

# Study on the Utilization of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Development of Rural Tourism

## Taking the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Doumen District, Zhuhai City as an Example

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### ABSTRACT

**This research starts with the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and rural tourism, taking the intangible cultural heritage in Doumen District as an example, analyzes the distribution and characteristics of Doumen intangible cultural heritage and the status quo of its rural tourism development, and finds out the current problems. Combining the actual situation of Doumen District's intangible cultural heritage by using field research, case analysis and other methods, this paper puts forward constructive opinions to promote the integrated development of intangible cultural heritage and rural tourism.**

*Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, rural tourism, tourism development*

### I. INTRODUCTION

UNESCO pointed out in the "Convention for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage": Intangible cultural heritage refers to various social practices, concept expressions, expressions, knowledge, skills and related tools, objects, handicrafts, and cultural sites that are regarded as part of cultural heritage by various community groups and sometimes individuals. Its specific scope includes 6 categories: (1) oral tradition, language as the expression carrier of intangible cultural heritage; (2) traditional performing arts; (3) folk activities, etiquette, and festivals; (4) folk traditional knowledge and practices about nature and the universe; (5) traditional skills and experience, such as traditional production technology, medicine, sports and fitness activities, etc.; (6) cultural space related to the above expressions.<sup>1 P1-2</sup> Intangible cultural heritage is a special heritage of mankind. From content to form, it has its

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO, Report on the Judgment Rules of "Masterpieces of Human Oral and Intangible Heritage" [R]. Documents of the 155th Session of UNESCO, 2000 (6).

own particularity. Its characteristics are mainly reflected in inheritance, sociality, intangibility, diversity, vitality, regionality, and folk.<sup>2 P183-187</sup>

China's "Opinions on Strengthening the Protection of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage" defines intangible cultural heritage as "referring to various traditional cultural expressions (such as folklore activities, performing arts, traditional knowledge and skills, and related utensils, objects, handmade products, etc.) and cultural spaces."<sup>3</sup>

### II. INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RURAL TOURISM

For intangible cultural heritage, "protection and inheritance" has always been a major issue. In January 2017, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on the Implementation of the Inheritance and Development Project of Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture", which requires the implementation of the intangible cultural heritage inheritance and development project, further improves the intangible cultural heritage protection system, and integrates the connotation of Chinese excellent traditional culture into all aspects of

<sup>2</sup> Li Shitao, The Basic Characters and Nature of "Intangible Cultural Heritage" [J]. Study of Ethnicity in Guangxi, 2007, (3).

<sup>3</sup> Wang Wenzhang, Introduction to Intangible Cultural Heritage [M]. Beijing: Educational Science Publishing House, 2008.

production and life. On the basis of continuous improvement of the intangible heritage protection system, various regions have continuously launched a series of explorations focusing on protection and inheritance practice, protection and inheritance capacity, and protection of inheritance environment.

In the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed to implement the strategy of rural revitalization. The development of rural tourism happens to be an important way to achieve the prosperity of rural industries. It is also conducive to protecting the rural ecological environment, increasing farmers' income, and improving the living standards of rural residents, so as to better meet the people's growing demand for a better life. The integration of "intangible cultural heritage protection + rural tourism" has developed into one of the effective models for intangible cultural heritage to return to modern life and to reproduce vitality in modern production and life.

Tourism is a cultural experience in the final analysis. Rural tourism is a kind of tourism and economic development activity based on the rural geographical environment and its resources, with rural characteristics and rural intentions as the core, and urban residents as the main source market.<sup>4</sup> It is also a cultural experience. On the one hand, the historical, cultural, unique, and participatory features contained in intangible cultural heritage are extremely attractive tourism resources that can meet the needs of tourists to experience culture and seek differences, and enhance the cultural connotation of rural tourism. On the other hand, the excavation, creation and dissemination of rural characteristic culture in the process of tourism development creates a new living space for intangible cultural heritage and effectively promotes the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

#### *A. "Intangible cultural heritage" injects cultural connotation into rural tourism*

The form and content of intangible cultural heritage are rich and varied, including folk customs, living habits, production methods, festival ceremonies, religious beliefs, traditional costumes, folk arts, cooking skills, craft specialties, music, singing and dancing, etc. Good protection, good management, and good inheritance of the "intangible cultural heritage" cultural "native goods" with a distinctive "local flavor" can not only make the cultural treasures left by these ancestors not be eliminated in the tide of the development of the times, but also make them be radiated with new vitality and shine with new light, as

well as create tourism products with new six elements of tourism: business, nurture, learning, leisure, passion, novelty to enrich the rural tourism industry.

#### *B. Rural tourism provides space for inheritance and protection of "intangible cultural heritage"*

The development of science and technology has gradually reduced the economic benefits produced by traditional production methods, and most of them have been replaced by new production methods; the acceleration of urbanization has caused changes in traditional rural lifestyles, and the living space of some intangible cultural heritage such as handicrafts, folk customs, and singing and dancing has been continuously squeezed. The inheritors of "intangible cultural heritage" lack social recognition, the public's enthusiasm for participating in professional inheritance is not high, and public financial support is small, resulting that "no successor" is a dilemma faced by many "intangible cultural heritage". The combination and mutual penetration of traditional folk culture and modern civilization cannot be prevented. This is the way out for the inheritance and development of "intangible cultural heritage". Only by innovating and activating the inner power can it be reborn. Rural tourism takes the rural cultural experience as the motivation. In the process of the development and utilization of "intangible cultural heritage", the form of expression of "intangible cultural heritage" can be restored, and the market value and social value of "intangible cultural heritage" can be re-given. The economic benefits generated by rural tourism provide development funds for "intangible cultural heritage". In the process of zero-distance contact, experience, and understanding of "intangible cultural heritage", tourists can enhance their awareness of protection of "intangible cultural heritage" and stimulate the cultural self-confidence of the inheritors of "intangible cultural heritage". Compared with the static protection model through museum exhibitions, activating heritage through "tourism", and integrating "intangible cultural heritage" and rural tourism can make intangible cultural heritage "live".

### **III. STATUS QUO OF RURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF DOUMEN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Doumen District is a district under the jurisdiction of Zhuhai City, Guangdong Province. It is located at the southwestern end of the Pearl River Delta and the westernmost part of Zhuhai City. It is about 30km away from Zhuhai's city center. It is an ecological zone of Zhuhai City, connected to Zhongshan City in the east, Jiangmen City in the north, and connected to Macau waters. It is also a national agricultural industrialization demonstration base, a national urban modern

<sup>4</sup> Wang Kunxin, Zhou Guozhong, Lang Fuping, Research on Rural Tourism and Community Sustainable Development: Taking Zhejiang Province as an Example [M]. Beijing:Tsinghua University Press, 2008.

agricultural demonstration area and the hometown of Chinese sea bass. As of 2018, Doumen District has jurisdiction over five towns including Jing'an, Baijiao, Doumen, Ganwu, Lianzhou and Baiteng Subdistrict. This area has a long history and the people there are excellent. It can be traced back to the imperial family of

the Ming Dynasty, leaving a large number of historical relics. According to the Zhuhai Intangible Cultural Heritage Database, Doumen District has a total of 20 intangible cultural heritages, including 3 at the national level, 5 at the provincial level, 11 at the municipal level and 1 item at the district level. (See "Table I")

TABLE I. LEVEL AND DISTRIBUTION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN DOUMEN DISTRICT, ZHUHAI CITY

Level	Serial number	Project name	Distribution area
<i>National level</i>	1	Doumen On-water Wedding	Distributed in all towns in Doumen
	2	Trapping Mudfish	Qianwu Town
	3	Cantonese Songs	Qianwu Town
<i>Provincial level</i>	1	Doumen Shatian Folk Songs	Baijiao Town, etc.
	2	Qianwu Floating Colors	Qianwu Town
	3	Sacraficing on roads in July, 30th of lunar calendar	Distributed in all towns in Doumen, especially in Hengshan Village, Lianzhou Town
	4	Hakka Bamboo Clappers Folk Songs	Baijiao Town
	5	Hengshan Duck Package	Lianzhou Town
<i>Municipal level</i>	1	Dancing Lion	Distributed in all towns in Doumen
	2	Lianzhou Dragon Dance	Lianzhou Town
	3	Doumen Gong Drum Cabinet	Distrubuted in Qianqu, Doumen, Jing'an, ang Baijiao towns
	4	Lianzhou Local Festival Celebration	Lianzhou Town
	5	Emperial Sacrificial Rites of Zhao Family in Doumen	Doumen Town
	6	Fut Ga	Qianwu Town
	7	Hakka Salty Tea	Baijiao Town
	8	Jinchao Pipa Duck in Hushan Villiage	Qianwu Town
	9	Dachikan Flame Barbecued Pork and Spareribs	Doumen Town
	10	Shangheng Sand Clam	Lianzhou Town
	11	Lianzhou Tylorrhynchus	Lianzhou Town
<i>District level</i>	1	Boiling Vegetable Tea on January 13th of Lunar Calendar	Distributed in all towns in Doumen

In recent years, Doumen has done a lot of work in the protection of intangible cultural heritage, funded inheritance projects and inheritors, and implemented the "intangible cultural heritage on campus" project. Doumen also invited intangible cultural heritage experts to introduce intangible cultural heritage knowledge and organize intangible cultural heritage inheritors to enter the campus every year to teach skills, set up intangible cultural heritage learning and training classes, and carry out special training courses. At present, it has entered more than 40 schools and kindergartens in Doumen, and nearly 50 inheritance bases have been established. And Doumen Cultural Center has been constructed to statically display and promote intangible cultural heritage. Doumen also has tried to combine intangible cultural heritage with tourism. A large-scale folk cultural festival will be held every year. As of 2019, it has been held 4 times. It is a grand folklore cultural event integrating folklore performances, competitions, tourism and leisure, folklore weddings, intangible

cultural heritage training, and original ecological intangible cultural heritage exhibitions, attracting a large number of tourists.

Although the combination of Doumen's intangible cultural heritage and tourism has made preliminary progress, there are still some problems in the implementation process:

*A. The design content of the combination of intangible heritage and tourism is relatively single*

At present, most of the "intangible cultural heritage" in Doumen rural tourism is still in folk festivals and museum displays. The form is single and the content is not rich enough. Tourists have more visiting rather than interactive experience. It is often that the relevant departments input with enthusiasm, intangible cultural heritage inheritors perform with efforts, and tourists watch the performance hastily. Because they do not understand the historical context of "intangible cultural

heritage" and cannot deeply appreciate its cultural connotation or feel its atmosphere, tourists are prone to aesthetic fatigue, and "intangible cultural heritage" routes appear deserted.

*B. Homogenization of tourism products exists in some places*

As some intangible cultural heritage items are distributed everywhere, the folk customs and habits in Doumen District are similar, the intangible cultural heritage content they possess is basically the same, and the degree of cultural recognition is not high. How to achieve differentiated development of Doumen "intangible cultural heritage" to attract tourists, each place seizes its own characteristics to attract tourists is worth thinking about.

*C. The inheritance mechanism is not perfect*

Farmers are the creators and inheritors of rural intangible cultural heritage. Due to the incomplete inheritance mechanism and the serious aging of inheritors, the new forces lack interest in inheritance. For example, in Doumen On-water Wedding, the inheritors are usually farmers. When in the slack season, they will carry out the intense rehearsal, and it has not formed professional development.

*D. There is a lack of high-quality talents*

Whether it is "intangible cultural heritage" protection and development of the countryside, or the revitalization of rural tourism, it is inseparable from the support of a large number of high-quality professionals. However, due to the impact of market orientation and new art forms, many intangible cultural heritages lack successors; the number of professional cultural management personnel is small, the structure is unreasonable, and the degree of specialization is not high; the existing talents have insufficient pioneering and innovative capabilities.

*E. The marketization of intangible cultural heritage is moving forward in difficult exploration*

The industrial chain of intangible cultural heritage integrating R&D (research and development), production and sales is still under exploration. Many intangible cultural heritages face loss and decline because they are aesthetically out of touch with the times. Many inheritors of "intangible cultural heritage" are still fighting on their own, and it is difficult to get rid of the concept of "small individuals, small insights, and small markets", and cannot form a large-scale production of powerful alliances, which seriously restricts the development of "intangible cultural heritage" marketization.

#### **IV. SUGGESTIONS ON THE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF DOUMEN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RURAL TOURISM**

*A. Giving full play to the government's responsibility as the first person responsible for intangible cultural heritage protection*

Doumen should speed up the formulation of relevant regulations suitable for the region and incorporate intangible cultural heritage protection into the overall plan for rural tourism development. Different types of "intangible cultural heritage" have different characteristics, and the ways and methods for rural tourism development are also different. Experts in "intangible cultural heritage" protection, folk culture, and tourism should be invited to participate in the design and implementation of the plan to achieve the unity of protection and effectiveness. It is necessary to establish the content and scope of intangible cultural heritage protection in the rural tourism context, and encourage inheritors to carry out transfer activities. It is necessary to guide and deal with the contradictions in the protection and development of "intangible cultural heritage" projects, the input and output of intangible cultural heritage tourism, adherence to tradition and innovation, and individual inheritance and social inheritance. Governments at all levels should vigorously strengthen the construction of protection institutions and professional teams to provide institutional and financial guarantees for the inheritance and development of "intangible cultural heritage" protection. At the same time, it is also necessary to establish an exit mechanism to learn from the national "intangible cultural heritage" exit mechanism, and to warn or cancel "intangible cultural heritage" projects and inheritors that do not match their names and have not fulfilled their due obligations.

*B. Focusing on building key areas for rural intangible cultural heritage tourism*

In the overall planning and design of intangible cultural heritage tourism, it is a necessity to highlight government leadership, social participation, fully listen to the opinions and suggestions of local intangible cultural heritage inheritors and villagers, and determine the theme of rural tourism, characteristic products, characteristic clothing and service standards, forming a rural tourism model with the countryside as the stage, intangible cultural heritage as the theme, tourism as the medium, and the purpose of protecting and inheriting intangible cultural heritage.

Route design should be reasonable and content should be rich. It is necessary to fully consider the needs of tourists of different levels and ages, explore the characteristics of each intangible cultural heritage from the perspective of different disciplines, highlight

the local vernacular and authenticity as much as possible, and create rich visual, auditory, and tactile sensory enjoyment. Only by allowing tourists to enjoy the tour of intangible cultural heritage can they have a deep understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of the heritage site and participate in the protection of intangible cultural heritage more consciously.

#### *C. Strengthening business training for relevant practitioners*

The most important feature of intangible cultural heritage is that it does not deviate from the special life and production mode of the nation, and it is the "live" manifestation of the national personality and national aesthetic habits. It exists by relying on the person itself, using voice, image and skills as the means of expression, and passing on from word to mouth as a cultural chain to continue. It is the most vulnerable part of the "live" culture and its traditions. Therefore, people are particularly important to the process of intangible cultural heritage inheritance. Talent is an important guarantee for the development of "intangible cultural heritage" tourism resources, including not only the inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, but also related practitioners. First of all, only if they love the intangible cultural heritage of the region, understand the history of "intangible heritage", and can demonstrate and tell the "intangible heritage" well, can tourists remember the "intangible cultural heritage". At present, the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is dying, and it is particularly necessary to optimize the development environment of intangible cultural heritage. A series of preferential policies should be adopted to retain the inheritors, so that the intangible cultural heritage can be truly activated and inherited, providing guarantee for tourism development. Relevant practitioners should be regularly organized to carry out training, and their knowledge and service awareness should be improved through various channels such as school education and on-the-job training.

It is a must to actively introduce professional talents, provide intellectual support for the development of intangible cultural heritage, and accelerate the win-win development of intangible cultural heritage protection and development. In addition, in addition to professional family inheritance and master-disciple inheritance, it can also be passed on through school inheritance and community inheritance, through training classes, inheritance bases, and "intangible cultural heritage" activities to avoid intangible cultural heritage work by the government to sing a one-man show and arouse people's enthusiasm for participation.

#### *D. Vigorously developing "Internet + intangible cultural heritage tourism"*

In the development, it is significantly necessary to make full use of the "Internet +" strategy to establish Doumen's unique rural tourism website as soon as possible to display Doumen intangible cultural heritage related information, including the basic situation of the inheritors, the latest intangible cultural heritage activities, and intangible cultural heritage products. It is also necessary to periodically carry out the publicity of Doumen's intangible cultural heritage in batches, and classify and fully record traditional songs and dances, arts and crafts, festivals and folk customs through feature documentaries, news reports, and online videos, highlighting the distinctive local characteristics and tourism value of Doumen intangible cultural heritage itself. To catch up with the times, it is also an important way to explore web live broadcasts, mobile apps, online games and other ways that young netizens like to see and hear, so that Doumen intangible cultural heritage will get closer to netizens, attract netizens, infect them, and drive intangible cultural heritage to "live".

#### *E. Speeding up the creation of Doumen intangible cultural heritage products*

The protection of intangible cultural heritage is not simply to display and exhibit, but to find a point of integration with modern life, "activate" the protection of precious intangible cultural heritage projects, and promote the modernization of projects, so that they can be better inherited, developed, and refreshed. The high-grade Doumen intangible cultural heritage tourism products should be exquisite, delicate and ingenious in terms of texture, content, size, packaging, etc., should be rich in commemorative significance and unique regional characteristics, and make intangible cultural heritage products the most authentic Doumen travel souvenirs, changing from "support" to popular life.

Innovatively developing new applications of intangible cultural heritage products should not only serve the purpose of modern people, but also avoid the vulgarity and inferiority of intangible cultural heritage products in the name of life. The tourism products developed by different intangible cultural heritage products should not be the same. The elements or connotations of intangible cultural heritage should be displayed in front of the world with new forms, new materials, new crafts, etc., enter the tourism market through complete marketization, and then integrate them into modern life.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

"Seeing people, things and life" is an important concept in the protection of China's intangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage must be integrated into life, innovated and developed, and recognized,

appreciated and needed by the public, in order to promote the living inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. Doumen's intangible cultural heritage is relatively rich. It is necessary to adhere to government-led, social participation, long-term planning, and step-by-step implementation to promote the win-win development of intangible cultural heritage and rural tourism.

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