

THE EMBODIMENT, INFLUENCE AND SUGGESTIONS OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL CULTURAL VALUES IN THE RURAL REVITALIZATION LEGAL SYSTEM

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Abstract: In 2020, with the in-depth implementation of the targeted poverty alleviation policy, China successfully eradicated absolute poverty. Since then, the country's focus has shifted from poverty alleviation to rural revitalization. The formation and development of China's legal system for rural revitalization is not isolated from traditional culture but is deeply influenced by the values of Chinese traditional culture. The values represented by Confucianism, Daoism, Legalism, and other schools of thought in traditional Chinese culture are reflected to varying degrees in the laws related to rural revitalization. These traditional cultural values have played an important supporting role in China's rural revitalization strategy.

Keywords: China's legal system for rural revitalization; Traditional cultural values; Confucian thought; Taoist thought; Legalist thought

1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, China has undergone a profound transformation from a planned economy to a market economy, achieving remarkable economic and social development. In addressing the long-standing issue of poverty, the Chinese government implemented a series of powerful poverty alleviation measures. These measures not only accurately identified impoverished populations and regions but also effectively allocated and utilized resources through targeted policies and assistance. This greatly promoted economic development and social progress in poverty-stricken areas. With the deep implementation of precise poverty alleviation policies, China has successfully eradicated absolute poverty, marking a great miracle in the history of human poverty reduction.

However, eliminating absolute poverty is only the first step. Consolidating the achievements of poverty alleviation and preventing people from falling back into poverty has become an important task for the Chinese government in the present and future. On December 26, 2020, China issued an important document titled "Opinions on Effectively Aligning the Consolidation and Expansion of Poverty Alleviation Achievements with Rural Revitalization", which pointed out that "after winning the battle against poverty and achieving the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, we must, on the basis of consolidating and expanding the results of poverty alleviation, advance rural revitalization in a comprehensive way, continuing to promote the development of formerly impoverished areas and the improvement of people's lives."

Since then, China's focus has shifted from poverty alleviation to rural revitalization. As the rural revitalization strategy continues to be implemented, China has introduced a series of laws and policies aimed at promoting the comprehensive development of the rural economy and society. Compared with past poverty alleviation efforts, rural revitalization is not limited to economic support and assistance to rural areas; it also calls for comprehensive improvements in cultural, social, and other aspects of rural life. The formation and development of China's rural revitalization legal framework is not isolated from traditional culture but is deeply influenced and shaped by the values of Chinese traditional culture. The values represented by Confucianism, Daoism, Legalism, and other schools of thought have been reflected to varying degrees in the rural revitalization laws, becoming important guiding principles in the construction of rural legal governance.

The significance of this study lies in the following aspects: First, an in-depth analysis of China's current rural revitalization legal system and the embodiment and influence of traditional Chinese cultural values within this system helps us better understand the local and distinctive characteristics of rural governance, providing valuable insights for improving the rural legal framework. Second, based on summarizing the impact of traditional cultural values on the rural revitalization legal system, this study will explore how to further leverage the positive role of traditional culture to promote the organic integration of legal governance, moral governance, and self-governance in rural areas, thereby achieving comprehensive rural revitalization. Third, China's rural revitalization practices and the construction of its legal framework offer a model that can be referenced by other countries, particularly developing nations. By analyzing the positive role of traditional cultural values in rural revitalization, this research can help other countries understand and incorporate cultural elements suitable to their own national conditions, promoting the implementation of their own rural revitalization strategies.

2 OVERVIEW OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE CULTURAL VALUES

2.1 Definition of Traditional Chinese Cultural Values

Traditional Chinese culture refers to the unique cultural heritage of China, formed through thousands of years of continuous evolution and development. It encompasses various aspects of the Chinese people's way of thinking, value systems, ethics, customs, traditional literature, clothing, and more. It represents the collective manifestation of various philosophical, cultural, and conceptual systems throughout Chinese history. Traditional culture, as a product of daily life practices, has played an important role in China's development process and holds significant importance for rural revitalization [1].

Traditional Chinese cultural values refer to the standards and perspectives that the Chinese people have developed over time to evaluate the significance of objective phenomena, including people, events, and objects. These values are deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture, shaped by long-term accumulation and inheritance, and carry distinct national characteristics and profound historical and cultural significance. They cover a wide range of areas, such as the spirit of self-reliance and perseverance, the unity of knowledge and action, emphasis on the spiritual life of individuals, patriotism, the pursuit of truth and dedication, and ethical norms like solidarity, mutual assistance, respect for the elderly, and care for the young. These values not only reflect the spiritual aspirations and moral principles of the Chinese people but also have had a profound impact on the development and progress of Chinese society.

2.2 Intellectual Origins of Traditional Chinese Cultural Values

The origins of traditional Chinese cultural values are deep and broad, extending to various aspects of ancient society, including religious beliefs, philosophical thought, social institutions, and customs. These elements continuously merged and evolved throughout history, eventually forming the unique set of traditional Chinese cultural values. These values, embodying the spiritual aspirations and moral standards of the Chinese people, have significantly influenced China's societal development and progress.

Among these intellectual origins, the philosophies of Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism, which are key components of ancient Chinese thought systems, have profoundly influenced traditional Chinese cultural values. Over time, these schools of thought became integral parts of Chinese cultural values.

2.2.1 Traditional Chinese Cultural Values Reflected in Confucian Thought

The Confucian school of thought was founded during the Spring and Autumn period, with Confucius (551 BCE – 479 BCE) as its founder. The core of Confucius' philosophy revolves around moral ideals such as "ren" (benevolence), "yi" (righteousness), "li" (propriety), and "zhi" (wisdom). Confucius emphasized the individual's responsibility to cultivate themselves, manage their family, govern the state, and bring peace to the world. His teachings provided future generations with a rich set of moral guidelines and social behavior standards. Confucianism gradually developed into a complete system during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, with disciples like Mencius and Xunzi further expanding its scope. During the Han Dynasty, Confucian thought received strong state support, and during the reign of Emperor Wu, Confucianism was promoted as the sole dominant ideology, marking its establishment as the official state ideology of ancient China.

The values emphasized by Confucianism, such as morality, benevolence, and social order, formed one of the most influential philosophical systems in ancient China. These values deeply influenced the Chinese people's way of thinking, behavioral norms, and cultural identity. The key traditional cultural values reflected in Confucianism include:

Benevolence (Ren'ai): Benevolence is one of the core values of Confucian thought, emphasizing care, compassion, and sympathy for others. Confucians believed that everyone should possess a heart of benevolence, extending kindness to others by putting oneself in their shoes. The Confucian principle of "the benevolent love others" advocates treating everyone with kindness and fostering a sense of empathy. In social interactions, this benevolence promotes love and warmth, contributing to social harmony. Some Chinese scholars have also pointed out that Confucian "benevolence" (ren'ai) is not limited to love and compassion for people but extends to caring for the environment as well [2].

Fairness and Justice (Gongping yu Zhengyi): Confucianism teaches that each person should fulfill their roles and responsibilities according to their position, thus ensuring the proper functioning of society. Confucians believed that the pursuit of personal interests must align with moral principles and should not harm others. This spirit of fairness and justice promoted societal equity and the maintenance of social order.

Propriety (Li): The construction of the ancient Chinese state was different from that of Western states, as it was built on the foundation of familial blood relationships, using "li" (ritual propriety) as a tool for patriarchal reinforcement of family governance. Initially, "li" referred only to the rituals and ceremonies in religious worship, but due to the influence of the family-based governance in ancient China, "li" permeated all aspects of people's daily lives [3]. Confucianism holds that "li" (propriety) is a key means of maintaining social order and harmony, as well as a standard for daily behavior. Confucians required individuals to restrain their desires and impulses, consistently aligning their actions with social norms and moral standards. Proper behavior according to "li" fosters respect and ensures orderly relationships in both public and private life.

Wisdom and Knowledge (Zhihui yu Zhishi): Confucianism advocates the pursuit of wisdom, knowledge, and rational thinking as essential tools for improving personal character and conduct. Confucians encouraged continuous learning and the pursuit of truth to enhance one's cognitive abilities and problem-solving skills. Education and wisdom were seen as vital in fostering virtuous individuals and capable leaders.

Sincerity and Integrity (Chengxin): Confucianism views sincerity and integrity as fundamental to establishing positive interpersonal relationships. Sincerity requires that people act with honesty and that their words and deeds align, avoiding falsehoods. A sincere and trustworthy attitude towards others and society fosters social cohesion and builds mutual respect.

Loyalty and Filial Piety (Zhongxiao): Confucianism considers loyalty and filial piety as the foundation of social stability and family harmony. Loyalty refers to the devotion of subjects to their rulers, while filial piety is the respect and care children owe their parents. Confucians advocated "loyalty to the state" and "filial piety to parents," viewing these as essential responsibilities and obligations toward the nation and family. Starting from the Han Dynasty, filial piety (xiao) was incorporated as a governing strategy and became the main theoretical foundation for ruling and stabilizing the country. The idea of filial piety began to infiltrate various aspects of society and political life during the Han period, establishing a system of social governance with filial piety at its core [4].

In summary, Confucian thought, with its emphasis on moral integrity, benevolence, social responsibility, and respect for hierarchical relationships, has profoundly shaped Chinese society, fostering values that continue to influence China's cultural and legal development.

2.2.2 The traditional Chinese values embodied in Taoist thought

Taoism, also known as Daoism, is a philosophical tradition rooted deeply in Chinese culture. It emphasizes harmony with nature, the pursuit of spiritual cultivation, and the cultivation of inner peace and tranquility. Taoism advocates living in accordance with the natural laws, known as the Tao, which governs the universe.

Taoism originated in ancient China, with its roots tracing back to the pre-Qin period philosophers such as Lao Tzu and Zhuangzi. However, the formal establishment of Taoism as a religious movement is attributed to Zhang Daoling in the late Eastern Han Dynasty (around 2nd century CE). Over time, Taoism developed into various sects and schools, each with its unique practices and beliefs.

Taoism played a significant role in shaping the ancient Chinese thought system and value system. It emphasized the harmony between man and nature, the importance of inner cultivation, and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment. Taoist ideas influenced not only philosophy but also politics, art, literature, medicine, and many other aspects of Chinese culture.

The traditional Chinese cultural values embodied in Taoism are mainly as follows:

Harmony with Nature: The harmonious relationship between humans and nature can be said to be a constant pursuit of the Chinese people for thousands of years. Whether emperors, philosophers, or ordinary citizens, none have ever fundamentally positioned themselves in opposition to nature [5]. The core value of Taoism is the harmony with nature, embodied in the concept of "Tao Te Ch'ing". It advocates living in accordance with the natural laws, respecting and preserving the environment, and achieving a harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature. Some scholars have pointed out that as early as the Spring and Autumn period, Chinese environmental legislation already reflected the idea of following natural laws and achieving sustainable resource use [6].

Non-action and Spontaneous Order (wu wei) : Taoism promotes the idea of "wu wei", which means non-interference and allowing things to take their natural course. In governance, it suggests that the best way to rule is to let people govern themselves, minimizing artificial interventions and fostering a state of spontaneous order. Some scholars have pointed out that Daoist "wu wei" does not mean doing nothing, but rather avoiding unnecessary or impulsive actions, and emphasizing respect for the natural order [7].

Simplicity and Inner Cultivation: Emphasizing simplicity in lifestyle and inner cultivation, Taoism encourages people to abandon material desires, reduce ego and ambition, and cultivate a peaceful and tranquil mind. This promotes mental clarity and wisdom, enabling individuals to make sound judgments and decisions.

Morality and Ethics: Taoism places great importance on morality and ethics, viewing them as the highest standards of human behavior. It incorporates virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness, and emphasizes the importance of these qualities in maintaining social harmony and stability.

These values together constitute the core of Taoist thought, reflecting the profound insight and unique understanding of nature, society, personal cultivation and the meaning of life in traditional Chinese culture.

2.3 Chinese traditional values embodied in Legalist thought

The Legalists, a prominent school of thought during the pre-Qin period, emerged and flourished during the Warring States era (475-221 BCE) in China. Originating from the tumultuous social changes brought about by the decline of the Western Zhou Dynasty, the Legalists advocated the supremacy of law and strict enforcement as the foundation for national governance. Their ideology centered on the belief that law, rather than ritual or morality, was the most effective means of maintaining social order and promoting national prosperity.

The Legalist school arose in response to the disintegration of the feudal system and the rise of new landed aristocracy during the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BCE). Key figures such as Guan Zhong, Li Kui, and Shang Yang laid the groundwork for the Legalist philosophy, emphasizing the need for reforms aimed at strengthening central authority and enhancing agricultural productivity. By the late Warring States period, Han Fei, a prominent Legalist thinker, consolidated and refined the school's ideas, advocating a comprehensive legal system backed by a powerful centralized monarchy.

Within the diverse intellectual landscape of ancient China, the Legalists occupied a unique and influential position. While Confucianism focused on moral cultivation and ritual, and Daoism emphasized harmony with nature and non-action, the Legalists prioritized pragmatic governance through law and order. Their ideology was instrumental in shaping the political landscape of the Qin Dynasty, which unified China under a strict legalist regime. Although Legalism later declined in official favor, its principles continued to influence Chinese legal thought and governance throughout history.

The Legalist school in ancient China embodied several key values that are fundamental to traditional Chinese culture. These values are not only reflected in the Legalists' political philosophy but also deeply ingrained in the societal mindset and moral constructs of the time. Here are the primary values:

Emphasis on Rule of Law and Order: The Legalists placed the utmost importance on the rule of law, believing that a strict and well-enforced legal system was crucial for maintaining social stability and justice. They emphasized the supremacy of law over arbitrary authority or personal preferences, a cornerstone of their political ideology.

Pragmatism and Utility: The Legalists were known for their pragmatic approach to governance, valuing practical results and efficiency over abstract moral principles. They believed that policies and reforms should be judged by their tangible benefits to society, promoting a culture of pragmatism and realism. Although they approach the issue from different perspectives, like Confucianism and Daoism, Legalism also advocates against exhausting natural resources, emphasizing that nature should continuously provide material sustenance for the state and its people [8].

Centralization of Power: The Legalists advocated for a strong, centralized monarchy as the basis for effective governance. They believed that only a powerful central authority could maintain unity, order, and security within the state, rejecting decentralized systems and promoting the concentration of power.

Promotion of Agriculture and Military Strength: The Legalists emphasized the importance of agriculture as the foundation of the nation's economy and advocated policies that encouraged agricultural production. Additionally, they placed great value on military strength, believing that a powerful military was necessary to defend the state's interests and ensure its survival.

Belief in Strict Punishment and Rewards: The Legalists were known for their belief in strict punishment for transgressions and rewards for meritorious deeds. They saw these measures as essential for enforcing discipline, deterring crime, and motivating citizens to contribute to the state's prosperity.

These values, as embodied by the Legalist school, not only shaped the political landscape of ancient China but also left a profound impact on traditional Chinese culture and societal values. They continue to resonate in contemporary Chinese society, informing debates on issues such as governance, social order, and economic development.

3 OVERVIEW OF CHINA'S RURAL REVITALIZATION LEGAL SYSTEM

The legal framework for rural revitalization in China is a multi-layered and multi-dimensional system aimed at promoting comprehensive rural development through legislative means. This framework encompasses several key laws, including but not limited to the Rural Revitalization Promotion Law, the Land Administration Law, the Urban and Rural Planning Law, the Rural Land Contract Law, the Environmental Protection Law, and the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China. These laws provide legal safeguards at various levels to support the rural revitalization effort.

3.1 Rural Revitalization Promotion Law

The Rural Revitalization Promotion Law, enacted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in 2021, outlines the overall principles, goals, and measures for implementing the rural revitalization strategy. It covers aspects such as industrial revitalization, talent revitalization, cultural revitalization, ecological revitalization, and organizational revitalization, as well as promoting urban-rural integration. The specific contents are as follows:

Industrial Development: Supports the integration of rural primary, secondary, and tertiary industries, fostering new industries, business models, and agricultural entities, bridging small farmers with modern agriculture.

Talent Support: Encourages talent development and attraction to rural areas, promoting education, training, and entrepreneurship support.

Cultural Prosperity: Enhances rural spiritual civilization, promotes ethical practices, and builds civilized villages.

Ecological Protection: Implements ecosystem protection and restoration projects, greening and beautifying rural environments.

Organizational Construction: Strengthens rural governance structures.

Urban-Rural Integration: Coordinates rural revitalization with new urbanization, optimizing industrial, infrastructural, and public service layouts.

Supportive Measures: Establishes a comprehensive agricultural support and protection system, ensuring financial investment for rural revitalization.

Supervision and Inspection: Implements a target responsibility and evaluation system for rural revitalization implementation.

In short, the "Law of the People's Republic of China on Promoting Rural Revitalization" is a fundamental and comprehensive legal framework in the "three rural" sector, underpinning stability, predictability, and long-term

development. It holds significant milestone value in fostering rural industrial revitalization, talent revitalization, cultural revitalization, ecological revitalization, organizational revitalization, and advancing integrated urban-rural development.

3.2 Land Administration Law

The "Land Administration Law of the People's Republic of China" (hereinafter referred to as the "Land Law") serves as the fundamental legal framework guiding land management and utilization in China, with provisions that significantly contribute to rural revitalization efforts. Key aspects relevant to rural revitalization include:

Protection of Rural Land and Collective Ownership: The Land Law emphasizes the socialist public ownership of land in China, which comprises both state ownership and collective ownership by working people. Rural land, except for those designated as state-owned, belongs to farmers' collectives, safeguarding their rights over land use and management. This foundation supports stable land relationships in rural areas, fostering conditions conducive to rural revitalization.

Compensation and Resettlement for Land Acquisition: When collective land is acquired for public purposes, the Land Law stipulates that timely, adequate compensation must be paid to landowners and users, including compensation for land, resettlement, and any attached structures or crops. This ensures that farmers' livelihoods are protected during land acquisitions, facilitating their participation in rural revitalization initiatives.

Support for Rural Development: The law, in conjunction with other regulations like the "Rural Revitalization Promotion Law," encourages the efficient use of land resources in rural areas. It supports policies aimed at revitalizing rural economies, such as the allocation of construction land indicators to rural development and the activation of rural land resources, thereby promoting agricultural modernization, rural tourism, and other economic activities.

Protection of Agricultural Land: The law emphasizes the strict protection of farmland, particularly permanent basic farmland, which is vital for ensuring food security and agricultural sustainability. This is crucial for rural revitalization as it safeguards the economic foundation of rural communities.

Collective Rural Business Land: Recent amendments to the law have facilitated the entry of collectively-owned rural business land into the market. This allows for more flexible land use, attracts investments, and promotes rural economic diversification, thereby boosting rural development and incomes.

Rural Homestead Management: The law regulates the management and use of rural homesteads, including their allocation, transfer, and utilization. This ensures that rural residents have secure housing rights while also promoting efficient land use and the improvement of rural living environments.

In short, the Land Administration Law regulates land use and management, emphasizing the protection of agricultural land and ensuring its sustainable use for rural development. It also addresses issues related to land ownership, use rights, and land conversion, which are crucial for promoting rural revitalization.

3.3 Urban and Rural Planning Law

The Urban and Rural Planning Law governs the formulation and implementation of urban and rural plans, ensuring that development activities in rural areas are in line with overall planning objectives and contribute to rural revitalization. It emphasizes coordination between urban and rural spaces and sustainable development.

The Urban and Rural Planning Law of the People's Republic of China, enacted and amended over the years, plays a pivotal role in facilitating rural revitalization by providing a legal framework for the coordinated development of urban and rural areas. Key provisions within the law that are particularly relevant to or supportive of rural revitalization include:

Comprehensive Planning and Coordinated Development: The law emphasizes the importance of comprehensive planning and coordinated development between urban and rural areas. It mandates that urban and rural planning should be formulated and implemented in a manner that promotes overall balance and sustainability. This approach ensures that rural areas are not neglected in the process of urbanization, but rather integrated into a holistic development strategy.

Rural Planning and Implementation: The law specifically addresses the need for rural planning, encouraging local governments to formulate and implement plans for villages and townships based on local economic and social development levels. This includes detailed planning for rural infrastructure, public services, and environmental protection, all of which are crucial for rural revitalization.

Respect for Local Characteristics and Community Involvement: The law emphasizes the need to respect local characteristics and involve communities in the planning process. For rural areas, this means incorporating traditional customs, cultural heritage, and the wishes of villagers into planning decisions. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and participation among rural residents, which is essential for the success of rural revitalization efforts.

Environmental Protection and Sustainability: The law places significant emphasis on environmental protection and sustainable development. Rural revitalization must be achieved in a manner that does not compromise the natural environment. The law requires that planning decisions take into account the protection of natural resources, historical and cultural heritage, and the prevention of pollution and other hazards.

Promotion of Infrastructure and Public Services: The law encourages the development of infrastructure and public services in rural areas, which are essential for rural revitalization. This includes improvements to roads, water supply, sanitation, education, and healthcare facilities. By providing these services, rural residents are empowered to improve their living standards and participate more fully in economic and social activities.

In summary, the Urban and Rural Planning Law of the People's Republic of China provides a solid legal foundation for promoting rural revitalization through comprehensive planning, respect for local characteristics, environmental protection, and the development of infrastructure and public services. By adhering to the principles and provisions of this law, China can achieve sustainable and inclusive growth in both urban and rural areas.

3.4 Rural Land Contracting Law

The Rural Land Contracting Law safeguards the long-term and stable contracting rights of farmers over rural land, enabling them to fully utilize and benefit from their land resources. It promotes the transfer of land contracting rights and facilitates the consolidation and efficient use of rural land, thereby supporting rural revitalization efforts.

The Rural Land Contracting Law of the People's Republic of China plays a pivotal role in promoting rural revitalization by ensuring the stability and security of land rights for farmers, thereby fostering agricultural modernization and rural economic development. Key provisions relevant to rural revitalization include:

Stabilizing and Securing Land Rights for Farmers: The Law aims to stabilize and improve the dual-tiered management system based on household contract management, granting farmers long-term and secure land use rights. This secures farmers' legitimate rights and interests in land contracting, thereby promoting agricultural, rural economic development, and social stability.

Three Rights Separation Policy: The Law implements the policy of "separating rural land ownership, contracting rights, and management rights" (known as the "three rights separation"), as outlined in the 2014 Central Document No. 1. This policy facilitates the transfer of land management rights, encouraging the development of moderate-scale farming and agricultural productivity.

Voluntary Return of Contracted Land: The Law allows farmers to voluntarily return their contracted land, including farmland, grassland, and forestland, during the contract period. This is intended to facilitate the transfer of rural surplus labor to secondary and tertiary industries and urban areas, accelerating urbanization and industrialization.

Protection of Land Contracting Rights: The Law emphasizes the protection of farmers' land contracting rights, ensuring their stability and security. This includes measures to prevent the infringement of farmers' interests during land transfers and promoting the organic integration of land and capital elements to attract urban capital into agricultural production.

Support for Agricultural Modernization: By stabilizing land contracting relationships and enabling the transfer of land management rights, the Law lays the foundation for agricultural modernization. It also encourages reforms in agricultural support and protection policies, shifting towards "green box" measures to comply with international trade rules while supporting sustainable agricultural growth.

In summary, the Rural Land Contracting Law of the People's Republic of China plays a crucial role in promoting rural revitalization by securing land rights for farmers, facilitating land transfers, and supporting agricultural modernization. These provisions aim to unlock the potential of rural economies, foster sustainable growth, and improve the livelihoods of rural populations.

3.5 Environmental Protection Law

Although not specifically targeted at rural revitalization, the Environmental Protection Law plays a vital role in ensuring that rural development activities adhere to environmental protection principles. It promotes eco-friendly practices and safeguards the natural environment, which are essential for sustainable rural revitalization.

The Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China contains several key provisions that are instrumental in supporting and fostering Rural Revitalization in China. Here are the main aspects:

Environmental Protection as a Basic National Policy: The protection of the environment is a basic national policy of China, and the state adopts economic and technological policies and measures conducive to conservation and the circular use of resources, protection and improvement of the environment, and harmony between humans and nature.

Prevention and Control of Pollution: Activities related to environmental protection adhere to the principles of giving priority to protection, emphasizing prevention, integrated governance, public participation, and liability for damages.

Public Participation and Environmental Awareness: All units and individuals have the obligation to protect the environment, and citizens are encouraged to enhance their environmental protection awareness, adopt low-carbon and energy-saving lifestyles, and conscientiously fulfill their environmental protection obligations.

Support for Environmental Science and Technology: The state supports scientific and technological research, development, and application in environmental protection, encouraging the development of the environmental protection industry and promoting information technology for environmental protection.

From the aforementioned provisions, it can be seen that the Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China provides a solid legal foundation and a powerful driving force for rural revitalization by establishing environmental protection as a fundamental national policy, clarifying the importance of rural environmental elements, strengthening pollution prevention and control, advocating public participation and awareness in environmental protection, and supporting innovation in environmental protection technologies. Additionally, the law's measures to prevent environmental pollution not only safeguard public health but also preserve the natural beauty and recreational value of rural areas, attracting tourism and investment, thereby promoting the process of rural revitalization.

3.6 Criminal Law

The Criminal Law, while not directly related to rural revitalization policies, provides a legal framework for punishing crimes that hinder or damage rural development, such as corruption in rural governance, illegal land conversions, and environmental pollution. By deterring such crimes, it indirectly supports the smooth implementation of rural revitalization initiatives.

The Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China contains several provisions aimed at safeguarding natural resources, which form an essential part of the country's legal framework for environmental protection. These provisions primarily reside in Chapter Six, Section Six, titled "Crimes of Damaging Environmental Resources Protection," as well as scattered throughout other relevant sections. Key Provisions and Main Contents:

Illegal Occupation of Agricultural Land (Article 342): This article was amended to include the illegal occupation of not only farmland but also forestland and other agricultural lands, with significant penalties for those who violate land management regulations, occupy such lands in large quantities, and cause substantial destruction. This amendment underscores the importance of protecting both farmland and forestland, vital for food security and ecological balance.

Crimes Related to Forestry Resources (Articles 344-345): The Criminal Law also criminalizes acts such as illegally cutting down or destroying precious trees, stealing timber, and abusing forestry permits. These provisions aim to prevent the depletion of forestry resources and maintain the ecological integrity of forests.

Environmental Pollution (Article 338): This article specifically targets those who discharge, dump, or dispose of radioactive waste, waste containing pathogens, toxic substances, or other hazardous materials in violation of national regulations, resulting in severe environmental pollution. Penalties range from imprisonment and fines to more severe punishments for aggravated offenses, including those committed in protected areas or causing significant harm to public health or agricultural land.

Therefore, the protection of natural resources, as stipulated in the Criminal Law, is intricately linked to the goals of rural revitalization in China. Rural revitalization emphasizes sustainable development, ecological conservation, and the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature. By criminalizing activities that harm natural resources, the Criminal Law serves as a deterrent, ensuring that economic development in rural areas does not come at the expense of the environment.

The preservation of farmland and forestland, for instance, is crucial for maintaining agricultural productivity and biodiversity, both of which are essential for rural economies and communities. By punishing those who illegally occupy or destroy these resources, the law promotes sustainable land use practices and safeguards the long-term viability of rural livelihoods.

Furthermore, protecting the environment from pollution not only safeguards public health but also preserves the natural beauty and recreational value of rural areas, attracting tourism and investment, thereby contributing to rural revitalization efforts.

4 THE EMBODIMENT OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL VALUES IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM OF RURAL REVITALIZATION

4.1 The Reflection of Confucian Values in the Legal Framework of China's Rural Revitalization

The values reflected in Confucian thought, such as benevolence, justice and fairness, propriety, wisdom and knowledge, integrity, and loyalty and filial piety, are embodied in various aspects of rural revitalization laws and policies.

Articles 55 and 56 of the Rural Revitalization Promotion Law encourage social capital to develop projects that are linked to the interests of farmers in rural areas, ensuring the dominant position and income rights of farmers in the process of rural revitalization, reflecting the law's concern for farmers' welfare. The Land Management Law and the Rural Land Contracting Law also have a large number of clauses to protect farmers' land rights and interests, allowing farmers to transfer land management rights by leasing, investing, etc., increasing farmers' income, and reflecting care for farmers' survival and development. These are all manifestations of the Confucian value of "benevolence".

The Rural Revitalization Promotion Law emphasizes that in advancing rural revitalization, the legitimate rights and interests of farmers and rural collective economic organizations must be safeguarded, and their interests must not be harmed. The Environmental Protection Law stresses the importance of strictly adhering to environmental regulations during the process of rural revitalization to prevent pollution and ecological damage, ensuring fairness in resource allocation and environmental protection. These principles reflect the Confucian values of "fairness and justice."

Although laws related to rural revitalization do not directly mention the term "etiquette," they indirectly reflect respect for rural etiquette and traditions through the protection of rural culture and landscape. For example, local governments are required to strengthen the preservation of historically and culturally significant cities, towns, villages, traditional villages, and rural landscapes. Additionally, in rural governance, the government promotes civilized practices, organizes moral education classes, and fosters socialist core values and outstanding traditional culture. These efforts guide villagers to observe social ethics and family virtues, all of which fall within the realm of etiquette culture. These actions reflect Confucian values of "etiquette."

Articles 18 and 53 of the "Rural Revitalization Promotion Law" encourage the development of agricultural informatization, promoting the digitization of agricultural production and management, and enhancing the digital and intelligent level of public services in rural areas. Additionally, in the practice of rural revitalization, the government has increased investment in rural education, improved the quality of rural education, and cultivated more knowledgeable

and skilled rural talents, providing intellectual support for rural revitalization. These measures reflect China's emphasis on wisdom and knowledge, which is a manifestation of the Confucian values of "wisdom and knowledge."

Although laws related to rural revitalization do not explicitly mention the word "integrity," the principle of good faith is a fundamental principle in Chinese law. In projects where social capital is linked to the interests of farmers, in the transfer of rural land, and in the requisition and compensation of rural collective land, all parties are required to act with honesty and fulfill their contractual obligations. At the same time, in the practice of rural governance, the Chinese government has vigorously promoted the development of a culture of integrity, using credit system development and mechanisms to penalize dishonest behavior. This guides villagers to be honest individuals and conduct affairs with integrity, fostering a favorable social environment for rural revitalization. These efforts embody the Confucian value of "integrity."

Although the "Rural Revitalization Promotion Law" does not directly refer to "loyalty and filial piety," the spirit of the law emphasizes the foundational role of the family in rural society and the care for the elderly and vulnerable groups. Moreover, the government has established and improved the social security system in rural areas, providing pensions, medical insurance, and other services for the elderly, which reflects the cultural tradition of filial piety and care for the elderly. These actions embody the Confucian values of "loyalty and filial piety."

4.2 The Reflection of Daoist Values in the Legal Framework of China's Rural Revitalization

Harmony with Nature: The concept of "Tao Te Ch'ing" is reflected in various legal policies related to rural revitalization, particularly in environmental protection laws. For instance, the Environmental Protection Law of China emphasizes the protection of natural resources and ecosystems, promoting sustainable development and ecological balance in rural areas. This aligns with Taoism's advocacy of living in harmony with nature and respecting the laws of nature.

Non-action and Spontaneous Order ("wu wei"): While the direct term "wu wei" may not be explicitly stated in legal texts, the principle of minimal government intervention and fostering self-governance is embodied in policies such as the Rural Revitalization Promotion Law. This law encourages rural communities to take the initiative in their own development, promoting self-reliance and spontaneous order, in line with Taoist ideals of non-interference and allowing things to take their natural course.

Simplicity and Inner Cultivation: The promotion of simplicity and inner cultivation in Taoism is indirectly reflected in rural revitalization policies that emphasize sustainable lifestyles and cultural preservation. For example, the Rural Land Contracting Act encourages sustainable farming practices and the preservation of traditional agricultural knowledge, fostering a simpler and more harmonious way of life that resonates with Taoist values.

Morality and Ethics: The importance of morality and ethics in Taoism is reflected in rural revitalization policies that promote social harmony and ethical behavior. The Rural Revitalization Promotion Law, for instance, emphasizes the role of community leaders and role models in upholding moral standards and fostering a positive social environment. This aligns with Taoist teachings on the cultivation of virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, and trustworthiness.

Therefore, Daoist values are reflected to varying degrees in the laws and policies related to rural revitalization. Although certain concepts may not be explicitly stated, the spirit and objectives of these policies align with core Daoist principles. These policies demonstrate the application of Daoist wisdom in modern governance by promoting harmonious coexistence with nature, reducing government intervention, encouraging a simple lifestyle and moral cultivation, and focusing on sustainable development.

4.3 The embodiment of traditional Chinese cultural values rooted in Legalist thought within the rural revitalization legal system

The values emphasized by the Legalist school, such as the importance of the rule of law and order, pragmatism and utilitarianism, centralization of power, emphasis on agriculture, and strict systems of rewards and punishments, can be discerned in various legal policies and regulations related to rural revitalization in China.

Importance of the Rule of Law and Order: Rural Revitalization Promotion Law establishes a comprehensive legal framework for rural revitalization, outlining measures to promote rural economic, social, and ecological development. It emphasizes the rule of law in addressing issues related to land management, resource allocation, and environmental protection, ensuring that rural areas are governed by clear and enforceable laws. Land Administration Law and Rural Land Contracting Law govern land use and ownership in rural areas, ensuring that land rights are protected and disputes are resolved through legal channels. They reinforce the principle of law and order by providing clear guidelines for land allocation, leasing, and contracting, thereby reducing conflicts and fostering stability.

Pragmatism and Utilitarianism: Rural Revitalization Promotion Law is designed to be practical and effective, focusing on concrete measures that can directly benefit rural residents and enhance their quality of life. It prioritizes initiatives that are economically feasible, socially acceptable, and environmentally sustainable, reflecting a pragmatic approach to rural development. Environmental Protection Law and Related Regulations emphasize the need for practical solutions to environmental challenges in rural areas, promoting sustainable development practices that balance economic growth with environmental conservation. They encourage the adoption of cost-effective and efficient technologies and policies to address pollution, resource depletion, and other environmental issues.

Centralization of Power: While Rural Revitalization Promotion Law promotes decentralization and community participation in rural development, it also emphasizes the role of the central and local governments in setting policies, allocating resources, and overseeing implementation. This centralized approach ensures that rural revitalization efforts are coordinated and directed towards achieving national goals and priorities.

Emphasis on Agriculture: Rural Revitalization Promotion Law prioritizes the development of modern agriculture, encouraging technological innovation, land consolidation, and improved agricultural practices. It also supports agricultural cooperatives and other forms of collective economic organizations to enhance agricultural productivity and rural incomes. Various government policies and subsidies aimed at promoting agricultural development, such as providing incentives for farmers to adopt new technologies, improving irrigation systems, and supporting rural infrastructure projects, demonstrate the importance placed on agriculture in rural revitalization efforts.

Strict Systems of Rewards and Punishments: Rural Revitalization Promotion Law and Related Regulations often include provisions for incentives and rewards for individuals, organizations, and communities that excel in rural revitalization efforts. At the same time, they establish clear penalties for violations of laws and regulations, such as illegal land use, environmental degradation, and corruption.

In summary, the values of the Legalist school can be seen in various legal policies and regulations related to rural revitalization in China, particularly in the areas of rule of law, pragmatism, centralization of power, emphasis on agriculture, and strict systems of rewards and punishments. These values provide a guiding framework for ensuring that rural revitalization efforts are effective, just, and sustainable.

5 THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE CULTURAL VALUES ON THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRENT RURAL REVITALIZATION LAWS IN CHINA

The traditional Chinese cultural values have exerted a profound influence on the formulation and implementation of China's current rural revitalization related laws. This influence is primarily reflected in several aspects.

Firstly, the harmonious coexistence and respect for nature emphasized in traditional Chinese culture provide valuable guidance for rural revitalization laws. This philosophy promotes a focus on the harmonious development of man with nature and the environment in legal formulation, aiming to achieve sustainable and green development goals. For instance, environmental protection regulations reflect the traditional emphasis on preserving nature.

Secondly, the community awareness, collective interest orientation, and family values in traditional Chinese culture are also reflected in relevant laws for rural revitalization. These values inform a greater emphasis on village community building and development, encouraging villagers' self-governance and participation, fostering harmonious and stable rural societies. Meanwhile, they also manifest the protection of farmers' rights and interests and the value of fair distribution, ensuring that farmers can fairly share in the fruits of development during rural revitalization.

Furthermore, the profound foundation of agricultural civilization and the tradition of emphasizing practical labor and experience accumulation in traditional Chinese culture have provided abundant ideological resources for the formulation of provisions related to agricultural production and farmers' lives in rural revitalization laws. This culture emphasizes the significance of agricultural production, respects the labor achievements of farmers, and encourages them to improve living conditions through diligent work. Consequently, in rural revitalization laws, we observe support for agricultural technological innovation, encouragement for the development of farmer cooperatives, and emphasis on the protection of farmers' rights and interests, all of which reflect the affirmation of the value of farmers' labor and the importance attached to the sustainable development of agricultural production.

Overall, traditional Chinese cultural values have played a significant role in the formulation and implementation of China's current rural revitalization related laws. This influence is not only reflected in the value orientation and goal setting of these laws but also permeates through their specific content and implementation methods. By incorporating traditional cultural elements, rural revitalization laws are more closely aligned with rural realities, making them easier for farmers to accept and understand, thereby effectively promoting the smooth progress of rural revitalization work.

6 SUGGESTION

To further harness the positive effects of traditional Chinese cultural values and promote their integration with the rural legal, moral, and autonomous governance systems, thereby achieving comprehensive revitalization of rural societies, we can delve into the following strategies:

Firstly, promote cultural education and awareness programs. Regular training and workshops for rural residents, leaders, and legal practitioners on traditional virtues and their relevance to contemporary rural development can strengthen the moral foundation of society. Such initiatives can inspire self-governance by encouraging villagers to resolve disputes amicably and maintain social order based on shared values.

Secondly, foster collaborative governance models. By establishing platforms that bring together government officials, village elders, and community leaders, we can develop decision-making processes that blend the formal legal system with informal, culturally rooted dispute resolution mechanisms. This promotes a hybrid governance model that is both legally sound and culturally sensitive.

Thirdly, leverage traditional cultural practices for sustainable development. Encouraging rural communities to adopt eco-friendly agricultural practices rooted in their cultural heritage, for instance, can contribute to both environmental

conservation and economic prosperity. Similarly, preserving and promoting local arts, crafts, and festivals can attract tourism, enhancing rural economies while preserving cultural identity.

7 CONCLUSION

Law is merely a special cultural phenomenon, and its creation, interpretation, and application are inseparable from culture. Law cannot develop independently of culture. Without the context of cultural traditions, the formulation, interpretation, and application of legal norms would be like a tree without roots or water without a source [9]. Through the introduction of China's rural revitalization legal system, traditional Chinese cultural values, and the role these values play within the legal framework of rural revitalization, we can see that traditional cultural values have played a crucial supporting role in China's rural revitalization strategy. Chinese traditional legal culture is a cultural system that is very different from Western legal culture. This cultural system is based on a natural environment and social life that are different from those in the West, and has a different conceptual foundation and composition [10]. Whether it is possible to promote the integration of Marxist legal theory with China's outstanding traditional culture, based on the practical foundation of Chinese-style legal modernization, directly determines the success of China's legal modernization [11]. Therefore, the formulation and implementation of Chinese laws cannot mechanically copy Western legal ideas and theories. Through the analysis and discussion in this paper, we hope that China's experience with rural revitalization can offer valuable insights and lessons for rural revitalization and the integration of culture and law on a global scale.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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