

## **Research on the development of farmhouse music in Shanghai based on co-evolution theory – Qian Wei village as an example**

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**Abstract:** With the acceleration of urbanization and the advancement of the information age, the novelty of rural household music industry and its complementarity with urban life become more and more prominent. From the perspective of co-evolution, through literature and interviews, and other research methods, this paper expounds the development of farmhouse music in the suburbs of Shanghai and the present situation of farm music in the Qian Wei village. It is concluded that Qian wei Village relies on the path of farmhouse entertainment and tourism, has a heavy ideological foundation of small-scale farmers, loose organization, unclear positioning of tourism products in Qian wei Village, flat level.

### **1. Introduction**

With the accelerating urbanization process, cities are stepping from industrialization stage towards post-industrialization and information era. Tourism, especially rural tourism, thanks to its growing novelty and complement to urban life, are expected to boast more popularity. However, after a rising period, the industry fell into a position of stagnation and even decline. The research puts QianWei Village in Shuxin Town, ChongMing District, Shanghai, as a case to approach the paradox and tries to raise proposals of relieving the basic conflict.

#### **1.1 The development of the farmhouses in the suburbs of Shanghai and the current situation of QianWei Village**

Now, as the forerunner of the development among all the cities in China, Shanghai has already completed the industrialization and is stepping into the past-industrialization era, which is featured with the phenomenon that the rural suburb area is also experiencing the trend of urbanization; along with the decrease of the rural land, the rural landscape and the rural culture are also declining, reduced to the memory of rural generation. Just because of the decline, however, they also become the scarce but lucrative tourist resources. Therefore, with the concept of “to live in a farm house, to enjoy farm food, to experience farm work and to enjoy farm leisure”, farmhouse tourism has attracted great numbers of urban citizens, especially those who have been away from farm for years and those who haven’t at all experienced the life on the farm. However, after the proposal of the concept in 1990s and the rapid advance in the early 21st century, the farmhouse tourism represented by QianWei Village is now faced with the dropping tourist number, the decline of the industry value, together with the hesitation of entering practitioners and the leaving of current ones. The villages are suffering from the questions on how to revive the industry.

#### **1.2 The opportunity facing the industry in the past-industrialization era**

It is noticeable that in the past-industrialization era, the proportion of output value of tertiary industry is rising sharply, catching up with the first and second industries, becoming the leading industry in Shanghai. The tertiary industry itself is also undergoing rapid vertical subdivision. Information industry, cultural industry and other emerging industries are expected to be separated from the tertiary industry and form a new fourth and fifth industry. These two new prospective industries are also the opportunities worth-seizing for the city during the transition from

industrialization to past-industrialization. The transformation of the farmhouse tourism can also take the advantage of these two thriving industries.

### **1.3 The research concept based on co-evolution**

The development of things and phenomena are not caused by the change of one dimension, but the result of the joint action of multiple dimensions. In the process of development, the factors of each dimension influence each other, evolve together, promote or inhibit the development. So is the development of farmhouse tourism. Gong and Ma (2014) divide the community space of farmhouse tourism into three dimensions: landscape space, institutional space and social relationship space and raise the theoretical framework of co-evolution among these three factors. They analyzed the history of farmhouse tourism in QianWei Village by that principle. This article proceeds the application of that theory and thus proposes targeted suggestions for the future development of the farmhouse tourism.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 On-the-spot survey**

From Jul. 30th to Aug. 1st, the author paid a visit to QianWei Village by ferry and vehicle and carried out an on-the-spot survey. During that visit, the author lived in QianWei Village Farmhouse Resort and chose multiple farmhouses to investigate their environment, sanitation, hardware and service conditions. The author also went all over the whole village to investigate the distribution of the tourist attractions and their current conditions. Meanwhile, the distribution of relevant tourist destinations and Business Centers in ChongMing District is also examined.

### **2.2 Questionnaire survey**

During the investigation visit, 41 questionnaires had been given out and collected, 1 for the village head and 40 for villagers. The village head questionnaire consists of Population Composition, Labor Force Composition, Economic Composition, Land Use, Internet Infrastructure and Application of the village while villager questionnaire is comprised of Household Population and Labor composition, Income Sources, Internet Infrastructure, E-commerce Applications. Through questionnaires, a huge quantity of objective information on the economy and the farmhouse tourism industry was obtained.

### **2.3 Interview survey**

During the questionnaire survey, the village head and 12 randomly chosen households who are engaged in farmhouse tourism (and other industries related to farmhouse tourism, e.g. retailing) took the interview about the current operating situation of farmhouses, the setbacks, views and suggestions on the current management of the farmhouse by the village, and future transformation of the operating model.

## **3. Summary of research**

### **3.1 The concept、 characteristics and positioning of rural tourism and farmhouse music**

Domestic scholars Lin Gang and Shi Peiji (2006) quantitatively analyzed the quotation, representation and timeliness of 20 rural tourism concepts, extracted six standards of rural tourism concepts, and defined the concept of rural tourism: taking place in rural areas, rural pastoral customs, agricultural production activities, farm life and people. Popular culture and other natural and cultural landscapes attract leisure, sightseeing, sightseeing and holiday activities for tourist attractions.

Foreign scholars have a broader definition of rural tourism. British scholars Gilbert and Tung (1990) believe that rural tourism is a kind of behavior that tourists enjoy, relax and relax in the rural environment (such as farms, pastures, etc.) under the condition that farmers provide food and

accommodation. Ukrainian scholar TETYANA et al. (2016) believed that rural tourism was not only included in rural agricultural tourism; it also included tourism in all natural, undeveloped areas without ecological impact, namely ecotourism; and limited development, consistent with the concept of sustainable development, with less environmental damage to sustainable development Exhibition tourism..

From all perspectives, the author agrees with Lin Gang's and Diamond Peiji's explanations on the concepts of rural tourism and farmhouse music, which better summarizes the location, content, purpose and form of rural tourism. Rural tourism is provided by peasant households. It is aimed at urban tourists as the main group. Through enjoying rural landscape and folk customs, experiencing agricultural production and life, carrying out leisure, sightseeing and relaxing tourism activities. Farmhouse music is also similar in concept to the above statement, and in domestic literature, they are basically regarded as the same concept Liu Qiao et al. (2009), Yan Shao Jun et al. (2010), Zhang Lihua (2015) and other scholars hold this view, this paper also regards rural tourism and farmer music as the same concept.

### **3.2 The application of co evolution theory in economic geography**

Co-evolution theory first appeared in the field of biology, and has been used more and more in non-biology such as geology, astronomy, economics and management. In biology, the premise of co-evolution theory is that the evolution of two populations has "strong influence" and "geographical proximity". Therefore, Liu Zhigao proposed that the co-evolution theory has spatial metaphor. He also pointed out that "at present, the theory and experience of co-evolution mainly focus on Evolutionary Economics and management, while economic geographers and regional economists seldom touch on it, especially on the spatial connotation of co-evolution. Look at... Co-evolution is a general concept, which can be used not only in the field of economics and management, but also in the analysis of spatial and geographical phenomena of economic activities (Liu Zhigao, 2008).

In the few literatures that use co-evolution theory to analyze economic geography problems, different scholars will participate in the co-evolution of population classification is also different. Hassink and other scholars deepened the framework of co-evolution theory into destination tourism products, tourism system and tourism sector three dimensions [i.e., the concept of co-evolution theory in biology population] to analyze the development of tourism in a region based on the life cycle theory of tourism destination and path dependence phenomenon. Domestic scholars Gong Wei and Ma Mulan, aiming at the characteristics of rural tourism, classify the "population" involved in co-evolution into landscape space, institutional space and social relationship space, which correspond to the above tourism products, tourism system and tourism sector respectively. (Gong Wei, Mamulan, 2014)

## **4. Research Result**

### **4.1 Transportation conditions**

QianWei Village is located in the middle-north of ChongMing Island, about 20km from Nanmen Town which is the commercial center of the island and has the main ferry pier connecting Shanghai City Center. It has a similar distance from the terminal of the planning S7 Highway (Shanghai-ChongMing corridor), Jianshe Highway. As for existing road access, it is 45km away from the Shanghai Yangtze River Tunnel-Bridge, which is approximately one hour's drive. Roads connecting QianWei Village are asphalt paved and well-maintained. There's a one-hour bus line connecting the village to Nanmen Town center, Nandong Line. Roads inside the village are paved by either asphalt or cement and hence it's convenient to reach every corner of the village.

### **4.2 Business location**

At present, main commercial centers of ChongMing district are Nanmen town (where the district government, bus terminal and ferry pier are located), Chenjia Town (close to Yangtze River

Tunnel-Bridge and is developing rapidly thanks to the transportation convenience). Subcenters are Xinhe Town and Bu Town (uniformly distributed between main centers). Commercial centers are all located in southern part of ChongMing Island and have some distance from QianWei Village. Therefore, the village can take the complementary advantage of the location far away from the bustle of commercial center. Characteristic farmhouses can also have an asymmetric competition with hotels in downtown. However, there also exists negative effects due to the difficulties going downtown and back. Farmhouse tourists' shopping and entertainment needs must be met inside the village and thus it places a demanding requirement to the tourist items in the village. Close to the village is Dongping National Forest Park. The park and the village form a complete value chain of sightseeing, catering and accommodation. This brings huge advantages to the QianWei village in attracting customers. Also, farmhouses are concentrated and have a large supply of accommodation and catering. That helps form an agglomeration effect and expand popularity.

#### **4.3 The operating situation of farmhouses in QianWei Village**

On-the-spot survey shows that QianWei Village is capable of providing basic service of catering and accommodation. However, as for high-level consumptions, there still has space for improvement. The tourist groups to the village are mostly excursion tourists from surrounding Yangtze River Delta city circle. Almost all the farmhouses visited have televisions, air conditioners, independent washrooms and wash supplies to meet the fundamental needs. But it is still worth noticing that nearly one third of the farmhouse do not provide Internet connection. In the information era, farmhouses still keep the traditional business model without the Internet and E-commerce, which makes the Shangri-La unknown to the tourists. In terms of service, the practitioners are all warm-hearted and offer decent and farm-featured food.

### **5. Analysis and discussion**

#### **5.1 The Qian wei village depends on the path of farmhouse and tourism**

This is the fundamental reason for the current development dilemma of Qian wei Village, which set foot in the tourism reception industry in the 1980s and opened its first farmhouse in 1999. Since then, the avant-garde village has locked the development path of vigorously developing rural tourism. In terms of tourism organization, the village head took the lead in setting up farmhouse music, and then several farmers followed up and achieved gratifying business performance; in terms of tourism products, once the trend of setting up farmhouse music in villages was formed, many villagers expanded the scale of income brought by farmhouse music, improved housing and service conditions, and the quality of tourism products was better than that in the initial stage. It has been upgraded to attract more tourists; In terms of tourism system, the statutory holidays in 2008 were divided into seven days of "Golden Week" and three days of "small and long holidays". Tourists were more inclined to travel around the short distance, and the potential target customer groups of QianWei Village increased. Institutional dividends and the huge profits made by the pioneers of Farmhouse Music tourism products make many farmers in the village compete to imitate and join the ranks of Farmhouse Music Businessmen for a time, and the organization of Farmhouse Music Businessmen is becoming larger and larger. With more and more Farmhouse Music Businessmen stationed, the competition among them is becoming more intense and market-oriented. The voice is getting higher and higher, so the village has to let go of the "four unification" management mode. In order to strengthen the village farmhouse business management, improve the village landscape perception, collection and unified land contracting system, intended to attract investment, improve the quality of tourism products (but the investment in the construction of tourist attractions and urban overlap is serious, poor results), and in the increasingly large group and increasingly intense competition. Competition also forces merchants to modernize, transform and enhance farmhouse enjoyment. The three dimensions of tourism organization, tourism products and tourism system interact with each other, influence each other and evolve together. They form a strong self-reinforcement on the rural tourism road of Qian wei Village, resulting in great inertia of the rural

tourism industry of Qian wei Village and strong path dependence. The development prospects of Qian wei Village are closely bound up with tourism industry, and the demand for land and labor in tourism reception industry is far less than that in agriculture. This also explains the reasons of small arable land per capita, outflow of young and middle-aged labor force and serious aging phenomenon in Qian wei Village.

### **5.2 Villagers' thought of small farmers is very heavy and their organizational form is loose.**

This is the main reason for the current development dilemma of the Qian wei village. As a natural condition of alluvial sand island, Chong Ming Island has flat and fertile land and relatively closed terrain. It is difficult to trade with the outside world. All kinds of factors lead to the typical river civilization of Chong Ming Island although it is near the East China Sea. The age of the left-behind elderly is mainly farming. The combined effect of "weather" and "land" makes the idea of self-sufficiency of small-scale farmers deeply rooted in the thought of the left-behind elderly in Qian wei Village. The commodity economic concepts of specialization, cooperation, mutual benefit and contract spirit are indirectly accepted and recognized by the left-behind elderly. The old people are willing to accept a short return on investment and a strong risk aversion. The above factors also form a strong thinking inertia in the left behind elderly in the Qian wei village. Therefore, planting, especially food crop planting, is still the ideal form of industry for the elderly, while for tourism, the interest of the elderly is not strong. The collection of arable land and the financing of new projects in villages touch on the core interests of the elderly. In addition, the stains left by the failure of investment in recreational projects in villages in the past make it difficult to carry out new ideas and ideas at the village management level. This leads to the formation of "the more economic development, the more long-term consideration of village cadres, the more loss of villagers". The "political paradox" of "political trust and support to village committees, including grass-roots governments, leads to concealed resistance, ultimately hinders the work of village cadres and affects the overall political development of villages". (Chen Ming, 2010)

### **5.3 The location of Qian wei tourism products is not clear, and the level is flat**

The farmhouse as rural pastoral, agricultural production activities, farm life and folk culture as a selling point of the tourism products should be complementary to the traditional urban leisure tourism project. However, at present the main leisure activities in QianWei village for chess, this activity before and amusement park like entertainment projects and city leisure projects serious overlap.

In terms of farmers and merchants, although the accommodation conditions are close to hotel rooms, the style of farmers' happy rooms is uniform, lacking theme, novelty and design sense, and can not complement the hotel rooms in cities and towns. Rooms can only meet the basic accommodation needs of tourists, but can not meet the diversified and deep-seated needs of different groups of tourists, such as families, young groups, colleagues, business negotiations and so on. Agricultural food and beverage also tend to assimilate seriously, mainly urban traditional home-cooked dishes, Chong Ming characteristic agricultural products produced few dishes, and lack of systematic publicity and introduction, thus making it difficult for tourists to form the impression of Chong Ming characteristic products, and then affecting the sales of characteristic agricultural products in avant-garde villages.

## **6. Conclusion**

With the urbanization and the city entering information society, the novelty of rural family life and its complementarity with urban life are increasingly outstanding. With the perspective of co-evolution, QianWei Village is considered as a representative to explore the co-evolution of the farmhouse tourism's conduction, product and regulation and approaches to alleviating the conflict between villagers' ideology and the improvement of the tourism so that the innovation of products and regulations improving the quality of farmhouse tourism can come true, and problems derived from the conflict can be solved.

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