

Research on the Living Conservation Path of Traditional Villages: A Case Study of Melang Village in Hainan

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Abstract: Under the tide of modern social development, the conservation and development of ancient villages face numerous challenges. Melang Village, a representative traditional village in Hainan, holds significant historical and cultural value. This study focuses on Melang Village, employing modern technologies such as field surveys and digital point cloud data collection to analyze its architectural forms and surrounding environmental resources. Based on this, a revitalization and adaptive reuse design plan for immovable cultural heritage buildings is proposed. the research aims to provide scientific guidance for the sustainable development of Melang Village and serve as a reference for the conservation and development of other ancient villages.

Keywords: Chengmai County; Meilang Village; Protection of Traditional Ancient Villages; Activation and Reuse; Tourism

1. Introduction

Chengmai County, one of Hainan's regions with profound historical and cultural heritage, ranks among the highest in the province for its number of cultural relics. It is home to numerous well-preserved ancient villages, renowned for their volcanic stone architecture, cultural legacies from the Song to Ming-Qing dynasties, and unique natural and cultural landscapes.

Melang Village, established during the Song Dynasty over 800 years ago, is one of the most intact volcanic stone villages in Chengmai County. Located in Jinjiang Town, Chengmai County, the village's houses, roads, and walls are constructed using dry-stacked basalt techniques, blending harmoniously with the volcanic plateau terrain to form a distinctive cultural landscape.

With the acceleration of urbanization, Melang Village faces challenges such as aging buildings, difficulties in cultural inheritance, and insufficient tourism development. Against this backdrop, effectively preserving the village's historical and cultural heritage while achieving sustainable development has become an urgent issue.

The research team conducted continuous field surveys in Melang Village starting in March 2023, including activities such as "Cultural Heritage Conservation—Advancing with the Times, Shared by the People (Artistic Sketching of Cultural Relics)" in Chengmai County's Old Town to explore traditional architectural heritage elements.

2. Field Research and Preliminary Results in Meilang Village

2.1 Overview of Cultural Relics and Buildings

The Melang Twin Pagodas, the Tomb of Chen Daoxu and Zhou Shi, and the Lingzhao Tomb form a heritage complex centered on the Chen Daoxu family, recognized as part of the Fourth Batch of National Key Cultural Relics Protection Units. These are the earliest surviving ancient buildings in Hainan.

The Twin Pagodas, built during the Song Dynasty, were erected by local resident Chen Daoxu for his two daughters. the Lingzhao Tomb was constructed by Chen Shanchang for her elder sister Chen Lingzhao. the tomb's owner, Lingzhao, was the eldest daughter of Chen Daoxu. the Lingzhao Tomb represents an important burial style of its time. Additionally, the Jirui Nunnery served as a place for Chen Daoxu and Zhou Shi to chant scriptures, while Chen Shanchang once resided in the Xianshou Nunnery.

1994: Melang Twin Pagodas designated as Hainan Provincial Cultural Relics Protection

Unit.

1996: Included in the Fourth Batch of National Key Cultural Relics Protection Units.

2006: the Tomb of Chen Daoxu and Zhou Shi, along with the Lingzhao Tomb, were added to the Sixth Batch of National Key Cultural Relics Protection Units, merged under the management of the Melang Twin Pagodas Administration.

2007: Excavation of the stone bridge, release pond, and stone archway between the pagodas.

2.2 Composition of Cultural Relics

2.2.1 Core Heritage Structures

The Melang Twin Pagodas are the earliest surviving ancient buildings in Hainan. the younger sister's pagoda faces east-west, with a square plan and seven tiers; the elder sister's pagoda faces southeast-northwest, with a hexagonal plan and five tiers. the two pagodas stand 20 meters apart, both built over a shared mountain spring pool, with their lower sections extending into the water. Structurally, the younger sister's pagoda is a single-walled hollow tower, while the elder sister's pagoda combines single and double walls.

The Tomb of Chen Daoxu and Zhou Shi, constructed in the first year of the Southern Song Jingding era (1260 CE), features a stone structure divided into an underground chamber and an above-ground memorial tower resembling a ceremonial hall. the Lingzhao Tomb, discovered during cultural surveys, has a rare and archaic design, with its upper structure largely damaged, leaving only the foundation and spire.

2.2.2 Cultural heritage environment

The cultural relics environment of the Meilang Twin Towers (including Chen Daoxu's Zhou Family Tomb and Lingzhao Tomb) includes relevant historical relics around the Twin Towers and the traditional village of Meilang Village. the relevant historical relics include Shiba, Fangsheng Pool, Shifang, Xianshou Temple Site, Jirui Temple Site, Meilang Twin Towers Museum, and so on.

The residential buildings in the ancient village of Chengmai Volcanic Rock have a closed and inward courtyard shape. the residential courtyards in the entire village range from dozens to hundreds of households, forming a group of residential courtyards, known as the ancient village. Meilang Village has a typical appearance of a volcanic village, with the basic

pattern mostly being a "courtyard style", and many ancient dwellings being connected two courtyard and three courtyard houses. the elements that make up the village include the Meilang Twin Towers, residential houses, ancestral halls, stone paved roads, ponds, earth temples, ancient wells, ancient trees, and the Meilang Twin Towers Museum. the water in the village is diverted into a pond, and the well is built with stones. There are several large trees next to the village, and under the trees, there are stacked stones that can accommodate more than ten people to sit down.

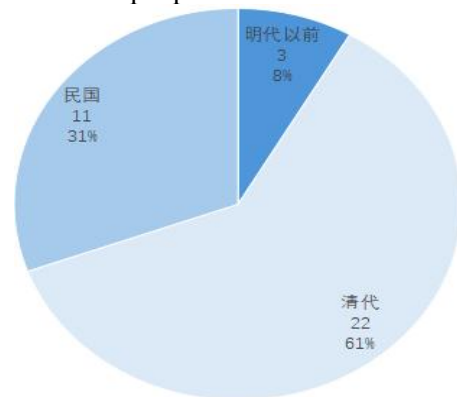


Figure 1. Building Age Distribution Statistics



Figure 2. Map of the Current State of the Environment

3. Design Scheme for the Revitalization and Reuse of Immovable Cultural Relics and Buildings in Meilang Village

3.1 Design Philosophy and Objectives

In the revitalization and reuse design of immovable cultural relics and buildings in Meilang Village, the national policy of "protection first, rational utilization, environmental improvement, and effective management" is implemented, aiming to fully explore and showcase the historical and cultural value of Meilang Village, and achieve

the organic combination of cultural heritage protection and modern social development. Through reasonable design, Meilang Village has become an important window to showcase Hainan's traditional history and culture, promote local economic development, improve the quality of life of villagers, and enhance their sense of identity and pride in local culture. the specific goals include protecting and restoring immovable cultural relics and buildings, inheriting and promoting local historical culture and folk customs, developing attractive cultural tourism products, promoting the integration of culture and tourism industry, and achieving sustainable development of Meilang Village.

3.2 Design Strategies for Revitalizing Cultural Relics and Integrating Resources in Meilang Village

Meilang Village is surrounded by abundant natural resources, with unique landscapes such as pastoral scenery and volcanic landforms. At the same time, immovable cultural relics and buildings also have profound historical and cultural value and unique artistic charm. In the design, fully utilize the advantages of these natural resources and cultural relics to create tourism experience products with culture as the core and ecology as the foundation.

Design a "fusion of culture and nature" by combining the Meilang Twin Towers, ancient tombs, and surrounding rural landscapes

The tourism route of 'Journey'. Tourists can enjoy ancient architecture while strolling through the countryside, experiencing the tranquility and natural beauty of the countryside. Utilize the surrounding volcanic stone resources to develop a handmade volcanic stone production experience project, allowing tourists to personally experience the charm of traditional crafts such as volcanic stone carving, increasing the fun and participation of tourism. Combining with the surrounding ecological agriculture, we launch activities such as picking agricultural products and experiencing farming, allowing tourists to deeply understand the local agricultural culture and enrich the connotation of tourism products. At the same time, a cultural exhibition area will be built around the Meilang Twin Towers, introducing visitors in detail to the historical background, architectural features, and cultural connotations of the Twin Towers through the

installation of display boards, multimedia display equipment, etc. By utilizing modern digital technology, virtual restoration of the twin towers is carried out, allowing tourists to travel through time and space, experience the construction process of Yuan Dynasty architecture and the social landscape at that time. For the stone statues of the Chen Jushi Zhou family's joint burial tomb and the architectural decoration of ancient dwellings, these elements can be refined and innovated, and applied to the design of cultural and creative products, such as making miniature models of stone statues, stationery and accessories with decorative patterns of ancient dwellings as elements. This can not only spread the culture of Meilang Village, but also create certain economic benefits.



Figure 3. Evolution of the Village

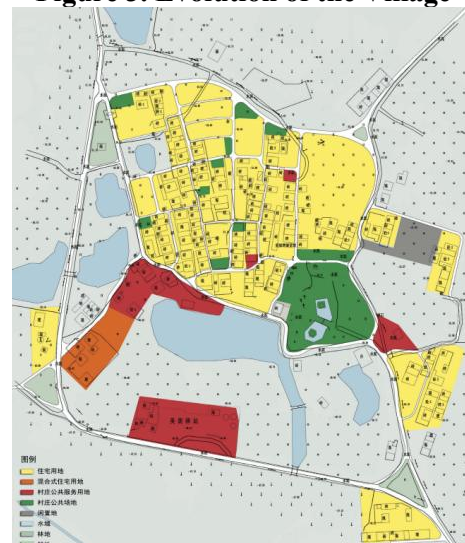


Figure 4. Map of the Current Status of Land Use

Through field research, literature search, and collection and analysis of digital point cloud data, the architectural distribution map, detailed information map of cultural relics and historical sites, and surrounding resource environment map of Meilang Village were collected, presenting the overall layout of the village and the distribution of various resources intuitively. We have established a building information database for Meilang Village, which includes detailed information such as the age, structure, style, and preservation status of buildings, providing a convenient data query and management platform for subsequent protection and research work.



Figure 5. Primary and Secondary Road Maps 2024

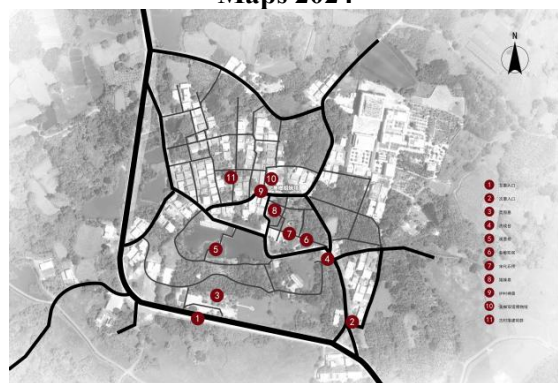


Figure 6. Current Location Map



Figure 7. Tourist Itinerary "Journey to the Integration of Culture and Nature"

The ability to observe and analyze the morphological characteristics of buildings and villages from different perspectives provides a visual reference for the revitalization and reuse design of immovable cultural relics and buildings, further promoting the development and improvement of tourism experience products that integrate culture and nature.

3.3 Integrated Development of Cultural Tourism and Cultural Creativity

Build a core cultural tourism scenic area in Meilang Village, integrate resources such as Meilang Twin Towers, ancient tombs, and traditional dwellings, and carry out unified planning and development. Improve the infrastructure within the scenic area, such as tourist service centers, parking lots, rest areas, etc., to enhance the tourist experience. Design diverse tourism projects, in addition to traditional sightseeing tours, adding cultural experience activities such as holding traditional sacrificial ceremonies, folk performances, handmade workshops, etc., to allow tourists to deeply participate in the cultural activities of Meilang Village. Develop night tourism projects, use lighting technology to create a night light show of the Meilang Twin Towers, hold an ancient village night market, showcase local specialty cuisine and handicrafts, extend tourists' stay time, and promote tourism consumption.

Establish the Meilang Village Cultural and Creative Industry Park, attract cultural and creative enterprises and artists to settle in, and carry out the design, production, and sales of cultural and creative products. Taking inspiration from the historical culture and architectural elements of Meilang Village, we have developed a series of cultural and creative products with regional characteristics, covering multiple fields such as cultural goods, tourist souvenirs, home decorations, etc. Strengthen cooperation with e-commerce platforms, expand sales channels for cultural and creative products, and enhance the dissemination of Meilang Village culture effect.

4. Conclusion

As a typical representative of traditional ancient villages in Hainan, Meilang Village has important historical and practical significance for its protection and development. Through field research and the application of

modern science and technology, this study comprehensively analyzed the architectural form and resource environment of Meilang Village, and proposed a design scheme based on activation and reuse. These plans can not only effectively protect the historical and cultural heritage of Meilang Village, but also promote the sustainable development of the local economy, improve the quality of life of villagers, and enhance cultural identity through the integration of cultural tourism and creative industries. In the future, with the continuous development of technology, the protection and development of ancient villages will have more possibilities, providing new ideas and methods for the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture.

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