

The Value of Ethnographical Museums under the Background of Social Innovation

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Abstract: Faced with the situation of loose management, professional brain drain, fewer audience and weak social influence in the development of ethnographical museum, this paper takes service and system innovation in the theory of social innovation as the starting point, and puts forward the theoretical system of building regional museum association. Through exhibition, collection and education, it is constantly connected with communities and villages to build their culture.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the construction of ethnographical museums has been in full swing. According to the statistics, there are more than 300 ethnographical museums in China. Nevertheless, due to the lack of funding, most museums are unable to continue the routine work of cultural relics collection, venue repair and renewal. At the same time, the existing system lacks practical incentive mechanism and space for personal career promotion, resulting in loose management in the museum system and loss of professional talents, which makes it difficult to establish complete scientific research and public education system. This paper proposed to combine the museums in ethnic minority areas, integrating existing resources, breaking the gap between single museums, so as to promote the economic development of ethnic minority areas, enhance people's spiritual and cultural life, and achieve the goal of cultural poverty alleviation.

2. Function and social value of ethnographical museum

The academic research of ethnographical museum in China has always been the focus of work, and the research mainly includes the following three aspects: "firstly, the relationship between artifacts, cultural forms and social relations (organization and structure) in different time and space backgrounds. Secondly, the system of things and its categories, the construction of memory and history, and the relationship between "correctness", "continuity" and "otherness" involved in the comprehension of nature, society and human beings. Thirdly, the connotation and property of the social culture involved in the museum, and the relationship among the social phenomena in cultural regeneration, such as consciousness, classification concept, exchange, artistic creation conditions and identity construction. "[1]

2.1 Museum and community building

The concept of community building emphasizes: "community consciousness, human construction and cultivation, emphasis on creativity, spontaneity and autonomous participation, take a bottom-up approach, and care for the community as a whole." [2] The essence of museum is to promote the formation of community consciousness, which is just similar to the concept of community building. The function of the ethnographical museum is not only a physical place for cultural memory exhibition, but also a creator of connecting national historical memory, living culture and creating high-quality spiritual life space. It will become an initiator of rejuvenating national culture in the new era.

2.2 From “objects” to “people” and “land”

From the 16th and 17th century, the first museum appeared, until now, the connotation of the museum has roughly experienced three stages of transformation. At first, it appeared as a “small group” cultural institution, and the role of museum was defined as a social place exclusive to the royal nobility or elites. After the 18th and 19th centuries, it was transformed into a “mass” cultural institution. Palace art galleries and private museums around the world began to open for the public gradually, and from the past collection research to public exhibition. By the 1970s, museum developed in a more liberalized way and went to public. “Ecological museum, new museology, community museum, etc., which emphasized the interaction between local culture and people had emerged as a new cultural ideology, and they all concerned about a core issue, which was what kinds of positive changes museum can bring to the surrounding world, People and land began to produce meaning and connection, and it was no longer roughly plunder or display of objects. This was an important start for museum to try to understand and construct the land environment with user behind cultural relics.” [3]

3. The relationship innovation of ethnographical museum under the background of social innovation

Under the background of social innovation, relationship innovation will lead to the change of characters, which means the relevant organizations must be relatively “open-minded”, trying to overcome the problems of confusing them, and overcome the traditional boundaries of separating producers and consumers. Therefore, the ethnographical museum should not be a separate exhibition hall, nor should it focus only on provincial capitals. Instead, museums should be connected with the local culture, environment and people, with the ethnographical museum in the provincial capital city being the core. The functions of traditional museums such as collection, research, exhibition and education should be transformed into a new driving force to self-learning and self-development of local society. What's more, it should take the local natural and cultural resources as the main body of the museum and incorporate the autonomous participation of local residents. Besides, it emphasizes the mobilized collection, interactive research, life-oriented display education, industrial management promotion, etc, and considers all natural and humanistic resources together, presenting them in an integrated way.

3.1 Regional museums campaign centered on ethnographical museum

Ethnographical museums are mostly located in relatively underdeveloped western regions, which have preserved a large number of unique cultural and natural resources. According to the idea of social innovation, it means social interaction, which needs to provide an innovative relationship. “In terms of relationship innovation, these relationships may be new, because they were either developed between unrelated individuals or there are some new relationships between interdependent individuals for other reasons (working in different departments or geographic regions).” [4] Taking Yunnan as an example, as a province with the largest number of ethnic minorities in China, Yunnan ethnographical museum, the national first-class museum, and 54 public and private museums registered by Industry and Commerce Ministry in Yunnan province need to provide a new connection for recombination, establish a museum association, and carry out a overall planning for development. Besides, according to the new relationship, the staff needs to be familiar with the characteristics and strengths of different museums, so that the concept of association can be planted into museum their minds while working. The association needs to be promoted by the understanding of museum managers themselves and the external forces (management departments), which is both a top-down and bottom-up process.

3.2 Ethnic and rural tourism centered on ethnographical museum

China's rural tourism is just emerging, and the main consumption pattern is still limited in the stage of living in farmyard, eating its food, doing its work, learning its craftsmanship and enjoying its

pleasure. Apart from some tourism products, like the highly participated picking activities, most tourism products are at primary stage, which can only satisfy the curiosity of tourists who know nothing about country life. Ecotourism, cultural and green tourism will be the next development direction of “beautiful countryside” tourism, and it is also the embodiment of the traditional Chinese philosophy of “the unity of man and nature”. Ethnographical museums are mostly located in areas with rich tourism resources. Its unique natural scenery and ethnic characteristics (production form, lifestyle, folk customs, rural culture) are the best places to develop sightseeing, vacation, entertainment and shopping. In the process of tourism development, museums should not only position themselves as tourist attractions, but also actively participate in the process of tourism development and planning, more importantly, play a unique role in the cultural tour.

3.3 The development of cultural industry chain centered on ethnographical museum

In recent years, the cultural and creative products of the museum have become a hot topic in museum economy. For example, the sales of cultural and creative products of the Palace Museum, with palace culture being its core, have reached 1.5 billion yuan. This great achievement has made many museums see the business opportunities and development direction, however, most museums do not dig deep enough into their own cultural themes and historical stories, and lack new ideas in design, only limited in the level of ordinary tourist souvenirs, mostly focusing on the homogenized products such as refrigerator stickers, mugs and commemorative medals, all of which lead to a flat sales performance. For ethnographical museums, there is still a large space for the development of cultural products with national resources as the core, especially for the cultural and creative products based on rural tourism, such as agricultural and sideline products, local products and rural handicrafts. Only by combining tradition, nationality, fashion, practicality and market requirement, can we create popular cultural and creative products.

4. Conclusion

The campaign of regional museums in ethnic minority areas will break the structure of traditional museums and adapt to the times' development trend and demand with an open attitude. The thought of museum caused by interaction between local culture and people has emerged and become a new cultural ideology. It takes the question of what positive changes museums can bring to the world as the core issue and it connects the collective memory and cultural heritage between land and people. What's more, the local natural and cultural resources are regarded as the main body of the museum and it is incorporated into autonomous participation of local people. Besides, the mobilized collection, interactive research, life-oriented display education, industrial management promotion are emphasized, and the thoughts of integrating natural and humanistic resources are presented. In conclusion, new social innovation and social relations need to be practiced, summarized and adjusted according to the real situation, so as to reach into a new height and level. It is hoped that the theoretical thinking of this topic can bring some inspiration for the development of ethnographical museum.

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