

The Preservation and Development Planning of China Traditional Village Against Background of Rural Revitalization Strategy

A Case Study on Dazi Village in Longshan County, Hunan Province, China*

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Abstract—Rural Revitalization Strategy has been put forward in 2018. Nowadays, it has become one of the key development strategies in China. Preservation and development of traditional villages which have suffered from irreparable damage for many years by rapid urbanization in China, has received great attention. In this paper, Dazi Village, a Tujia Minority village in Longshan County, Hunan Province, which was included in the fifth batch of China Traditional Villages list in 2018, was introduced. This paper investigated and analyzed natural resource and environmental conditions, as well as historical and cultural heritage, evaluated the significance of architecture. On this basis, several methods and measures for preserve and development of traditional villages has been suggested against the background of Rural Revitalization Strategy.

Keywords—Rural Revitalization Strategy; Tujia Minority; cultural heritage preserve

I. INTRODUCTION

Rural Revitalization Strategy which was put forward in the 19th Congress of the CPC reports, is a strategy that focuses on promoting the all-round revitalization of rural areas, including agricultural production, native culture, ecological environment, and organizations [1]. It is the general principle for works of agriculture, villages, and farmers in the rural area of China. China has already

announced 6,819 traditional villages in five batches, since 2012, accounting for about 3 percent of the total amount of Chinese villages. Most of the existing buildings in the traditional villages have been built for a long time. The existing traditional buildings (groups) and their occupation scale, as well as the surrounding environment are well organized as an integrated whole. The structure, materials, and decoration of the buildings have high aesthetic inheritance value with traditional skills.

With a long living history and precious native cultural heritage, traditional villages represent a harmonious human settlement space in its specific environment. The significant value of preserving traditional villages can be summarized as three aspects: scientific value, cultural and artistic value, and tourism value [3]. First of all, the changes of settlement landscape and the inheritance of national beliefs provide a possibility for our study in historical evolution and local culture. Secondly, traditional minority languages, dietary habits, marriage customs, funeral customs, exquisite carvings, structures, ethnic costumes, ethnic musical instruments, textile technology et al., all reflect the unique cultural and artistic charm of a traditional village. Traditional villages are composed of architectures, regional characteristics, and traditional customs, which have high artistic value. Thirdly, the tourism value of ancient villages can be mainly embodied in three aspects: natural scenery tour, traditional history and culture exhibition, and local culture experience.

All native culture and architectural art in traditional villages are unique and very perishable for China as well as the whole world. Therefore, the preservation and development of traditional villages are worthy of in-depth study.

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II. STUDY AREA

A. Address

Dazi Village is located in the southeast of Hongyanxi Town, in Longshan County, Xiangxi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, Hunan Province, China. It is an ancient village with a total population of 1, 447 in 316 households, that cover a total area of 12 km².

The ethnic groups in Dazi village are mainly Miao and Tujia, as well as Han. There are 69 traditional stilted buildings of Tujia Minority, 10 of them have been built for more than 100 years. The primitive residential buildings expand along the contour line beside the stream in the valley, which create an antique, quiet and leisure scene. An ancient bridge named Liangting Bridge at the entrance of the village, which was built in the last years of the Ming Dynasty, is a second-level cultural relic preservation units in Longshan County. The Tujia folk songs, traditional skills of Tujia and Dongdongkui (a Tujia clarinet vertical blowing instrument) are well preserved in Dazi village.

In December 2018, the expert committee proposed to list Dazi Village into the fifth batch of traditional Chinese villages. In consideration of its long history and abundant tangible cultural heritages, splendid Tujia traditional customs, and beautiful natural scenery, Dazi Village was proposed by expert committee to be involved in the fifth batch of Chinese Traditional Villages, in December 2018. (See "Fig. 1")

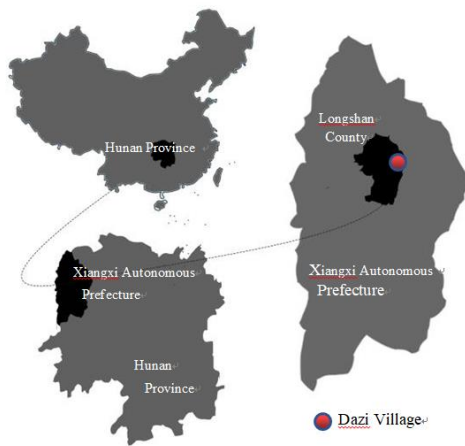


Fig. 1. Location.

B. Building in the Village

Tujia stilted building is mainly composed of main rooms and wing rooms. The function of the interior space of the house is traditional and integral, and it is closely related to the folk culture of the Tujia people. The overall layout of the houses is relatively flexible with the main house built on the ground which generally includes three rooms. The middle one is called Tangwu. It is the place where to commemorate the ancestors, treat guests and arrange funeral and wedding ceremonies. The wing rooms are connected to the main rooms and used as kitchens, bedrooms and guest rooms. Some of them are suspended and supported by pillars.

Most of main houses form north to south, fronting water and with hills on its back, perfectly integrates with the surrounding environment. Timber-clad wing gives the farmhouse an L-shaped or U-shaped plan, which wraps two or three sides of a private courtyard. Wood and stone from the mountains were chosen as the building material and Chinese-style tiles as the roof material. This kind of tile is usually made of local materials, hard to crush, and lightweight, which is easy to transport. (See "Fig. 2")

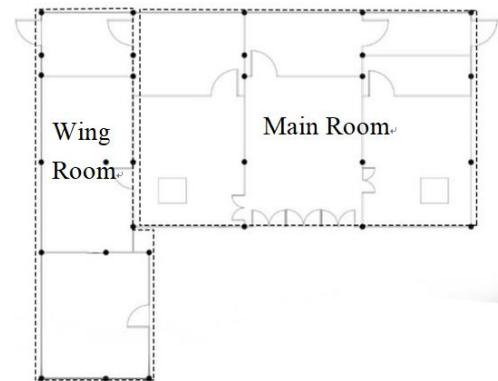


Fig. 2. Traditional pattern of traditional architecture.

C. Local Cultural Heritage

The most famous and classical performing arts of Tujia ethnic minority is Hand-waving Dance, which originated from Bayu Dance and evolved into Hand-waving Dance after Tang and Song Dynasties. "Nuaner Diao", a folk song in Tujia local language, is also widely spreading. There are still some local customs present in Dazi village.

Soup festival, a Tujia people's unique custom of killing pigs and drinking soup during the New Year Festival.

Kujia (crying at wedding), a wedding custom of the Tujia people, which celebrate the marriage by crying and singing when Tujia girls get married.

Dancing funeral, a Tujia people's unique funeral custom, dancing for one night in front of the dead.

Playing lanterns, Tujia people always widely carry out lantern festivals and lantern theatre entertainment activities to celebrate the Spring Festival.

Agricultural culture, Tujia Minority is still an ethnic mainly depends on agricultural production. Agricultural culture plays an important role in their producing and life with a long history. (See "Fig. 3")



Fig. 3. Photos about folk culture.

III. PRESERVE STRATEGY

A. Building Preservation

All of the buildings in Dazi village were divided into four categories according to the results of evaluation based on their historical age, cultural heritage and structural form, and respectively being deal with four different ways as follow:

- Class I: Preservation

Those last for more than 100 years, with high historical and cultural value, still in higher quality, maintaining the traditional style and representing the cultural elements of Tujia. For these buildings, the form, structure, and material as original style are preserved. If some parts of the building had been changed, the altered parts must be restored as they were before.

- Class II: Construction-functional Replacement

Those have been built by traditional methods for several decades, with low historical and cultural value. In this case, a proper improvement of internal living facilities and a functional replacement on the basis of retaining the original pattern and form of the traditional houses are carried out. In consideration of their location and situation, several of them could be made into tourist facilities.

- Class III: Renovation

Those have been built less than 10 years by modern construction technology using new materials therefor no historical and cultural value, and not in harmony with traditional buildings in the village. These buildings should be upgraded or renovated and change them into a traditional form. Carrying out building facade management and control is of great significance to improving the overall style of the village.

- Class IV: Reconstruction

Those nearly collapsed or have been abandon, should be rebuilt, reconstruction or just removed.

B. Participatory Methods

In order to comprehensively and completely protect the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of traditional villages, designers and planners must pay attention to the diversity of participants. It is necessary to take all different people into account to figure out all kinds of needs in the preservation and development of traditional villages.

- Villagers

The villagers are not only the owners of heritages but also the core team of the ancient village preservation. It's necessary to respect the interests of villagers, encourage them to live and produce in the original site and avoid population evacuation and high vacancy rate in the process of preservation and renovation [2]. On the other hand, planners have to teach villagers how to protect their old dwellings and help them maintain the cultural landscape of traditional villages, keep stimulating and improving villagers' preservation consciousness.

- Government officials

Villages preservation needs rigorous management and strong policy support. Base on the planning and management of the government, residents can be guided by officials to self-renew and renovate traditional dwellings independently.

- Tourists

According to our investigation, green food, leisure, and health productions were the most concerned issues of tourists in Dazi village.

IV. DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The overall development plan chose cultural inheritance, green and healthy food, rural tourism and leisure, as the main function, with integral public service facilities, aiming to create an ecological culture and healthy village. Sightseeing tourism and honeybee-breeding industry were introduced to the village. A flower field, culture museum, Tujia style inns, and a traditional restaurant were also well designed. (See "Fig. 4")

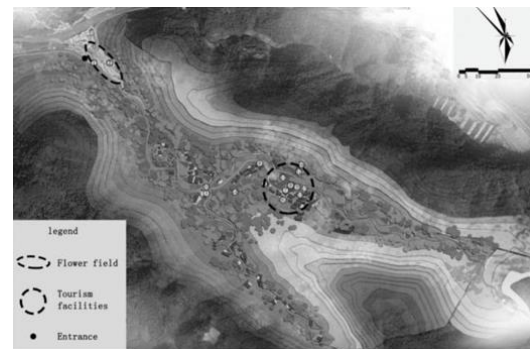


Fig. 4. Planning master plan of Dazigou

A. Culture Museum

Firstly, a house from Class II were took into consideration of their location, style, as well as quality, and then they were transformed into a Tujia culture museum as the first stop for tourists to enter the ancient village. In order to improve the utilization rate, designers re-arranged the internal room functions, designing a Tujia Catering Culture Exhibition Hall, a Farming Culture Exhibition Hall, a Tujia Brocade Culture Exhibition Hall, a Folk Culture Exhibition Hall, and the Reception hall, also leaving room for the administrator. Moreover, the courtyard space and the lotus pond on the north side of the building were reconstructed, which could make the building and the surrounding environment more integrated and more usable. (See "Fig. 5")

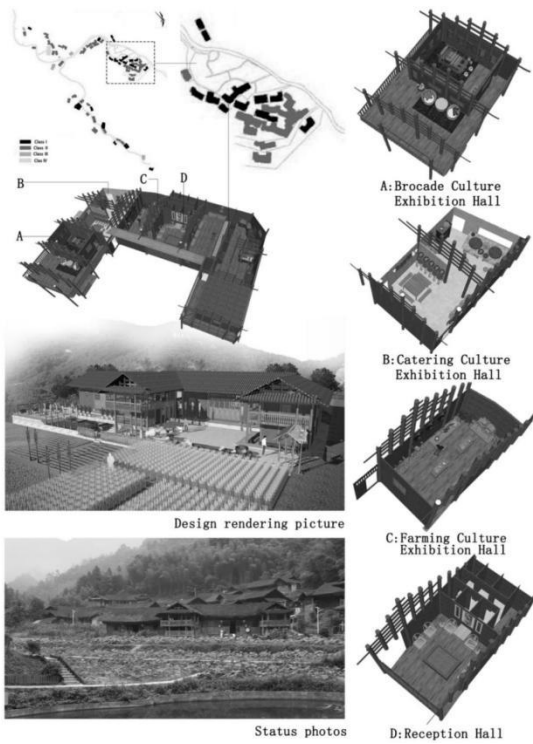


Fig. 5. Sketch map of preservation and reconstruction of folk custom exhibition hall.

A farming experience zone which located in front of the museum, was composed of lotus ponds, rice fields, waterfront platforms, and viewing platforms. Visitors can experience farming activities and enjoy the farming scene.

B. Flower Field

There is only one road along the gully leading to the village from the town. Several landscape nodes along the road, including a flower valleys and village entrance were set up, which would provide visitors a streamline tour experience and enhance the integrity of the village landscape. Flower Valley was located at the entrance to the village. It mainly grew local plants such as rape, peach blossom, dream flower, impatiens, dahlia, and Chinese milk vetch. Honeybee-breeding industry was then introduced, which could increase farmers' income, and also serve as a characteristic landscape of the village. (See "Fig. 6")

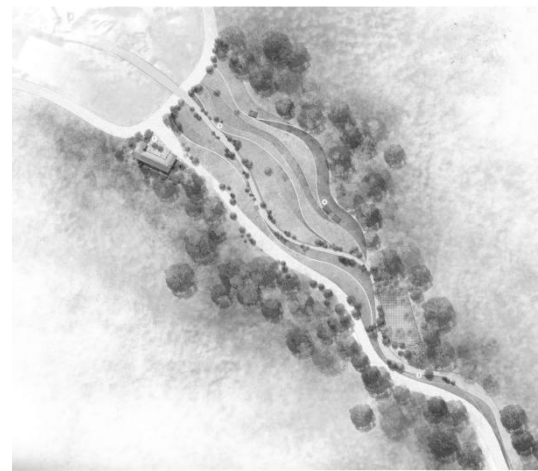


Fig. 6. Plan of flower valley.

C. Other Facilities

Besides the folk culture museum, there were also other three tourism facilities were designed in the village. In order to ensure the rationality of the functions and benefits for the best view, these buildings were involved into a tourist streamline around the farming fields and lotus pond. The Tujia style inns were adjacent to the folk museum and the main road. It was located on a slope of 3 meters high, with open sight and relatively convenient traffic. The conference center is close to the museum with a viewing platform ahead. (See "Fig. 7")

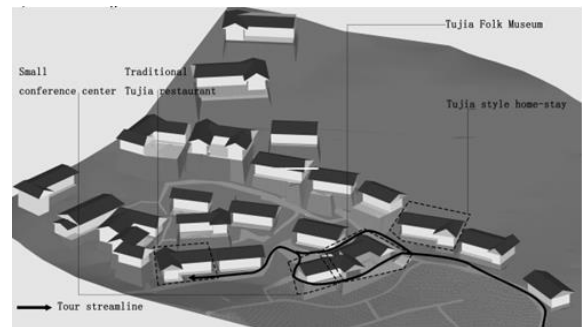


Fig. 7. Location sketch of tourism facilities.

V. CONCLUSION

Traditional villages are "living heritage" which integrates historical factors, human factors, as well as natural factors. Preserving traditional villages is the key way of national culture preservation. The inheritance and preservation of national culture needs more attention in the current rapid urbanization. For the sustainable development of traditional villages, people have to find a way out of harmony and healthy development among culture, human-being and natural environment.

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