

Exploration on the Development Path of the Activation of Ethnic Minority Villages

—Take Radish Village as an Example

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Abstract

The radish village in Yanmen Township of Wenchuan County is one of the most representative Qiang villages in the Qiang nationality area. By investigating the development status of the village, this paper analyses the traditional resources and current situation of the village, and puts forward the protection and activation from the perspectives of historical features, human settlement environment, village texture, street space and innovative tourism. The purpose of this paper is to explore the path of protection and activation of minority villages through case analysis, and to realize the activation of villages in minority areas.

Keywords

Minority Nationality, Village Protection, Rural Restoration, Activation

1. Overview of the Development of Ethnic Minority Villages

In recent years, a large number of villages have been destroyed because of the serious damages over a long period of time and the backward economic development in rural areas and the indiscriminate demolition of old buildings and the construction of new ones. Ethnic villages lose their original features, and their natural landscape and human environment are damaged to a certain extent, which ultimately affects the peaceful life of villagers. In addition, tourism development has become a convenient and effective way for ethnic villages to improve their lives and raise their economic level. Although it improves the living standard of local residents to a certain extent and promotes the spread of national culture, on the other hand, the excessive emphasis on tourism effects and short-term interests in the development has produced a great negative effect on

the inheritance of national culture, and laid a heavy burden on the long-term and lasting development of ethnic villages [1], and serious hidden dangers. How to achieve sustainable development of ethnic villages is not only a social theoretical issue, but also a practical issue worthy of consideration by planners.

Nowadays, many people have realized that ethnic minority villages are a scarce human resource and have protected and utilized them [2]. However, for minority villages, it is imperative to combine the excavation of historical and cultural resources with the protection of historical buildings and the development of local industries, with the protection of ancient villages and buildings as the focal point, and make every effort to “activate” the historical and cultural resources and natural environment of traditional villages and ancient buildings, so as to fully integrate and utilize the local ancient villages and buildings. Traditional cultural resources, such as temples and empty and old buildings, can realize the living protection of minority villages and restore the memory of ancient villages.

Based on the above development status, the Luopuzhai Village in Wenchuan County, Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province was selected as the research object. The radish village is the main village inhabited by the Qiang people in Yanmen Township. It is the largest and oldest Huangni Qiang village, and it is also a typical case of the lively protection of minority villages.

2. A Survey of Radish Villages

2.1. Development Status

Located on the high plateau of Minjiang Grand Canyon, Luopuzhai Village is a small loess plain that suddenly rises in the high mountain canyon winding hundreds of kilometers. About 100 hectares of loess flats are inhabited by more than 200 people, the Qiang people, the oldest ethnic group of mankind. This is the most concentrated residential houses found so far in the Minjiang Grand Canyon, with the largest population and loess as the building material of the Qiang architectural community [3]. The villagers are all Qiang people. Before the earthquake, there were 224 households, totaling 1071, with an average of 4.8 households.

The houses in the village are all high earth houses with two to three floors. The whole village is like a miniature town with countless streets and alleys. It is a large group of Huangniqiang villages and the largest Qiang cultural tourist area in China at present.

2.2. Traffic Location

Located between Wenchuan and Maoxian counties and on the high and semi-mountain platform on the South Bank of Minjiang River, Radish Village is the largest flat land in the high and semi-mountain of Minjiang Grand Canyon and the most ideal place to overlook Minjiang Grand Canyon. Under the village belongs to Yanmen Township, Wenchuan County, located in the north side of Wenchuan County, east side of the county town, connected with it through Na-

tional Highway 213, less than 10 kilometers away from the county town.

2.3. Geographical Environment

Located on the South Bank of Minjiang River and backed by Linpan Mountain, Luopuzhai is located in an alpine canyon with overlapping peaks and mountains. The Valley of Minjiang River is broad and the village space is vertical to the longitudinal ladder extension of Minjiang River. It is a typical representative of high mountain villages in the Qiang nationality area.

The whole village is situated on the platform on the South Bank of the upper reaches of Minjiang River, between Fengshan and Huangshan, at an altitude of 1970 meters. The village is 600 meters above the river bed of Minjiang River. The village is surrounded by Bishan Mountain. The surrounding area is basically agricultural and forestry land, which integrates the village into the whole green space. The village itself looks like a flying phoenix. After the baptism of the 5.12 earthquake, the village today is like the rebirth of the Phoenix Nirvana, forming a landscape pattern of “surrounded by mountains, rivers and fields, standing proudly around the ancient Qiang village in the clouds”.

2.4. Architecture Quality

The ancient village of radish village has a very unique architectural feature. The whole village is almost built of yellow mud, which is situated on the yellow mud platform with different elevations. The architecture and environment are integrated. In the process of building radish stockade with thousands of years of history, war defense is the core idea. Almost every family is connected, each family is connected, stacked and scattered, forming a three-dimensional interweaving military fortress of upper, middle and lower levels. There are 72 lanes in the stockade. It seems that each family has its own courtyard, but in fact they are connected with each other, Tong. In the 5.12 earthquake, the ancient village of radish was seriously damaged, the whole picture was basically destroyed, the buildings were almost flattened, 226 houses collapsed unavoidably, 44 people were killed in the earthquake. Road traffic was basically destroyed and all the roadways in the village were deformed. According to the assessment and analysis, all collapsed buildings account for 50% of the total number of buildings in the earthquake; severely damaged buildings account for 40% of the total number of buildings; and some collapsed buildings account for 10% of the total number of buildings.

2.5. Cultural Resources

There are many gods worshipped by the Qiang people in the radish village, most of which are natural gods. In addition to the fire god represented by Guozhuang, the rest are symbolized by white stones and are widely worshipped. On the Qiang people's blockhouse, the white stone at the top of the roof mostly symbolizes the Supreme God Mubi Tower, and there are white stones on the window edge and door edge to show the awe of other gods. Qiang's handicraft techniques

include Qiang embroidery, paper-cut, silver ornaments, Qiang embroidery clothing, iron forging, metal casting, woodworking, stone-laying and so on [4]. The traditional dresses of the Qiang nationality are linen gown, sheepskin shoulder, headdress, waistband and legging. Men's long clothes over knees, braided handkerchiefs, belts and leggings are mostly made of linen or wool. They usually wear straw shoes, cloth shoes or cowhide boots. The blouse is long and ankle-length, with plum-blossom silver collar, lace embroidered at the hem, cuffs and collar, waistband embroidered apron and ribbon, and pattern embroidered on the waistband. The dresses of different regions in Qiang District are different, and each place has its own distinct characteristics. Iron forging, commonly known as beating iron, mainly forges some agricultural tools or daily necessities; metal casting processing is mainly some jewelry, its process generally uses beating, hammering, carving, carving, inlaying, welding, cleaning and other processes; woodworkers mainly build houses, make furniture, carpenters hand planes, tools diverse; Qiang people in the upper reaches of the Minjiang River. Stone houses and tall towers were built in the valley.

3. Exploration of Villages Activation Path

Radish Village is an important carrier of Qiang culture. The nature of the village has been positioned as: the most concentrated residential houses and the largest population have been found so far, and the Qiang architectural community is made of loess. Based on the analysis of the advantages of resources and the current situation of villages, the general path of protection planning should be set as follows: attaching importance to the material and intangible cultural relics, protecting the true history of radish village, protecting all its historical information and activating the village space.

3.1. Restore the Historical Style

Combining the natural environment such as mountain body, water body and human settlement environment in Luopuzhai village, the natural ecological environment and unique Qiang people's humanistic environment are organically combined into a whole to create a town style with outstanding characteristics of mountains, rivers and Qiang people. With the construction of "three micro" (micro-landscape, micro-pastoral, micro-environment) as the breakthrough point, the village style highlights the unique Qiang history and culture, maintains the traditional architectural style, adheres to the principle of "repairing the old as the old, restoring the original appearance", mainly protects and restores the traditional Qiang village, vigorously develops the outward-oriented space, and gathers and sacrifices for the residents. Activities such as providing venues for activities to show the ancient charm of Qiangzhai; extroverted space emphasizes the expression of traditional landscape characteristics, and coordinates with traditional landscape in Qiangzhai in form, color and volume; for the landscape that influences traditional landscape in villages, it should be rectified or transformed,

and the placement of modern landscape elements should be strictly controlled in quantity. In the aspect of architecture, the original architectural art symbols are used to fully display the characteristics and elegance of Qiang culture in murals, sculptures and eaves.

3.2. Improving the Human Settlement Environment

In the process of environmental protection and improvement of human settlements, the relative position, scale and relationship of the elements of “mountain, forest, stockade, field and road” in Luopuzhai village should be strictly controlled. It is forbidden to cut down or transplant trees in stockades to protect natural mountain forests. Active use of mobile flower pots, stone containers, vertical greening and other forms of courtyard and dam corner greening. Planting shrubs and flowers on both sides of the main landscape trail forms a landscape belt along the road. Coloured leaves are used to decorate the pastoral scenery. The drainage ditch of Qiangzhai is renovated so that the dirty water and wastewater do not remain in the ditch. Protect the current water quality, maintain the ecological shoreline on both sides of the river, plant aquatic and wet plants, green the river bank, and create a good hydrophilic landscape. Without affecting the normal life of the residents, the landscape nodes should be added appropriately, such as Qiang Village Entrance Square, Central Square (used for Qiang people’s singing and dancing performances and public activities square), Qiang Culture Exhibition Lane, Qiang ancient building visiting place, etc. Create places for tourists to enjoy leisure and entertainment. Improve the public service facilities, improve the identification system, add landscape sketches reflecting Qiang culture, extract elements of Qiang culture, in the form of traditional style, highlight the characteristics of villages, and prepare for tourism development. Considering the harmony of color with architectural style and pavement of pavement, gray, wood color and white are adopted, and wood, stone, bamboo and glass are used as materials.

3.3. Reconstructing Village Texture

Highlighting the overall spatial form and street pattern of the radish village, respecting the historical and cultural traditions of the Qiang people, giving priority to protecting and repairing the ancient towers, maintaining the existing landscape pattern as a whole, forbidding unauthorized excavation and alteration and maintaining its natural form. Relying on the mountains and facing the Minjiang River, the radish stockade is built on the natural terrain and has a fluctuating skyline. The stockade has a good land relationship with the background environment. The villages are surrounded by forests, rich in layers and highly ornamental. The combination of farmland and Qiang people’s dwellings in Qiangzhai is excellent, forming the original ecological pattern of “road, farmland, Qiang village, mountain forest” symbiosis. For the protection of hydrology, the overall spatial trend of rivers should be respected and tampering with, occupying and

widening rivers should be prohibited. For the texture protection of farmland and plantation, on the basis of following the original texture, it should be combed and reformed with the surrounding natural environment texture. For courtyards and buildings, according to the age of formation, architectural integrity, closure, and combined with the construction quality, scale, materials, evolution process and historical and cultural comprehensive rating. To protect the space form and combination relationship of traditional Qiang architectural communities and courtyards, permanent structures should not be constructed on courtyards, the scale of the length-width-height ratio of courtyards should not be changed, and the related elements such as platforms and steps connected with courtyards should not be changed. The material and style of the courtyard should be protected, including the building enclosing the courtyard, the landscape and decoration inside the structure. Moderately increase the courtyard vegetation, improve the ecological nature of living space, but at the same time do not affect the residents' functions such as drying grain. Make use of the courtyard environment, introduce traditional characteristic activities and folk culture, and enhance the popularity of the courtyard.

3.4. Shaping Street and Lane Space

Most of the radish stockades are entrance roads, main trails, secondary trails, mountaineering roads, field roads and courtyard-crossing roads within the stockade. Entry roads are generally two lanes, about 6 m wide, cement road leading to the interior of the village, which is the main vehicle lane of the village; the main walkway is the main road for local villagers to cultivate and daily life, distributed along buildings and main farmland, with a width of about 0.5 - 0.6 m, and the material is dirt road. Secondary walkways and courtyard-crossing roads are connected by steps. Because of the dispersal of courtyards, the utilization rate is high, but there is a lack of repair. In shaping the space of streets and lanes, we should strictly protect and follow the traditional road form and spatial pattern in Qiangzhai, the linearity of pavements and courtyard-crossing roads, and the connection interface, so as to maintain the traditional sense of spatial scale of roads. Control the road material, maintain the historical style of the buildings on both sides, combined with the greening of the front and back courtyards, as well as water supply and drainage functions, to maintain the traffic function of residential houses. Daily maintenance and repair of all kinds of roads should be done well to improve road traffic conditions. Appropriate widening of access roads and allowable conditions can increase the entrance landmark buildings and enhance the identification of Qiang village. The blues-tone slabs covered with cement pavement were restored. Continuation of climbing road, forming circuit, avoiding broken roads, improving the condition of climbing Road surface, and paying attention to anti-skid treatment. Attention should be paid to the arrangement of debris in front and back of the house so as not to hinder its traffic function and keep it unobstructed. Considering the light-

ing environment, we should add street lights, road signs and other facilities to improve the guidance. Adding trails and widening some field paths as walking trails.

3.5. Innovation of Tourism Industry

After Wenchuan Earthquake, the industrial development of Luobuzhai Village has been seriously hindered, mainly focusing on agriculture. Combining with the existing development foundation and cultural resources conditions of the village, we should vigorously develop new industries such as cultural heritage and tourism services. Making use of the advantageous conditions of the deep culture of the Qiang people in the present radish village, we can open up a unique tourism experience dominated by historical sites and Qiang culture. For example, situational experiential tourism, its audiences are mainly young and middle-aged people who are willing to challenge, like to study and attach importance to experience. Different from the past horse-drawn sightseeing, experiential tourism aims to integrate tourists into the scene, strengthen interaction, deepen the connotation, and make the tourism process “sensory”, “experiential” and “autonomous”. In experiential tourism, tourists gain not only visual perception, but also spiritual harvest in cultural and historical background, exploration of the origin of Qiang culture and history, and experience satisfaction. The development mode includes role-playing mode and decryption adventure mode. The role-playing model is mainly based on historical events or myths and legends of the Qiang people (such as the Dayu River Control, the Qiangge War, and the legend of Yangjiaohua). Tourists are required to change their clothes to play one of the roles and visit scenic spots. The staff of scenic spots interacts with each other in the preset scenic spots. They will get different feedback for different roles in different scenic spots, and promote the process of tourism experience according to the scripts of historical evolution. While deepening tourists’ understanding of Qiang’s history and culture, it also enriches the interest of tourism. The mode of riddle-solving and adventure is mainly in the confined space or nodes (such as the damaged and un-repaired Qiangzhai complex, which has been simply renovated after the earthquake), in conjunction with the historical scenes of Qiang culture, tips are set in various details. Tourists need to accept the challenge of a series of intellectual puzzles and simple practical participation to find the exit. New technology such as VR technology and flat panel application can be introduced to enrich tourism experience. For tourists who are not helped by the staff and solve puzzles independently, small rewards can enhance the sense of achievement of tourists.

Through such innovative tourism development, we can improve the income level of villagers, promote the common prosperity of villages, and let villagers become real beneficiaries [5]. At the same time, it also provides a suitable place for foreign tourists to take weekend vacations and experience culture.

4. Conclusions

The important purpose of rural activation is to increase income and improve life. The radish village chooses to develop in the way of combining culture with ecology and tourism to promote economic growth. Therefore, we activate the radish village under the condition of closely combining the village environment so as to make it more interesting and at the same time lose its cultural authenticity. Give full play to the important role of rural tourism in the construction of beautiful countryside and poverty alleviation and development, promote the villagers to increase their income and become rich, and build turnip village into a vibrant countryside with tourism, cultural experience and ecological vacation as its main functions. Let visitors enjoy the natural scenery, but also can bring culture home in leisure.

With the continuous development of cities, the acceleration of urbanization has brought new opportunities for the development of minority villages. At the same time, it inevitably brings unprecedented impact and destruction to the original ecological rural landscape. The area of cultivated land is decreasing, soil erosion is becoming more and more serious, water resources shortage and ecological environment are seriously damaged. Some villages have abandoned their original sense of identity and values, aesthetic values, blindly imitated urban construction, the use of modern materials and technical means, and the arbitrary patchwork of architectural colors, thus gradually losing the rural inherent idyllic scenery and cultural heritage. The present situation of the protection of traditional culture and historical buildings in Luopuzhai Village deserves our deep consideration. It tells us that we can slow down the pace of protection and development appropriately. In the process of development, we should effectively protect the natural environment, historical buildings and national culture, highlight and carry forward the local traditional characteristics, and cannot change the village, and lifestyle of residents. The purpose of “protection and activation” is to repair the natural environment and restore the style of ancient villages; activate the core buildings and renovate new buildings; develop cultural and tourism industries, so as to integrate the old and the new, and realize the protection of village space and the revival of culture.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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