An Analysis of the Inheritance and Development of Farming Culture in the Context of New Rural Construction

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ABSTRACT: As the foundation of China’s culture, farming culture has a long history and now still play an important role in rural life. By elaborating the new rural construction status, the meaning of farming culture, its confronting problems and solutions, the paper advocates an idea of respecting tradition, rules so that we can make a harmony between man and nature.

KEYWORDS: New rural construction; Farming culture; Design; Diversification.

Farming culture has been evolved step by step naturally. The production and development of China’s countryside cannot be done without the natural surroundings. And now, we are constructing socialist new countryside and propelling the urbanization, so there is already a consensus of respecting the history, protecting the environment, and inheriting the culture. Yet, there are still many difficulties to solve these problems. This paper discusses from the perspective of basic culture construction, inheritance protection mechanism, and building modern industry.

1 A SURVEY OF CURRENT STATUS OF CHINA’S NEW RURAL CONSTRUCTION

New rural construction symbolizes China’s progress in all side. In 2006, the central document has made an elaboration of the socialist new rural construction and pointed out that the basic content of new rural construction was “the growth of production, the enrichment of live, the civilization of folk, the tidiness of the countryside, the democracy of management. We are meant to build a new kind of countryside that improves the production and living conditions, the farmers’ comprehensive qualities, the better living surroundings, and makes it civilized and harmonious.

By now, people get a good feedback since the new rural construction is developing continuously and the rural face has changed. The rural economy has boomed and the living standard has improved. The gap between cities and countryside is narrowing. Some corresponding social public service policy like rural education, medical basis, social security cause has been improve and elevated. But meanwhile, there are lots of urgent problems. Like, the villages don’t have a clear direction on their own positions under the good momentum, and if we have a poor understanding to that, we cannot deepen our work except for making it a pilot. Therefore, job number one is that we cannot ignore the different trend of the villages and blindly pursue the novelty, quickness, change, and foreign.

Actually, each village has its uniqueness, and during construction, we need to get rid of the sameness according to the situation. Survey has said that in the design of the Sang Jia village, Wen Jia street, Shouguang city, the high standard and uniformed buildings has far outweighed the consuming ability of the farmers, which heavy the burden and rural debt of the farmers. “Painting house” is the representative of the formalistic when constructing new rural districts. Many villages are painting their buildings and making a simple renovation to them. There is a monument in a village that said “one way to enrich people is developing economy”. This village pays highly attention to the industry development and the road and lamp maintenance, but when they paint yellow color to the new houses and old houses, the folks should pay collectively, and then the village become all vulgar and we can see no history and modern elements in it.

Therefore, in rural construction, the inheritance of historical culture, especially the understanding to the farming culture and using it to decorate the villages can enrich the meaning of the new rural districts.
2 UNDERSTANDING FARMING CULTURE

We have a long history of farming, and in modern people’s life, we often see the prints of farming. It has already the root of China’s culture at the beginning of the agriculture society. It is one important part to the traditional culture and also the main spirit source of the Chinese nation core value. Besides, it is the basis of the urbanization and modernization, and all of us live on that.

2.1 Beginning

As an old kind of culture, farming culture consists of many cultural elements, dominated by, for example, tool culture and livestock culture. The living culture, eating culture, pottery culture, clothes culture, spiritual culture, all of this are the derivative elements. The birth of the dominated culture symbolizes the birth of farming culture, and the derivative elements are the sign of the mature of farming culture.

So, the birth of farming culture has always been a major subject to the scholars, which concerns archaeology, botany, and history. In 1872, European researchers Neilson said that “four periods can be divided in human history, hunting and gathering period: the nomadic or livestock period, farming period, and cultural period”. When people decided to leave their caves or trees to build houses above the earth, the period from hunting to gathering up to the collective living period was called primitive farming period. From that we can see China has such a period. But now all the famous inheritance including Pei Ligang, Ci Mountain, an Luo Jiajiao, He Mudu, are belonging to living farming period, instead of primitive farming period. “Recently, Mr. Shi Xingbang holds that the primitive district in our country might be in the middle of Shanxi or the middle of Shanxi, even further to the Xia Chuan culture, where we found the stone plate of 20 thousand years ago, dated back to the BC 9000 to 8000.

2.2 Connotation

Farming culture is continuous in China. It is the intelligence of the labor people created during thousands of years. It represents the traditional idea, technology and farming system and the connotation of the whole nation.” The farming character of basing on agriculture and assisting by fishing was then the social life mode, crossing the whole traditional culture. And as an existing material spiritual culture, it entered the ethics and concepts of Chinese people, making a solid foundation for the thought of valuing agriculture. Ballad, folk song, legend, and idioms are the main form of inheriting the farming culture. Cowherd and girl-weaver, The Butterfly Lovers, are all the moving tales in folk. And the sentence “it rains in the Tomb-sweeping Day, and it dries until the Summer Solstice” demonstrates that people at that time farmed and harvest according to the weather. They are all the vivid representative and precious traditional resources of the folk. It reveals that the people respected the farming work, which has the key function in connecting the personal ethics and national traditions.

When constructing the new rural areas, spiritual construction is the most important thing. Cultural soft power can propel it and can endow it with specific connotation. To dig up, create, inherit, and develop new rural construction idea is the key element that cannot missed.

2.3 Heritage value

In real life, farming culture still influence people in one way or another. Its modern value is to protect the traditional culture, and inherit it, represented by its respect to the land and environment, and its understanding and caring to the modern life conception. During designing new rural planning, inheriting farming culture can not only protect biological environment, develop countryside farming, propel sustainable use, but also can stay local uniqueness, district, and national uniqueness, enriching people’s daily life and constructing harmonious society.

2.4 Farming culture – based on human beings

It is said that each place has its own way of supporting its own inhabitants. The different surroundings, customs make the farming culture different, which finally leads to different living habits and different cultural idea of different nations. In traditional eat and drink structure, the staple food and the non-staple food structure is the Chinese traditional advantage, from which we can see the changes and accumulation of Chinese life. The essence of farming culture is “comply with heaven and earth’s virtue, sun and moon’s brightness, four season’s timing, the ghost’s fierce.” “Comply with” means conform to nature, and men and heaven are integrated into one thing, so that they can get the harmony in everything.

2.4.1 Farming culture – the basis of the development of the countryside’s tourist trade

When constructing new rural areas, people don’t care about the housing. If they can live happily in a garden-like environment, doing some meaningful things, though busy sometimes, they will be very happy. It’s a satisfying living way. Planning new rural areas design should conform to the natural laws and understand farmers’ mood, know what they are really thinking. After all, the heroes of the new rural districts are people who live here. The development of countryside tourist trade, sightseeing agriculture, efficient ecological
agriculture cannot live without the inheritance of farming culture. Their exploitation can add happiness to the farmers’ lives, making them enjoy the modern entertainment service after busy labor and work. While exploiting countryside, enriching their culture and improving farmer’s quality, it reminds us of protecting the nature, and saving resources.

### 2.4.2 Farming culture – enrich the connotation of modern new rural areas

Farming culture is the historical condition to realize countryside cultural sustainable development. During urbanization progress farming culture plays a bridge role or key role in it, being both creative and connecting the two districts. The tourist development need the decoration of culture, so does the value of farming culture. A novelty without history must be dull, and its life temporary. So, in the new time, respecting history and protecting as well as using it is good for our own development. Nowadays, rural areas are divided by slices. With communities as its main special form, rural society’s main culture and spiritual resources are still farming culture. What we really need to think about is how to explore its modern value and develop it while transform it from the traditional agriculture to the modern agriculture.

### 3 THE MAIN PROBLEMS CONFRONTING NEW RURAL AREAS CONSTRUCTION

In recent years, with the rapid development of the economy, people’s life improve a lot. However, some traditional habits disappear an people get far and far away with the farming culture. Meanwhile, some people antagonize the nature with the idea of men must win the heaven. Deforesting, land reclamation, and so on leads to the global warming, land desertification, earthquake, and the like. Therefore, human beings need to respect the natural laws and adjust measures to local conditions to find the development.

#### 3.1 Globalization – Chinese traditional culture get eroded

Confronting globalization, all the ideologies and cultures are entering and Chinese good traditional ethics are being eroded. People are ignoring the good quality of the farming culture, and the bad ideology propel the money worship, the style of seeking quick success and instant benefits, and the mode of wasting, which influence the countryside’s social mood, trigger the danger of belief crisis, morality and psychology.

With the progress of the urbanization, farmers’ production, life style are turning from countryside mode to the city mode, making the countryside culture position embarrassed. Seeing it from the social development point of view, countryside need and must develop. But some countryside, while developing themselves, ignore the scientific protection to the local historical culture. Influenced by the foreign culture, we blindly renovate the old houses and build meaningless pseudo-classic architecture, which is a huge impact to the rural traditional culture. Some places are advocating eco-development, and separating the cultural heritage from the social progress, natural environment and inhabitant life.

#### 3.2 Pollution – the ecological environment is challenged

To the traditional countryside, new rural construction brings the biggest challenge – ecological problem. That people ignore the environment has brought chaos to the ecosystem; the improper tore down and plan of the city of the developers destroy the original buildings and green system, the landscape and the mountain layout; many countryside building and transform plan has taken many farm land; we don’t pay enough attention to the natural environment and we ignore the local peoples customs. The polluted enterprises like steel, coal, chemical, and paper producer, and cement enter the village frequently, which influence the local environment and disturb the local life greatly.

Guan Shan county, Deng Ta city, Liaoning province has rich steel and ore resources. With the progress of the new countryside construction, the developers also target there to obtain money. However, farmers find themselves unrest. Trunks always are seen in the roads and dust spread all over in summer. When it rains the road is all muddy and the crops decrease because of the dust, which leads to heavy air pollution, noisy pollution and disorder of the ecosystem, which makes the farmers have many contradictory with the miners and the government. That people do not respect the village culture makes the culture go bad in the progress in the society.

#### 3.3 Countryside landscape has been destroyed greatly

Countryside landscape is one of the natural or historical remains in social progress phrase, and is also the basis of the Chinese national root belief.” However, propelled by the quick pace and economic interest, many countryside landscape have been badly planned, over tourist developed, and production. In one of the Zhejiang cultural protection habitant, because the improvement of the living standard and the increasing need of the housing, outside the Ming and Qing buildings are many modern reinforced concrete structure buildings, which cover up some ponds. Now, we can see some modern decorated new houses, even
though these new houses do not destroy the old ones heavily, the style is greatly influenced.

4 BUILD DIVERSIFIED PROTECTION WAYS

The disorder of the urbanization disturb people’s living environment and living style to some extent, and it even destroy the humanity. We should recall the beautiful countryside and the simple traditional life. The farming cultural root need us to protect.

4.1 Protect housings and natural heritage

Traditional housings and natural countryside are the heritage of the history. They form special natural landscape in time. The layout and style of the countryside and the living customs of the people reflect thousands of years of farming culture.

The first one is to protect in-site, mainly represented by museum, integration, moving, and ecology. To those valuable ones we need to keep them original and complete and a sustainable environment, which can be done by dynamic museum. Integration is to manage a cultural heritage in one place, such as the Qiao house in Shanxi. To protect the origin of the old villages, people move to another village beside it, which is called moving plan. Ecology stresses that people remain what it is and build the cultural site to protect the old villages.

The second one is to developing protection. For example, tourism and landscape. By now, most of the villages protections are using this way, the developing will draw money into the protection and developing to the old housing and the local people can get economic interest so that they will pay much attention to the developing and protection to the old villages, which also enhance their protection consciousness.

4.2 To carry forward farming culture in traditional festivals

China has various traditional festivals, which are the important part of the Chinese history. The progress of traditional festivals reflect the nation or the country’s history or culture. China’s traditional festivals derive from ancient times. From them we can still see the vivid pictures of the people. For example the most featured festival in China – Spring Festival. It has 4000 years history. Both Han nationality and minor nationalities celebrate at that time, like sacrifice, remove the old and welcome the new, wishing to God, etc. from little year, people are busy sweeping the houses and tools. All this activities have the same topic, that is, ring out the Old Year and ring in the New Year.

Year in and year out people enjoy the happiness of the festivals and feel the charming given by the history. People’s sense of identity cannot fade out with time. We should do well in these festivals and we should reflect the traditional cultural essence in life. This is not just to inherit the farming culture but also carry forward the Chinese culture. Since ancient times, China has a saying: “the Spring Dragon Festival comes, the dragon raises its head; and in the double third day, Xuan Yuan was born”. In the lunar year double third day, what the ancient people call Shang Si festival, is the day to remember Huang Di. During festival, each place will hold up unique temple fairs, even the supermarkets, cultural museums, and museums are making a big temple fair. Among which, Chinese traditional activities reflect vividly the vitality of traditional life in modern society.

4.3 To balance the relation between construction and culture

Based on the farming culture, countryside culture should reflect the cultural meaning and traditional ethics. Speaking of countryside, what enter our mind id the laboring people and we don’t think about the countryside culture. When the designers are planning the countryside, the culture must in it. The endorsement of the government and the improvement of the social understanding change people’s attitude towards countryside culture. How to balance the relation between construction and culture, the solutions are as follows:

4.3.1 To enhance the construction of the cultural infrastructure, and to optimize public service system

The infrastructure in countryside will bring forward the countryside construction. The county library, and museums should enhance the digital construction. The countryside should establish comprehensive cultural station which integrates books, education, sci-tech popularization, activities, learning and training, and video. To the school left space in countryside we can use them to service the cultural construction and establish activity bases. To construct and optimize the service infrastructure is the designing points in new rural planning.

4.3.2 We should pay attention to the countryside education and improve the folk’s comprehensive quality

As the main body of the new rural construction, farmers’ quality influence directly the level of construction. So, the designers should visit the folk to understand them. We should know the countryside people’s characteristics and what they need. We should offer the knowledge farmers a creativity platform and space to find the balance point to narrow the gap of the city and countryside.
4.4 Build farming culture museums, agricultural expo park, theme park and other media or cultural places

To build theme park or gardens, like the established Chinese agriculture history, Northwest farming culture museum, Suzhou farming culture and the successive ecological agricultural garden, the folk custom garden can let people know the farming culture better and can interest the urban citizens and teenagers, especially when they are doing farming activities, people integrate culture into entertainment and put themselves into nature. By this way they can feel the customers of the countryside and feel the traditional life style.

For example the art garden in Yang Jiabu in Weifang city, Shandong has collected many artistic elements and exhibit and experience, represented by the production of kite and New Year pictures. The homeland topic museums have dozens of landscape and hall exhibits, where we can feel the historical furniture, relics, paintings, and old villages. The farming culture is in front of our eyes. At the same time, the construction and the diversified custom culture should make the visitors experience the happiness of kite and year pictures, as well as the living way and customs hundreds years ago in Yang Jiabu. There is also the modern eco-agricultural tourism garden in Shandong Qufu, which integrates sightseeing, farming activities, and science communication. Exhibiting vegetable and flowers, raising animals and making organic-ecological farming, all of this reflect the new meaning of traditional farming culture and modern farming culture.

5 CONCLUSION

Keep the root, and do the developing reasonably. New rural construction is a long-term project that benefit the country and people. While constructing, we need to handle well the relation between human beings and nature. We should not blindly exploit, develop. Instead, we should pay enough attention to the farming culture, reinforcing the spiritual construction. The excellent tradition enveloped in the farming culture can have a guild meaning to the modern culture construction. So, in constructing, we should remember to protect the traditional culture, inherit the farming culture essence, integrate the modern and traditional elements and promote the harmonious progress of the society.

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