

1 Article

2 Cultural Identity in Conservation of the Cultural 3 Landscape values in Uraman Takht Village- Iran

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20 **Abstract:** Identity is the basis and foundation of the cultural landscape. Despite the emphasis of
21 international documents and charters on its various aspects and necessity, today, the cultural
22 landscape is threatened by extinction due to changes of many parameters. Accordingly, it is crucial
23 to find an approach that can sustain cultural identity and its values in the changing world of the
24 twenty-first century. Given the qualitative and the changing nature of cultural identity, achieving
25 an approach which can lead to its continuation is not straightforward. By reviewing and analyzing
26 international conventions and documents, on the one hand, and expert opinions, on the other hand,
27 the present study, therefore, aimed to find out how the approach of cultural landscape values
28 conservation can lead to the continuation of cultural identity in the natural and cultural heritage of
29 Uraman Takht. This paper employed qualitative research methods as a basis for data collection and
30 analysis, which primarily involved the use of content analysis along with field observations and
31 interviews with stakeholders and indigenous residents.

32 **Keywords:** Cultural identity; Conservation; Cultural landscape; value; Uraman Takh.

33

34 1. Introduction

35 One of the main advances in recent decades is conservation of ethnographic landscapes and the
36 identity of locations for indigenous communities. Cultural and natural values form the identity and
37 personality of cultural landscapes [1]. Rössler asserts that the cultural landscapes indicate an
38 interwoven network of natural and cultural values whose identity are the identity and culture of
39 individuals [2]. Cultural identity includes the ways people communicate with cultural landscapes.
40 This communication is achieved due to awareness of natural and cultural values. Moreover, the
41 values create a distinct identity which is the result of communication between people and landscapes
42 [3]. Cultural identity is the basis of cultural heritage and values of cultural landscapes are the basis
43 of cultural identity. The local and native people who are the constructor and keepers of cultural
44 landscape, consider location values as the inseparable part of their cultural identity. Indigenous
45 people live in the landscape and consider the identity, history and nature as the values of cultural

46 landscape which they have maintained from past to present [4]. From Taylor and Mitchell approach
47 (2016), the landscape reflects the identity. The aim of conservation of cultural landscape is transfer of
48 international prominent values to the next generation. The transfer of these values leads to
49 continuation of the cultural identity of human beings [5]. Therefore, the main research question is
50 what approach could make the cultural identity persistent in natural and cultural heritage? The main
51 aim of this study is to realize the cultural identity and prominent values of the cultural landscape in
52 various communities and finding the appropriate approach for their continuation with emphasis on
53 Uraman Takht historical village. Thus, based on review and investigation of international documents
54 and conventions and analysis of the viewpoints of theorists and their explanation in Uraman Takht
55 case study, it tried to achieve this objective and then investigate the role of local people in the
56 protection and continuation of the cultural identity of Uraman. Thus, this study is considered
57 qualitative in terms of research question and achievement of objective and in order to investigate the
58 related literature to prominent international values in the cultural landscape, documentary study and
59 content analysis are used. In the next phase, in order to realize the prominent values of the cultural
60 landscape of the Uraman Takht city and the role of local people, three different methods have been
61 used for data the collection, including 1) participatory observation, photography and daily note; 2)
62 Documentary and descriptive study and observation and 3) structured and semi-structured
63 interview.

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2. Literature review

67 With the aim of recognizing the prominent international value of cultural landscapes based on
68 this definition that the landscape is the result of joint interaction between man and nature, the
69 theorists of this field have addressed recognition of the value according to two important criteria of
70 man and nature. Mitchell is one of the pioneers in offering a new classification of values based on the
71 cultural landscape. He classifies value in cultural landscapes into six main categories: 1)
72 environmental values, 2) cultural values, 3) spiritual values, 4) educational values, 5) scientific values
73 and 6) recreational values. Brown et al consider landscape protection approach in linking nature
74 conservation and culture and promotion of participation with local inhabitants of that landscape and
75 believe that this approach protects the cultural landscape based on the relationship between people
76 and nature over time. Traditional land use patterns that have shaped many cultural landscapes in the
77 world contribute to biodiversity [6]. Accordingly, Brown and Mitchell first pay attention to
78 simultaneous consideration of natural and cultural values in the protection of cultural perspective;
79 then, referring to the preservation of traditional patterns of sustainable use of land by local people
80 emphasizes on preservation of intangible values and introduce intangible heritage as guarantee of
81 preservation of natural values. Mitchell and Buggy consider the cultural landscape as including
82 material and immaterial, natural, spiritual, and cultural factors [7].

83 In addition, Rossler considers cultural landscape as the interrelationship between culture and
84 nature, tangible and intangible heritage, biodiversity and culture and points out that these
85 components represent a strong link between the essence of culture and human identity [8]. Moreover,
86 Stovel classifies cultural landscape values into three categories: historical-documentary values,
87 artistic value, creativity and cultural values [9]. One of the most important issues that most theorists
88 point out in terms of values in cultural landscape is intangible values.

89 Gustave Aroz, based on the provisions of St. Antonio Statement, introduces value in relation
90 to a cultural perspective, including value of identity, historical value, material value, social value and
91 economic value [10]. Taylor agrees with Mitchell on preservation of cultural landscape values and
92 states that a successful approach to protection of cultural, urban and rural landscape is consideration
93 of natural values to the same extent as cultural values, maintaining traditional communication with
94 the location and participation of people in protection of places where they live and work [11].

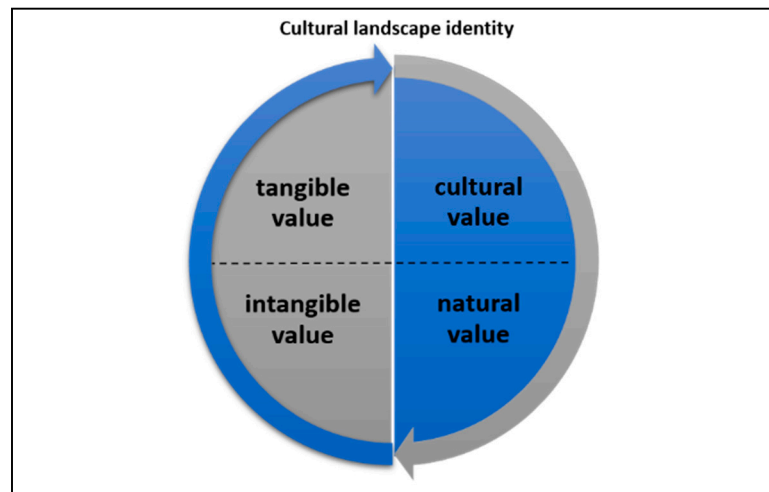
95 Francesco Bandarin also emphasizes on intangible values in cultural landscape protection and
96 assets that the domain of cultural heritage is not limited to monuments, archaeological sites and
97 objects rather it includes traditions and lifestyles inherited from our ancestors such as oral tradition,
98 performing arts, social activities, celebrations, natural and universal knowledge and the knowledge
99 of production of local products are generally defined as intangible values [12]. As claimed by Fidler
100 and Yokilehtot state: "Today's tendency is towards a wider perception of cultural heritage as a
101 concept that brings all the signs of human achievements over time" [13]. In this case, Convention 1972
102 of the UNESCO World Heritage Center could be mentioned, which deals with protection of natural
103 and cultural heritage values of the world and in particular its transformation in 1992 and
104 consideration of the concept of cultural landscape by defining the common work of man and nature
105 and paying attention to the cultural landscape values including local people, biodiversity and
106 cultural diversity [14].

107 UNESCO World Heritage Center classifies cultural landscape into three categories: 1) openly
108 defined perspectives: designed and constructed on purpose by human being where gardens and
109 artificial landscapes which are usually associated with religious buildings or memorials are placed,
110 2) evolved organic: this kind of landscape has been achieved from social, economic, administrative
111 and religious obligations and its present form has evolved in association with its natural environment
112 and in response to it, and 3) associative cultural landscape: this category includes that kind of
113 perspective on the World Heritage List which is justified by religious and ethnic superiority, artistic
114 or cultural elements of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence that may not be
115 that much prominent or even absent [15]. By reviewing the content categorized by the UNESCO
116 World Heritage Center, it can be concluded that values are in four main categories: cultural value,
117 natural value, tangible value and intangible value. All these values are formed and sustained in
118 connection of man and his environment and sustained. The World Heritage Center considers the aim
119 of protecting cultural landscapes as the preservation of its prominent values which in addition to
120 protection of cultural values considers protection of natural values and intangible value important.

121 After approval of the cultural landscape in World Heritage Convention in 1992, various
122 specialized meetings and conventions were dealing with conservation in cultural perspectives. In this
123 regard, it is possible to refer to Florence declaration 2014 on heritage and landscape as human values.
124 This declaration focuses on cultural diversity, heritage and landscape values. The statement considers
125 landscape as an integral part of the heritage and states that the perspective has tangible and intangible
126 values. Florence statement considers biodiversity as a value which should be preserved. This
127 statement has introduced utilization of local knowledge in relation with modern knowledge as one

128 of the landscape protection approaches [16]. According to the studies, the basis of the identity in a
129 cultural perspective are natural and cultural values which have two dimensions of tangible and
130 intangible. Figure 1 represents values in a cultural landscape which constitute the foundation of
131 identity.

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Figure 1: cultural landscape identity

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137 3. Materials and Methods

138 The research approach is qualitative and the main strategies of study include qualitative strategy
139 for recognition of the status quo, historical interpretative strategy for recognition of the phenomenon
140 and the studied sample is in the past and the logical argumentative strategy is in development of
141 conceptual framework of the study. For this study first for review of the literature related to
142 prominent international values in the cultural landscape, documentary method and content analysis
143 have been used. In the next stage, in order to recognize the prominent values of the cultural landscape
144 of Uraman Takht, three different methods have been used for data collection: 1) participatory
145 observation, photography and daily note; 2) Documentary and descriptive study and observation
146 and 3) structured and semi-structured interview. Part of the collected data is related to the
147 researcher's presence in the field of research and recording data through photography, note taking
148 and participatory observation. The total obtained data from this section is descriptive and used to
149 support the information obtained from interviews. In this section, the researcher has collected and
150 recorded the required information through filed study.

151 The method of study and documentary and descriptive observation include collection of data
152 and published and not published documents about the case study; these resources include
153 qualitative-analytical and quantitative- descriptive information published by researchers,
154 government agencies, consulting engineers, private institutions and companies.

155 The obtained information in this way is useful in becoming aware of physical, historical, cultural,
156 social, economic and proposed plans and projects around the studied area. In addition, data collection
157 through deep interview tool for sharing views and opinions of "executives", "professionals" and "local
158 residents" is another major strategy of this research. For this purpose, interviews were conducted in
159 three phases: the first interviewed community includes "executive directors" at the provincial level
160 of the Government, Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism departments of Kurdistan,

161 Municipality and City Council in Uraman area. In the second phase, "experts, including designers,
162 planners, project executives and researchers" are interviewed who were active in relevant agencies
163 and organizations at the provincial level and non-native specialists such as university professors. In
164 the third stage, "local residents of Uraman area" were interviewed. It is noteworthy that the questions
165 of interviews for each group were prepared individually based on the main objectives.

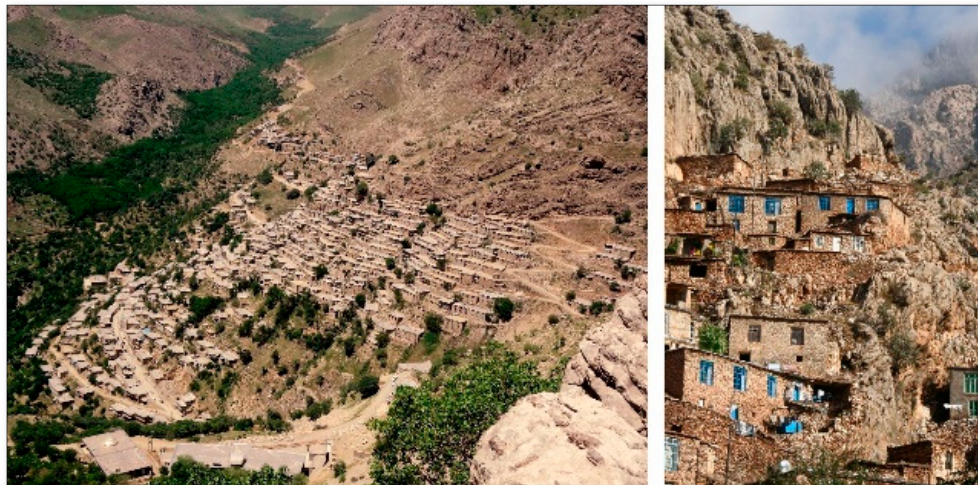
166 The interview with managers and experts was done in deep and semi-structured way with
167 certain questions; Moreover, the interview with local residents Uraman was also in deep and semi-
168 structured way and it tried to make no limitation for audiences in responding and to make the
169 mentality of the interviewer not directly influential. Deep interview indicates the face to face contract
170 of interviewer and respondent. The range of interview varies from structured status or a thread of
171 planned questions to informal and unstructured conversation about the intended subject of
172 interviewing [17]. The interview is a kind of exploratory research that is used to explain the
173 information obtained from participatory observation and has a supportive and supporting role for
174 descriptive data. The methodology of this research in review of the views of local residents of the
175 Uraman area of Kurdistan is qualitative ethnographic approach. In the studied sample, more than
176 100 interviews were conducted with native inhabitants of the Uraman region from 2013 to 2016. The
177 method of data collection in this section was based on a deep semi-structured interview and
178 participatory observation.

179 4. Results

180 4.1. Outstanding values of Uraman Takht's cultural landscape

181 Recognizing Uraman Takht's Cultural Landscape Uraman Takht is a village in the Oraman
182 region of Kurdistan province, locate in the west of Iran. Uraman Takht's cultural landscape can be
183 introduced as a small part of the Oraman Cultural Region. Oraman is a cultural district where the
184 age of living comes to thousands of years [18]. Indigenous peoples in this mountainous area have,
185 over time, being very creative with their natural environment, and this creative process has continued
186 in many respects to this day. Indigenous knowledge of the construction of stone houses on the slope
187 of the mountain, the management of spring water and its division into gardens inherited from their
188 ancestors, unique handicrafts, the ritual ceremony of Piran Shaliar, which has become a symbol of
189 the cultural identity of Uraman Takht, and the most important intangible heritage of the area, and
190 the distinctive gardens in the form of terraces on the slope of mountains are all among the exceptional
191 values of Uraman Takht's cultural landscape (Fakohi, 2016). This intertwined structure of tangible
192 and intangible values reminisce the past and the experience of the ancestors, as well as the identity
193 and lifestyle of the Uraman people.

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Figure2: Uraman Takht's Cultural Landscape

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198 As a result of researches, field studies and interview with indigenous people, the values of the
199 cultural landscape of Uraman through which it is possible to maintain and continue cultural identity
200 are introduced in two groups of natural and cultural values. These values include tangible and
201 intangible dimensions.

202 4.1.1. Natural values:

203 In this area, 117 bird species, 23 species of mammals, 17 reptile species and 242 plant varieties
204 have been identified. The most important vegetation in this area is oak and *Pistacia Atlantica* (wild
205 pistachio) forests. Its animal species include caracal, goat, brown bears, leopard, vulture, osprey and
206 golden eagles and Partridge [19]. This richness of biodiversity is a reflection of the unique natural
207 geography of Uraman region. Local people of Uraman use most herbs for pharmaceutical purposes
208 [20]. Due to being located in a mountainous and impassable area, Uraman region is less exposed to
209 pollution and has a clean climate, which led to the cultivation of organic fruits in this area that will
210 have many economic benefits. The mountains, oak forests and the wilderness nature and amazing
211 valleys of Uraman are very attractive [21]. Many natural elements bring different meanings when
212 combined with beliefs of people. In Uraman, Sirvan River and Shahou Mountain and Kosalan are
213 mythic symbols that play important role in ancient poetry and literature. Another important natural
214 element is *Pistacia Atlantica* (wild pistachio) which due to various medicinal uses is considered a
215 sacred tree and planted on graves of big people [22].

216 4.1.2. Cultural values:

217 One of the cultural values is documentary and historical value. Uraman village has an old texture with its
218 habitat dating to thousands of years. One of its symptoms has been a discovery of property transaction
219 documents in Uraman related to the time of the Parthians [23]. There are two historic monuments of the tomb
220 and house of Pir Shaliyar which are historical and important. In the northern part of Uraman village and on a
221 hill overlooking the village, there are traces of walls and pillars indicating its oldness and being ancient.
222 According to the inhabitants, the oldest texture of village was located on the north side of the village next to the
223 abyss called "Tanoure Dave" and near "Hanoudga" spring [24]. Another cultural landscape values is its
224 architectural value. The architectural value in cultural landscape includes the creativity of human interaction
225 with nature for living and its related technologies. For example "Uraman Takht village which is located at the
226 end of Uraman valley and on its steep slope of this valley in west-east direction in front of northern side of the
227 Takht mountain" [25] have stone and dry stone architecture. The roofs are made with the trees in the same area
228 and are blended in a new way with the bedrock. Sometimes the cliff is part of the wall of house, foundation or
229 other components such as stairs.

230 The artistic values play an important role in the cultural landscape of Uraman. The Uraman
231 cultural landscape is an evolved organic landscape whose artistic beauty is intrinsic to nature,
232 including the artistic combination of settlements with rocks; artistic stoning inspired the natural
233 forms of stone arrangement. The men's clothing, part of women's clothing, shoes, socks, gloves, hats,
234 agricultural tools, all kinds of baskets, all kinds of woven fabrics (cloth, waves, Glim, Jajim), felt,
235 spindle and Tasbih are handmade products of this village which are all made using natural fibers
236 from animal hair to wood and other natural materials in that area are in a creative and artistic way
237 [26].

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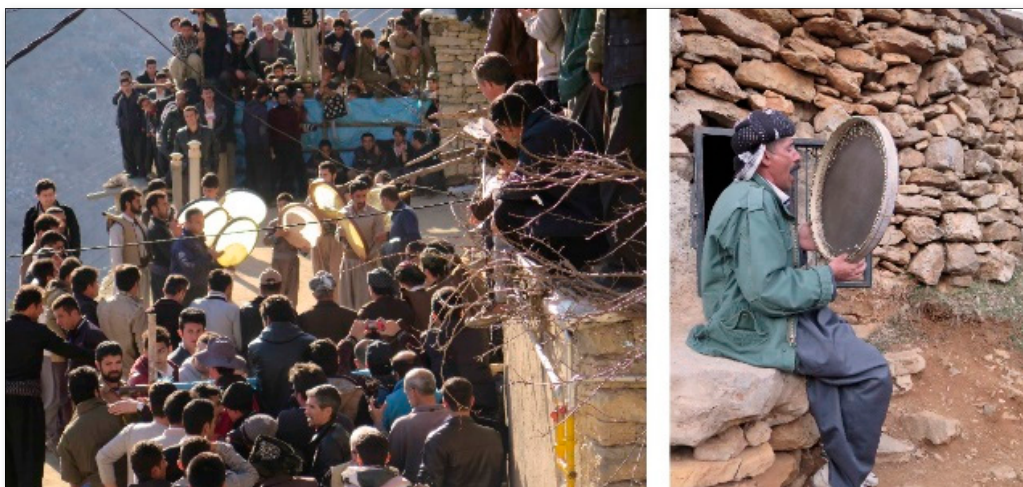
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Figure3: Local productions in the uraman takht

243

244 Identity of people in Uraman and in interviews, almost all respondents referred to. The existence
245 of holy people, places and rituals associated with them is one of the most important spiritual values
246 in Uraman Takht. Pir Shaliyar is one of the holy and mythical personalities in the Uraman whose
247 house, tomb and prayer house are considered as holy places of Uraman Takht. The rites and
248 traditions related to ceremony of Pir Saliyar have continued from the past to present. This ceremony
249 is held with the participation of local peoples every year like many religious ceremonies in the world.
250 The existence of holy trees which are mostly wild pistachios represents a deep link between the
251 spiritual beliefs of people and nature [27].



252

253

Figure 4: Pire shalyar ceremony in the uraman takht

254

255 The cultural landscape has been formed over the years from past to present with the continuation
256 of positive interaction of human with nature. Protection of cultural perspectives as an achievement
257 of experience and lifestyle of people has a significant role in survival of values and their transmission
258 to the next generation. The traditional knowledge beside new knowledge, paying attention to local
259 languages, different foods, and native management system along with modern management and
260 updating handicrafts will preserve values and promote identity where native people play a very
261 important role. Cultural landscape values are part of its identity; thus, it is possible to expect the
262 survival of cultural landscapes while preserving values.

263

264 4.2. The Role of Indigenous People in the Conservation of Cultural Landscape and Continuity of 265 Cultural Identity in Uraman Takht

266 The cultural landscape is an ideology in which the earth is a spiritual concept, rather than
267 material, and in that human being is an integral part of the earth. Oral traditions, traditional practices,
268 and deep relationship between humans and living and non-living components of the environment
269 are the fundamental values of the landscape which reveal the role of the human in the cultural
270 landscape [28]. Andrew and Buggey consider human and human culture as an integral and
271 interconnected component of the earth, which has created the cultural landscape. Further, they
272 believe that this all-encompassing connection of human with the nature and the creation of intangible
273 values are the key factors in the life of the cultural landscape. Francesco Bandarin highlights the role
274 of indigenous communities in preserving the cultural landscape, which includes the traditions and
275 lifestyle inherited from ancestors, such as oral tradition, performing arts, social activities, rituals,
276 celebrations, natural and global knowledge and knowledge of creating indigenous products, which
277 are generally defined as intangible values. This intangible heritage is protected by indigenous people
278 through their knowledge and skills, often passing on during rituals, celebrations and other social
279 activities [29].

280 The viewpoint of Uraman's indigenous inhabitants in preserving cultural landscapes and its
281 identity is the basis for decision making. Local communities and indigenous people have understood
282 the meaning of positive and peaceful interaction with the nature over the years and have
283 demonstrated this understanding in their behaviors. They do not set free the opportunity of
284 manipulating the cultural landscape and guarantee the conservation of their heritage for the future
285 generations. Hence, if the decisions made for the Uraman pass through the filter of its people, it will
286 restore the path to development which is the product of the comprehensive recognition of various
287 generations of the ecosystem. As a result, first nature is essential in shaping Uraman's cultural
288 landscape and lifestyle of indigenous people, and then the local community plays a critical role in the
289 continuity of life and the preservation of its landscape and identity.

290

291 5. Conclusions

292 The studies show that cultural landscape includes natural and cultural values which have
293 tangible and intangible dimensions. These values indicate the basis of cultural identity and their

294 maintenance and conservation leads to the maintenance of cultural identity. In this paper, in addition
295 to introducing natural and cultural values in Uraman Takht, it was shown that these values define
296 an identity for local communities. The study and recognition of the cultural landscape display how
297 the indigenous people have shaped their cultural identity in accordance with their nature, and have
298 been preserving it for many years, continuing to this day. Today, with the rapid changes and
299 globalization and the new management practices in which indigenous people have no role, the
300 cultural landscape and the root of it, i.e. the cultural identity, are in decline. The conservation of the
301 cultural landscape is an approach that, by utilizing the participation of indigenous people, we can
302 bring the knowledge of indigenous people, which has been gradually completed over many historic
303 periods, to the present. Relying on the worldview of these peoples, and in light of the changes in
304 today's world, they will regain their identity and sustain it. The cultural identity developed in
305 Uraman village has been and continues to be based on the social participation in line with the nature.
306 Therefore, conservation of Uraman's cultural landscape as a process of engaging people in
307 conjunction with nature and working together will not only enhance their cultural identity, but also
308 prolongs their life.
309

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311 formal analysis, P.H.; investigation, M.N.; resources, L.R.; data curation, L.R.; writing—original draft
312 preparation, L.R.; writing—review and editing, S.F.; visualization, M.N.; supervision, P.H.; project
313 administration, S.F.

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316

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