against Japan, the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea, and border construction, highlighting the national defense attributes of border villages. Second, it records folk culture, detailing the production and living skills, traditional festivals, languages, writing systems, food, clothing, and folk beliefs of various ethnic groups, exploring the unique value of hunting and fishing civilizations and agricultural civilizations. Third, it presents village changes, comprehensively reflecting the modernization process of border villages from aspects such as

economic development, infrastructure construction, population structure changes, and policy implementation effectiveness, showcasing the benefits of national policies to the border regions. Fourth, it refines the spirit of border defense, interpreting the core connotation of the spirit of the border regions in the new era by recording the daily practices, advanced models, and touching stories of border residents^[6].

3.1.3. Expanding the dimensions of dissemination by relying on digital technology

Digital empowerment is an important support for maximizing the value of village history. The compilation team simultaneously promoted the construction of the “Y area border village culture digital platform, “ building a four-in-one digital carrier of “text library + image library + geographic information library + interactive platform. “ The text library integrates the full text of 18 village histories, supporting keyword search and chapter navigation; the image library includes visual resources such as field survey videos, oral interview recordings, and old photos; the geographic information database uses a “cultural map” function to spatially mark resources such as revolutionary sites, folk custom sites, and natural landscapes, achieving precise positioning and scene-based display; the interactive platform includes a message area and a story-sharing area, encouraging villagers and netizens to supplement their memories and exchange insights. Digitalization not only solves the problem of long-term preservation of village historical materials but also breaks down geographical limitations, allowing more people to know about border culture and laying a technological foundation for subsequent technology transformation^[2].

3.1.4. Promoting the transformation and application of results in multiple scenarios

The value of village history compilation is ultimately realized through the transformation of results in multiple scenarios. In terms of cultural and tourism integration, it cooperates with tourism enterprises to deeply integrate village history resources with border tourism routes, developing characteristic products such as red study tours, folk experience, and rural leisure; in terms of governance practice, it extracts the wisdom of governance and the essence of village rules and regulations from village history, providing reference for grassroots party organization building, village self-governance, and conflict mediation. This multi-scenario transformation model transforms village history from “static text” into “dynamic resource, “ achieving an organic unity of cultural, governance, educational, and economic value^[7].

3.2. Real-world dilemmas

3.2.1. Insufficient depth and completeness of memory excavation

Some elderly villagers are advanced in age and experiencing memory decline. Furthermore, some historical materials and folk customs have been lost or damaged due to their age, making it difficult to verify certain historical details. Precious oral histories face the risk of “the history being lost with the death of the person. “ At the same time, the compilation team, limited by time and energy, has not delved deeply enough into interpreting historical materials recorded in some minority languages, and has not sufficiently explored the historical context of cross-border cultural exchanges, affecting the completeness and depth of the village history content.

3.2.2. Limited breadth and effectiveness of results transformation

The connection between village history results and the cultural tourism industry and governance practices is not close enough. The development of cultural tourism products in some villages remains superficial, lacking in-depth exploration of the village’s historical and cultural connotations, resulting in significant homogenization. The governance wisdom found in village history has not been fully translated into concrete governance solutions, and its practical application in grassroots governance needs improvement. Furthermore, the transformation of research results lacks a market-oriented mechanism, relying mainly on government investment and university support, which is unsustainable^[8].

3.2.3. The long-term guarantee mechanism is still incomplete

University-local government cooperation is mostly concentrated in the compilation stage. After the project ends, the maintenance and upgrading of digital platforms and the dynamic updating of village history content lack sustained funding and personnel support, leading to stagnation in updates on some new media accounts. Simultaneously, the lack of a professional research results transformation team results in insufficient commercial development and brand operation capabilities for village history resources, making it difficult to achieve sustained value release.

4. Strategies and suggestions for optimizing the realization of the value of border village history compilation

4.1. Strengthening professional support and deepening memory mining

Establish interdisciplinary research teams, attracting experts and scholars from fields such as history, ethnology, sociology, and linguistics to participate, and enhance the professionalism of historical material interpretation and cultural explanation. Conduct rescue excavation of scarce historical materials, conduct emergency oral history recording of elderly villagers, and use audio and video recording technologies to completely preserve memories; strengthen cooperation with archives, museums, and research institutions to expand the channels for historical material sources. At the same time, pay attention to weak links such as cross-border cultural exchanges and the inheritance of ethnic minority cultures, supplement and improve the content of village history, and enhance the academic and cultural value of village history^[9].

4.2. Expanding integration paths and enhancing transformation efficiency

Deepen the “village history +” integrated development model and promote the cross-border integration of village history resources with more fields. In terms of cultural tourism integration, develop customized study tour products and cultural and creative products, create border culture IP, and enhance the differentiated competitiveness of tourism products; in terms of governance practice, unite local governments and scientific research institutions to transform the governance wisdom in village history into operable grassroots governance guidelines. At the same time, introduce market-oriented operation mechanisms and encourage social capital to participate in the transformation of results^[5].

4.3. Improving the long-term mechanism and ensuring sustainable development

Establish a normalized mechanism for university-local cooperation, sign long-term cooperation agreements, and clarify the responsibilities and obligations of both parties in village history updating, platform maintenance, and achievement transformation. Strive for special funding support from local governments to establish a special fund for the compilation and application of border village histories, ensuring the continuous operation, content updates, and transformation of results for the digital platform. Establish a professional team for results transformation and operation to enhance the development, operation, and management capabilities of village history resources. Simultaneously, establish a dynamic updating mechanism for village history results, regularly collecting supplementary memories from villagers and new developments in village development to ensure the timeliness and vitality of village history content^[4].

5. Conclusion

Border village history compilation, as an innovative practice of border cultural governance, has realized multiple values in cultural inheritance, governance optimization, education, and industrial empowerment, providing important support for strengthening the sense of community of the Chinese nation and improving the modernization level of border governance. However, border village history compilation also faces practical difficulties such as insufficient memory mining, inadequate results transformation, and an imperfect long-term mechanism. In the future, it is necessary to further strengthen

professional support, expand integration paths, and enhance the breadth and effectiveness of results transformation. Through continuous optimization of practical paths, border village history compilation will become an important force in promoting border prosperity and stability, injecting lasting cultural momentum into the high-quality development of border areas.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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