

Protecting and Inheriting Nostalgic Culture of Traditional Fishing Tanmen in Urbanization

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Abstract—The South China Sea has been regarded as their ancestor’s waters by the Tanmen fishermen. Hainanese fishermen have been the only group of people in the history who have continuously been exploring the South China Sea. They played an irreplaceable role in the process of exploration and protection of the South China Sea, which has formed unique marine cultures with tropical regional characteristics. In the new context of urbanization in Tanmen, it is of great significance to strengthen the marine ecological environmental protection, study the successful experiences from other countries or regions to establish the mechanism of leadership, coordination, protection and utilization, and actively attract social fund and the folk wisdom, and systematically compile fishing village nostalgic cultures, which will help to provoke strong surges of nostalgia for the new and elder fisherman alike, boost the sustainable development of Tanmen town in the in-situ urbanization, promote Tanmen’s marine cultural power, and enhance the national cultural identity.

Keywords: *nostalgia, traditional fishing villages and towns, protecting and inheriting, Tanmen in Hainan, in-situ urbanization*

I. INTRODUCTION

Tanmen town, which is adjacent to Bo’ao town (the permanent site of Bo’ao Forum for Asia), is located in Qionghai City, Hainan Province. The ancestors of Tanmen fishermen developed not only the offshore fishing but also the distant fishing in the South China Sea. Ancient folk navigation and shipping technology have not kept Tanmen fishermen from distant fishing with the help of their ancestors’ intelligence who creatively combined the compass and ancient timing unit “更” and created “南海航道更路经” (Navigation Manuscript in the South China Sea), which has been included in the national intangible cultural heritage list. Without modern accurate navigation in the South China Sea, the ancestors of Tanmen fishermen have been able to shuttle back and forth between the South China Sea and

Tanmen town in order to make a living. In 2009, Tanmen Central Fishing Port was designated as a first-class fishing port by the Ministry of Agriculture of the People’s Republic of China. It has become a comprehensive modern fishing port integrating Qionghai fishing boats’ shelter and supply, circulation and processing of sea products, leisure and tourism, tropical marine science museum, and publicity of folk cultures of the South China Sea. In 2013, Tridacna became the pillar industry of Tanmen town under the support of local government, and thousands of people made a living by selling the products of tridacna. However, tridacna industry was banned in the sake of ecological balance and environmental protection in 2015. In January 2016, it has been prohibited to sell, purchase or use tridacna products. Therefore, some of the Tanmen fishermen have been transforming to fishery, tourism, catering and other industries to develop leisure fishery and marine-related tourism with typical local characteristics, and the Tanmen seafood market was founded based on ocean-featured culture and South China Sea Museum. In October 2016, Tanmen was listed in the first batch of towns with Chinese characteristics. In the second half of 2017, Tanmen town continuously stepped up the pace of beautiful village construction, focusing on the construction goal of ecological island and beautiful fishing village, which comprehensively has improved the environment of the fishing village, accelerated the infrastructure construction, and built Tanmen village into the first beautiful fishing village in Qionghai. In September 2018, Paigang village in Tanmen was entitled as a five-star beautiful village in Hainan province [1].

In October 2019, Tanmen was selected as one of the national top 1000 towns in terms of the comprehensive strength of the year 2019. From the coastal waters to the distant fishing, Hainanese fishermen have been the only group of people in the history who have continuously been exploring Xisha, Zhongsha and Nansha, which has formed unique marine cultures with tropical regional characteristics.

II. IN-SITU URBANIZATION NOSTALGIA

The report of the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China calls for a new type of urbanization in China. The central conference on urbanization was held on December 12th 2013. And the experts pointed out the land urbanization preceding the population urbanization featured the previous Chinese urbanization, and the increasing area of the city proper is several times higher than that of the growth of urban population. And there are quite a large number of migrant workers in urban residents who have not been completely urbanized. The new people-oriented urbanization put forward the urbanization should respect the nature, conform to nature, and advocate the idea that human beings are an integral part of nature, rely on the existing landscape and other unique scenery, combine the city into nature, and make the residents have green hills and blue waters in sight and bear the image of homeland in mind, which clearly outlines the cultural development blueprint of new urbanization. And nostalgic culture is one of the most important parts of cultural inheritance in the new urbanization. Nostalgia, as a common and eternal emotion of human beings, conveys people's sentimental attachment and yearning for their hometown, as well as the continuity of civilization and a particular culture. Nostalgia has both spiritual and physical manifestations[2].

With the rapid expansion of urbanization, the transformation of traditional villages, the over-exploitation of tourism and the neglect of cultural inheritance in the process of new rural construction, the number of traditional villages has been decreasing dramatically, with some of them damaged badly since the 1980s. In recent years, with a great many grown-ups swarming to the towns or cities for work and the old and the young staying at home, the population in the village has greatly dropped, which has resulted in rural hollowing, fast aging population, and the cultural interruption of traditional villages, etc. Paigang village in Tanmen town, known as the Pearl of the South China Sea, is a traditional fishing village to pass on the fishing cultures and customs for more than one thousand years, which still has been an intact ancient fishing village up to now. In order to guide the transformation and upgrading of Tanmen fishery industry, improve the living standards of the fishermen, and smoothly promote local urbanization, it is better to make the best use of the resources in the ancient fishing villages to solve the problem of local employment of villagers.

In-situ urbanization is a new type of urbanization, and the original villagers would be urbanized through non-agricultural employment in their indigenous area. This is bound to cause certain damage to residential buildings, customs and traditional handcrafts, especially those with historical and cultural and local characteristics. Consequently, it is more conducive to the continuation of the cultural genes with remaining nostalgia with local characteristics and sustainable development of in-situ urbanization[3].

The ancient buildings in the village are the backbones for the construction of the beautiful fishing village. During the construction of the beautiful fishing village, the original

landscape and protection of the old houses in Paigang village have been the focus of the work. A pavilion named Wangfuting in the south side of Tanmen old ferry and an ancient well in the middle of the village are the historical witness of the ancestors' glorious history to fish deep in the South China Sea. The village has been infused with energy with the rise of Bed and Breakfast in the past two years, the rapid development of rural tourism, and the original fishing customs and cultures in Paigang village which serves as the soul during the whole fishing village construction.

III. PROTECTING AND INHERITING NOSTALGIC CULTURE IN FISHING VILLAGE OF TANMEN

There are 14 village committees with a population of 29000 or so. Before the Ming Dynasty, fishermen in Tanmen Town had made a living in the South China Sea and accumulated very rich tropical marine folk customs and cultures. In the process of in-situ urbanization, some measures can be taken to protect and inherit the nostalgic culture of the traditional fishing villages and coastal towns.

A. It is necessary to establish the mechanism of leadership, coordination, protection and utilization and formulate the 5-year or 10-year development plan of traditional fishing villages and towns scientifically to promote the sustainable development of nostalgic culture and in-situ urbanization

According to the National New Urbanization Plan (2014-2020), the following principles should be adhered to in the urbanization. First, cultures or customs are inherited with typical local characteristics. In accordance to regional historical and cultural resources, the regional difference, cultural diversities, historical memories, cultural development, etc, should be highlighted. Second, draw up overall plan with classified guidance. The central government will make overall planning, local governments should explore innovation, and actively promote new urbanization. In 1947, the UK promulgated and implemented the town and country planning act and the comprehensive development and planning law, which strengthened the government's macro-control, integrated planning and urban-rural integration, and greatly promoted the construction of urbanization. Germany coordinated urban and rural development, stressed regional coordinated and balanced development and German industrial policies focused on small and medium-sized cities and small towns, encouraged the development of characteristic industries, and reasonably optimized their industrial layout, which greatly promoted their process of urbanization [4]. In Tanmen's process of urbanization, the local government should stress the importance of agriculture and industrial support, while making full use of the existing ecological space with nostalgic cultures. It is indispensable to invite experts on intangible cultures, ecosystem, tourism management, urban and rural design and other fields to form teams, conduct field research, reasonably demonstrate the design, plan the protection of material culture and intangible cultural heritage in advance, try to work out a five-year or 10-year

development plan reasonably, focusing on the protection and development of traditional fishing villages with tropical characteristics and historical memory of the South China Sea, and promote the sustainable development of in-situ urbanization.

B. Relevant experts and scholars should be encouraged to compile systematically nostalgia-related materials on Tanmen's histories, folk customs, cultures, fisheries, agriculture, science, arts, architectures, and so on to inherit nostalgia easier

For thousands of years, the South China Sea-oriented fishermen have been living in coastal villages of Tanmen town. From the initial fishermen living by the sea, big and small fishing villages have come into being. Generations of fishermen have been continuously expanding from the coastal waters to the deep sea. And Tanmen has become a port capable of anchoring thousands of fishing boats or ships [5]. The forefathers of Tanmen fishermen have been fishing in the deep South China Sea for more than 700 years. Tanmen people rely on the South China Sea, and every generation of fishermen has a manuscript of *Geng Lu Bu* (also known as Navigation Manuscript in the South China Sea) created by their ancestors. In the era of without modern navigation, fishermen could have safely gone back and forth between Tanmen port and the South China Sea, which is the collective wisdom and the memory treasure of the fishermen in the South China Sea [6]. It is necessary to organize interdisciplinary experts and scholars to fully explore the materials on the challenging process of the ancestors of fishermen to develop the South China Sea, the earliest naming way of the islands in the South China Sea, the sea worship sacrifice ceremony, the sea saviors *108 Brothers* worship, rough marine daily diet, the South China Sea-featured marine proverbs, marine costumes with tropical characteristics, varied shell carvings, taboos in the South China Sea. The above-mentioned customs and cultures should be compiled or shot or filmed bilingually, which should skillfully integrate various marine nostalgia elements with in-situ urbanization, such as tropical marine customs, ancient rudders and oars, shell carvings, leisure fishery, marine festivals, and so on to further improve the marine culture atmosphere of the South China Sea and provide a solid material basis for better inheritance of nostalgia culture.

C. It is necessary to make full use of the South China Sea Museum, fully tap the cultural background of nostalgia, further enlarge the nostalgia culture of Tanmen, promote the tourism urbanization, and boost the dynamic inheritance of nostalgia memories by rational development

The South China Sea Museum of China, situated in Tanmen town of Hainan Province, which covers a total construction area of 70593 square meters, includes exhibitions on the South China Sea, such as exported cultural relics of previous dynasties, biological specimens of the South China Sea, historical relics of Hainan province, ship models of previous dynasties, etc. There are 8 indoor

exhibition halls and 1 outdoor exhibition gallery in the southern area, and multifunctional hall, conference hall, cultural and creative sales in the northern area, etc. With over 70000 pieces of various collections, the museum is a comprehensive museum designed to display cultures, natural ecology, the cultural heritage protection of the South China Sea, and promote cultural exchanges between countries and regions along the maritime Silk Road. The Chinese people have been engaged in fishing and other activities in the South China Sea for more than 2000 years. Since the Tang and Song Dynasties, the islands in the South China Sea have been included in China's territory, under the jurisdiction of the Chinese Central government, with the Navy patrolling the waters and the sea. From 1930s to 1940s, Japan illegally occupied Xisha and Nansha Islands of China. After the Second World War, the Chinese government resumed the exercise of sovereignty over the Islands in the South China Sea. In the course of continuous development of the South China Sea, Tanmen fishermen first discovered, named and continuously developed and utilized the islands and related areas in the South China Sea. Although the people in Tanmen experienced numerous ups and downs, they have accumulated profound historical memories and created brilliant tropical marine customs and cultures. With the full utilization of the South China Sea Museum and further development of tourism urbanization in Tanmen based on nostalgia culture, it would be conducive to the further promotion of local urbanization and better inheritance of nostalgic memory.

D. Aimed to raise people's awareness of marine ecological protection, it is necessary to build distinctive towns, industries and tourism with Tanmen's own characteristics, and improve people's living standards, it is necessary to attract more talented people to return home to set up their own business for better in-situ urbanization

In order to protect and inherit marine folk culture, Beachcombing Festival has been successfully held for five times in Tanmen since 2015. Since ancient time, Tanmen fishermen have been accustomed to the custom of offering sacrifice to the sea for ship safety blessing and good harvest in the coming year. Beachcombing originated from Tanmen fishermen's unique pioneering spirit and local culture of distant fishing in the South China Sea. In August 2019, the 5th Tanmen Beachcombing Festival was held. The activities include treasure hunting, beach concert, seafood feast, *108 Brothers* hot pot, and so on [7]. Residents and Tourists home and abroad not only learn about traditional marine cultures, but also experience the fun and pleasure of the above mentioned activities.

Through the in-situ urbanization in recent years, Tanmen has become a new fishing town with its own characteristics. The in-situ urbanization benefits the common people, improves their cultural identity, and retains the nostalgia. Taking culture-centered construction of the featured town, the government has kept local residents do business at home. The business of marine arts and crafts operated by

local residents in Tanmen has become more and more prosperous. Now, more than 7,000 villagers have returned home to start their own businesses. He Shengchuan, who used to run a famous tea restaurant in Hongkong for 35 years, returned to his hometown Tanmen and opened a restaurant co-funded with his brothers to inherit the thousand-year-long fishing culture of Tanmen [8]. In addition, local residents have teamed up with villagers to turn old houses into fisherman's home stays. The metope of old coral stone, table and chair made of old boat wood, fishing net, trawling, etc. unique fishing cultures and experience has attracted a great many tourists home and abroad.

E. It is indispensable to innovate government management in terms of policies, laws and finance to protect ancient fishing villages, and resolutely prevent constructive destruction in case of absence of nostalgia

Under the national strategy of rural revitalization, many places combine the protection of ancient villages with the development of tourism. However, experts believe that whether tourism can achieve sustainable development in rural areas and improve the level of rural civilization remains to be verified. A professor named Zhou Jian at Tongji university said that many ancient villages have lost their authenticity when they became tourist attractions. Wealthy people from other parts of the country have flocked to become the bosses of industries, such as food and housing, while locals have been driven to sell cheap handicrafts. Tourism companies or the government even bluntly created some artificial scenic areas, such as hotels, squares, and so on, incompatible with surroundings[9]. Therefore, the government should innovate management policies in law, finance and other aspects to protect the ancient villages. It should not only completely protect the local buildings and avoid man-made constructive damage, but also develop tourism in combination with the characteristics of Tanmen town and fishing villages to improve the living standards of local residents for a sustainable in-situ urbanization.

IV. CONCLUSION

Traditional coastal fishing villages in China not only face challenges but opportunities, though some supportive policies have been put forward, such as the construction of beautiful village, rural environment renovation, tourism development fund, rural culture station construction, etc. In the process of urbanization, it is clearly required to preserve the original village, no cutting trees, no occupying the lake for construction use, and less demolition of houses, so as to improve the rural residents' living conditions. Since 2013, in line with the concept of no cutting down trees, no demolishing houses, no occupying farmland for construction with in-situ urbanization, 12 towns in Qionghai city have been reconstructed with the standards of 5A scenic spots, covering 1,710 square kilometers in the process of in-situ urbanization. The in-situ urbanization not only benefits the common people, but improves their cultural identity, and retains the nostalgia.

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