A Study on the Spatial Practice and Institutional Support of the Sense of the Chinese National Community in the Context of Coordinated River Basin Development

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ABSTRACT
Under the background of promoting regional coordinated development and strengthening the modernization of national governance, river basin collaborative development has become an important spatial carrier to enhance the consciousness of community of shared future for mankind. Based on basin-based coordinated development perspective, the paper analyses the optimization incentives of basis space practice and system guarantee above mentioned national community consciousness fostering. Informed by spatial governance, collaborative development and community building theories, the paper explains the intrinsic coupling logic of river basin governance and collective identity construction and discusses how ecological co-governance, economic connection, as well as cultural integration are the key routes to translating spatial cooperation into shared identity construction. In addition, the research examines what institutional settings support these practices: cross-regional mechanisms of coordination; multi-level governance arrangements; integration of policies; maintenance on rule-of-law guarantees. The study claims that as natural–social composite spaces river basins can be seen as a constructive platform for shaping ecological interdependence into social cohesion and national identity. Not all basin development will coordinate governance and institutional breakthrough, this upgrade not only promotes regional integration of shared interests, emotional ties, and value recognition across ethnic groups, but also provides a new driving force for the formation of the Chinese nation community consciousness. Finally, it proposes an integrated framework from the perspective of institutional support and spatial practice innovatively, which has practical significance for advancing national unity and high-quality regional development in the new era as well as theoretical value.

Keywords: *River basin coordinated development, Consciousness of the Chinese nation community, Spatial practice, Regional governance, Institutional support, Collaborative governance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The promotion of coordinated regional development has increasingly become an important part of the strategy for national governance modernization and high-quality development since the 13th Five-Year Plan was put forward. The river basins as natural geographical units integrating ecological systems, economic networks, and cultural interactions are becoming increasingly important spatial carriers for the coordination of regional relations and configuration optimization of governance structure [1]. In contrast to administrative units that are defined solely by political frontiers, river basins have at their core the interdependence and connectivity that pervade them, and are thus a paramount arena for the exploration of new models of cross-regional cooperation and integrated governance [2]. Under this background, it is increasingly important to study how basin collaborative development can help facilitate the sense of community among the Chinese nation.

According to the consciousness of Chinese nation community, all ethnic groups in China have gained and shared identity, collective memory and

common interests through long-term collaboration. It is both a non-static cultural and ideological construct as well as the result of negotiated processes that take place through social interaction, inclusion in space, societal integration and institutional ordering [3]. Previous work has predominately approached the subject in terms of cultural identity, ethnic relations or political governance; much less attention has been directed to the spatial aspects that shape and consolidate collective identity. Research on river basin governance, in particular, has centered on ecological protection, resource allocation and economic coordination, with limited attention to its social and integrative functions. The bridging of these two research domains proposes a new analytical element by which to understand how spatial cooperation mechanisms may create shared national consciousness [4].

Theoretically, spatial governance theory and collaborative development theory call attention to space as an active medium around social relations and institutional practices, and the importance of coordinated action among multiple parties across regions and administrative levels. These perspectives can come together to make river basins a composite natural-cultural space in which ecological elements are interwoven with each other, economic cooperation and cultural exchange engender conditions for community forming [5]. This builds stronger national community consciousness as groups that meet there gradually develop common interests, mutual recognition and collective responsibility through continued interaction in the spatial frames shared by them.

This study methodologically adopts qualitative analytical methods through a theoretical interpretative and institutional analysis approach. Based on the above investigation, this paper explores the relevant coupling logic of river basin collaborative development and national consciousness formation (specifically that of Chinese nation community), identifies key spatial practices including ecological co-governance, economic linkage and cultural integration, and analyzes the institutional mechanism to maintain their sustainable operation [6]. SCs and SPs create an analytical framework connecting spatial practice to institutional support, which will expand on existing discourses of both regional governance and community-building theory.

2. THE THEORETICAL COUPLING LOGIC BETWEEN RIVER BASIN COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE CHINESE NATION COMMUNITY

River basin coordinated development inherently possesses spatial basis for collective identity formation at the national level. Administrative regions are frequently created based on political limitations while river basins, in contrast, are naturally built using ecological connection and resource interdependence. Through the water systems, environmental impacts and development shared by them, upstream and downstream areas are combined into a socio-ecological integrated system [7]. The inherently entangled nature gives rise to objective conditions for cooperation, mutual dependence and joint responsibility that resonate well with the basic tenets behind the awareness of Chinese national community.

The concept of space as an active part of about social reality built and shaped social relations and collective identities, is an aspect that the theory has gradually assimilated since the year 1980. Governance at the level of river basins also needs coordination across different jurisdictions, ethnicities, and economically disadvantaged regions, thus rendering significant engagement and institutional convergence more likely. Different social actors gradually form stable cooperation patterns through joint decision-making, ecological management, and infrastructure interconnection [8]. Persistent spatial interaction facilitates trust-building and the co-management experience, enabling a greater sense of belonging and collective identity.

In economic terms, the coordinated development of river basins consolidates the realization of community consciousness by forming interlinked markets and scheming derivative industry framework. The flow of capital, labor, technology, and information across basin regions narrows developmental gaps and strengthens shared interests between different peoples. When economic cooperation produces real benefits—better livelihoods, new jobs and regional prosperity—it strengthens beliefs about mutual dependence and common fate [9]. Economic integration, in this sense, is thus a concrete mechanism through which these abstract principles of national unity are mutated into everyday social

experience. To clearly illustrate the internal coupling relationship between river basin coordinated development and the consciousness of the Chinese nation community, the theoretical logic framework is shown in “Figure 1”. As a natural–social composite space, a river basin forms community consciousness through ecological, economic and cultural connections, supported by spatial practices and institutional systems.

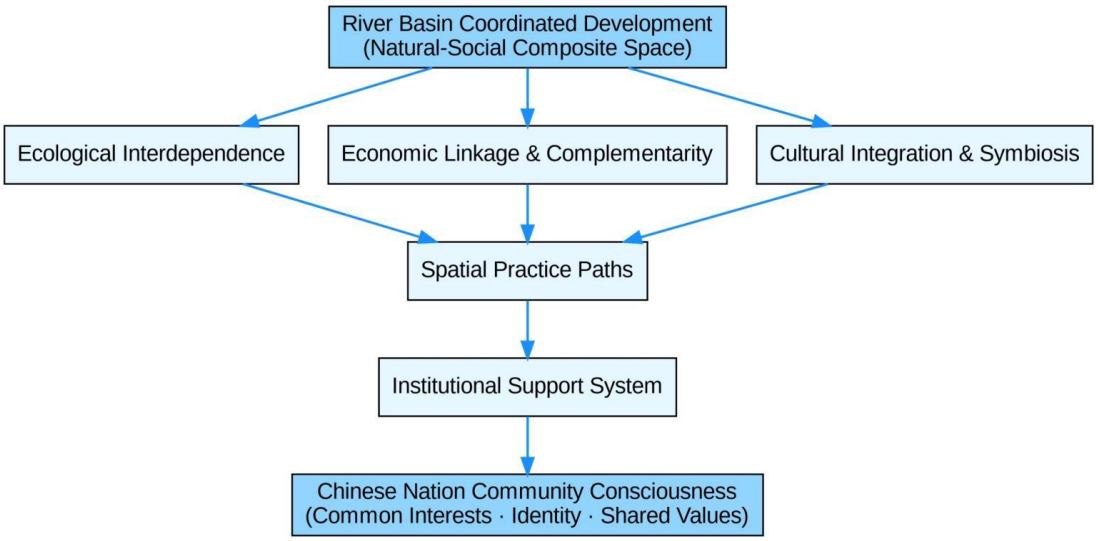


Figure 1 Theoretical Coupling Logic.

3. SPATIAL PRACTICE PATHS OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE CHINESE NATION COMMUNITY IN RIVER BASIN COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT

Guided by the vision of Chinese nation community, river basin coordinated development becomes a biological entity that is constructed and rebuilt through systemic relationships, as opposed to relying on abstract discourse or policy advocacy. River Basins are integrated socio-spatial complexes where different regions and populations cooperate: continually translating objective interdependence into shared identity and collective recognition. Spatial cooperation can effectively strengthen the community consciousness, guided by ecological co-governance based on common environmental responsibility, economic linkage that emphasizes common interests, and cultural integration that deepens various emotional and value connections. These three interlinked dimensions together show how spatial interaction promotes social coherence and institutionalized collective identity through coordinated development across river basins.

3.1 Ecological Co-governance: Shaping the Awareness of a Community of Shared Destiny Through River Basin Ecological Coordination

Environmental governance in river basins is a shared responsibility among upstream and downstream areas, because ecological systems are interconnected. Pollution diffusion, water resources allocation and ecosystem degradation often cut across administrative boundaries necessitating a coordinated ecological management system as opposed to isolated local actions. This interdependence of ecological well-being makes the inhabitants of different regions and social classes aware that environmental risks and benefits should be borne communally. The awareness of configured contingent theory mainly relies on the joint ecological governance practice, and also forms an important cognitive basis for consciousness of a community with a shared future

The cross-region ecological governance mechanism further institutionalizes cooperation, and strengthens collective responsibility. Such joint monitoring systems, harmonized pollution control policies and integrated watershed restoration projects encourage collaborative decision-making among the different tiers of government and various stakeholders in society. These collaborative

practices remap environmental protection from being a spatially encapsulated administrative activity into a process of governance undertaken by the many. Through engaging in joint ecological governance, actors build trust, cooperation norm and common mission belief, hence firming up the idea that ecological security is a public good.

Ecological co-governance is also instrumental in reconciling development interests with equitable resource distribution. River basins coordination mechanism is common water use, ecological compensation, and environmental responsibility division of negotiations. These processes foster dialogue and compromise between regions at varying levels of development or with different resource endowments; Ecological collaboration promotes regional peace, sharing, and equitable governance relations by establishing benefit-sharing and compensation frameworks, thereby strengthening social trust as well as perceptions of common interests within the broader national community.

3.2 Economic Linkage: Strengthening the Foundation of Shared Interests Through River Basin Economic Networks

The coordinated development of river basins leads to the formation of interconnected economic networks between different administrative and regional boundaries. This enhances the spatial base for the smooth flow of production elements (capital, labor, technology, information) through river basins at that level and promotes intensive coordination among various regional economies achieved by means of transportation system collaboration, industrial economy cooperation and market interconnectedness. This increasing economic interdependence promotes the participation of regions with different resource endowments and development levels in a complementary division of labor, turning geographical proximity into systematic co-operation within the economy. Given how economic activities increasingly depend on cross-regional cooperation, the development interests of different region can become shared to form a material foundation for collective identity.

Establishing basin-wide economic linkages will further help to narrow development gaps and boost inclusive growth. Coordinated industrial planning, interconnected infrastructure and integrated regional value chains enable less-developed areas to tap wider markets and development opportunities. When the populations of various regions see their employment prospects, income growth and access to public services improvement, economic cooperation is directly linked to real improvements in everyday life. Common development results in better perceived fairness and mutual benefit, thus strengthening the recognition of common interests under the overall national framework. From the perspective of river basin coordinated development, fostering the Chinese nation community consciousness requires spatial practices as paths and institutional systems as guarantees, forming an integrated "practice–support–goal" framework, as illustrated in "Figure 2".

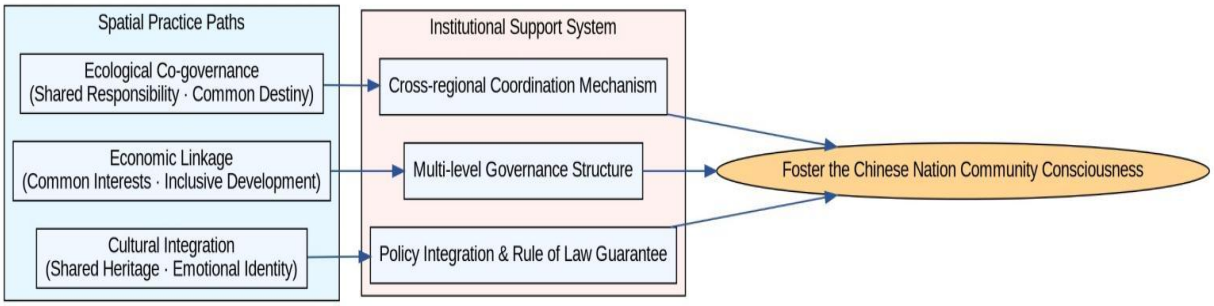


Figure 2 Spatial Practice & Institutional Support Framework

The economic cooperation in river basin promotes stable interaction among social actors, enterprises and local governments and forms a long-term cooperative relationship. Frequent economic interactions facilitate harmonization of institutions, alignment of policies, and diffusion of innovations across regions. Over time, these repeated dealings create trust, shared expectations and norms of cooperation so that economic exchange can spill over into social integration. In this regard, basin-based economic networks are not only an important driver of regional development, but also one of the most effective practical paths for mutual interests to be optimized and internalized

into a part of consciousness under the roof of Chinese national community.

3.3 Holistic Protection of River Basin Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage of river basins is the overall accumulation of human activities, ecological adaptation and cultural interaction in a long-term common development process. Unlike disconnected heritage sites constrained by administrative frontiers, cultural resources in a river basin generally form an interlinked cultural system delineated by migratory paths, exchange networks and similar ecology. The realization of the region-wide recognition of cultural heritage can effectively transcend the fragmentation of protection and reflect the continuity, integrity and value system of regional civilization, which provide an important cultural support for enhancing collective identity.

These mechanisms must cross regional boundaries and integrate conservation planning, resource management, and cultural interpretation to provide comprehensive protection of river basin cultural heritage. It promotes systematic protection for its heritage through unified protection standards, joint governance platforms, and collaborative management among local governments. This coordination of practices not only improves the efficiency of heritage protection but also encourages cooperation between regions, confirming that cultural heritage is a shared historical legacy instead of a local exclusive property.

4. CONSTRUCTING THE INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR THE SPATIAL PRACTICE OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE CHINESE NATION COMMUNITY

The system of effective institutional support is the guarantee for effectively cultivating the consciousness of community of the Chinese nation in regional coordinated development. It is with respect to this lack of institutional mechanisms that can formalize spatial collaboration and social interaction into reliable, long-term behavior that we see a need for intervention. Institutions systematically guide and reinforce ecological co-governance, economic linkage, and cultural integration through formalized rules-cross-regional coordination bodies-governance systems. This infrastructural support turns ad hoc collaboration into stable, predictable, and scalable social processes such that collective identity becomes an integral part of the operational logic of river basin development.

Simplified multi-level governance structures use of different stakeholders—central, provincial, and local authorities to social actors to enterprises and community organizations. Such vertical and horizontal integration enables policies and initiatives to be implemented in a coherent manner while taking into account the local context. Multi-level coordination provides both top-down direction and bottom-up participation in order to achieve consistency of spatial practices with ecological, economic, and cultural dynamics. Multi-level governance structures connect governance across scales, embedding collective action norms in everyday spatial practice and enhancing social cohesion and shared identity formation.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed the strategic construction and institutional sharing of community consciousness of Chinese nation under the development model of river basin coordinated, as well as the synergetic effect between space governance and infrastructure construction. First of all, it shows that because river basins are natural–social composite spaces, they constitute a special space for exploring collective identity through ecological interdependence, economic cooperation and cultural exchange. Specifically, regions and ethnic groups at different levels of the economic chain gradually establish common interests, emotional resonance-cyborgs and shared values through their coordination in certain spatial contexts—which is a gradual process creating the gene pool of national conscientiousness.

The paper shows how spatial cooperation leads to identity formation through three essential pathways: ecological co-governance, economic connectivity, and cultural integration. Ecological co-governance is the common responsibility and mutual trust, economic linkage is the material interest and interdependence, cultural integration is emotional identity and values consensus. All of them together work as a cohesive multidimensional driver in which spatial interaction drives cohesion and social recognition on a national level.

It is institutional mechanisms that are necessary to keep these spatial practices viable. This refers to

how these different governance levels, mutually interacting in cross-regional coordination bodies and legal frameworks or multi-level governance structures, provide the structure and normative support for making informal cooperation processes persistent and relatively stable. These institutional forms contribute to equity, legitimacy, and accountability by allowing different actors in society to become effective participants in governance and embedding community awareness within everyday social and spatial practices.

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