



# The Protection and Development of Ancient Town's Tourist Cultural Heritage from the Perspective of Cultural and Tourism Integration

## —A Case Study of Xitang Ancient Town in Jiangnan Water Town

Ouyang Tiantian, Chen Yan, Zhang Yue

School of business administration, Anhui University of Finance and economics, Bengbu, Anhui, 233000

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**Abstract:** As a social behavior, tourism has become an indispensable part of people's lives, and tourism forms are becoming more and more diversified. Culture is the charm of tourism resources, and cultural and tourism integration is an important way to realize the transformation and upgrading of the tourism industry structure. The ancient water town in the south of the Yangtze River has become a favorite tourist destination for many tourists due to its unique geographic location and charming water town. In recent years, it has been in the stage of application for heritage. However, with the development of the tourism industry, the contradiction between the protection of cultural heritage and the development of the tourism industry has gradually emerged. This article takes the ancient town of Xitang, which has a well-developed tourism industry among the ancient towns in the south of the Yangtze River, as a specific research object, and explores its existing problems. From the perspective of cultural and tourism integration, the protection and development strategy of the ancient town's tourism and cultural heritage is proposed with a view to the development of the ancient town of Xitang. Provide direction and provide reference for the development of tourism in other ancient towns.

**Keywords:** cultural and tourism integration; tourism cultural heritage protection; Xitang ancient town

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## 1. Introduction

Since the implementation of the "13th Five-Year Plan", China's economic development has entered a new normal, and the cultural industry and tourism industry are facing transformation and upgrading. This integration will form a cultural tourism industry with their own industrial characteristics. Since the 1990s, the ancient water town in the south of the Yangtze River has attracted domestic and foreign tourists with its unique natural and cultural landscape. After many years, it has developed into a tourism brand with obvious regional characteristics. Many of these ancient towns take tourism as their main industry, and most urban residents are engaged in tourism. As one of the developed ancient towns in the south of the Yangtze River, Xitang Ancient Town has experienced thousands of years of wind and rain and long-term historical evolution. It still retains some ancient buildings, traditional customs and local lifestyles. It has become a microcosm of local society and history, attracting many tourists.

At the same time, the ancient town of Xitang has been in the stage of application for heritage in recent years, and the protection of heritage is also constantly advancing. However, with the development of the tourism industry, the contradiction between the protection of historical and cultural heritage and the development of the tourism industry has gradually emerged<sup>[1]</sup>.

## 2. Summary

Foreign scholars began to study the tourism development of ancient towns earlier and achieved some results. The research began around 1950, most of which focused on the impact, protection and inheritance of the tourism development of ancient towns. Scholars such as Luo Rodrigo (2002) and Cohen (2001) explored the positive and

negative impacts of tourism industry development through the study of tourism cases in ancient towns; Maria ( 2002 ) studied the characteristics of tourists in ancient towns; ChrysHom ( 2008 ) conducted research on New Zealand's Luo Torua's research has discovered how communities can better participate in tourism management.

Research on tourism in ancient towns in China started relatively late. Hualing Liu ( 2004 ) pointed out the importance of tourism development and protection of ancient towns through the analysis of the tourism value and sustainable development of ancient villages in China; Lin Mao ( 2006 ) on cultural tourism in ancient towns Resource evaluation, discussing the relationship between protection of ancient towns and tourism development; Li Xiaoyan ( 2006 ) studied the sustainable development of tourism in ancient towns in China from the three aspects of economy, society, and environmental protection and proposed solutions to the problems.

Throughout the research in this field, there are rich results and different focuses, but there is a lack of relevant research based on the perspective of cultural and travel integration. Therefore, this article hopes to study the tourism development of Xitang Ancient Town from the perspective of cultural and tourism integration, hoping to promote the development of the tourism industry, the protection and development of the ancient town, and improve the spatial environmental quality of the residents and tourists in the ancient town. It also hopes to be a reference for other ancient towns. effect.

### **3.Problems in the protection and development of Xitang ancient town**

#### **3.1 The conflict between tourism development and heritage protection**

In the initial stage of tourism development, it is feasible to promote heritage protection through tourism development. However, as the development of the tourism industry deepens, the contradiction between tourism development and heritage protection becomes more and more obvious. The utilitarian nature of tourism culture and the culture of heritage protection Features conflict. For tourism consumers, the spiritual significance of many cultural heritage symbols is only tourism consumption goods. In order to attract more tourists to travel destinations, tourist destinations package these cultural heritages to stimulate consumption and obtain more for the purpose of profit and entertainment. More profit. The implementation of some protection measures is more for tourism developers to improve the tourism market competitiveness of the ancient town. This has led to excessive commercialization, utilitarianism and loss of simplicity in the ancient town<sup>[2]</sup>.

#### **3.2 The life of local residents conflicts with tourism activities**

The tourism development of Xitang Ancient Town is carried out in a way that communities and scenic spots coexist. The first is the community, and the second is the tourist attraction, which is known as the "Living Thousand Year Old Town". With the in-depth development of tourism and the development of tourist attractions, the residents of Xitang Town face unfamiliar tourists all the time, which brings great inconvenience to the lives of the original residents. During the peak period of tourism, a large number of tourists poured into the ancient town. In order to develop tourism, many public spaces in the ancient town were requisitioned as public green space and land for public facilities, and the living space of residents was lost.

#### **3.3 Poor business environment**

The impact of tourism has greatly stimulated the original commerce of the ancient town, and the commercial activities in Xitang have also undergone great changes. Many shops have undergone commercial transformation, and the original small building spaces have been expanded and merged, and the decoration has lost the characteristics of the ancient town. In the course of competition, developers rely too much on the location conditions of stores, and the phenomenon of product homogeneity is also It is very serious. The ancient town lacks features. The increase in restaurants, bars, tourist souvenirs and other shops is similar to other tourist products. The staff turnover in Xitang Ancient Town is large. Operators and customers do not know each other, and Guzhen has a low revisit rate and few frequent customers. Many merchants are only keen on doing one-time business. Customers generally feel distrustful of

product quality and attitude towards customers. The overall business atmosphere is not Well, it affects the experience of tourists<sup>[3]</sup>.

### **3.4 Lack of cultural space**

Xitang Ancient Town is one of the birthplaces of Wuyue Culture and has a long history. It was listed as one of the first batch of historical and cultural towns in the country in 2003. Many scholars in the town are active here, and religious and folk cultural activities are rich and colorful. Xitang Ancient Town has been since 1996 Since the development of the tourism industry in 2015, it has maintained the development direction of " protection first, development second " ,and became a 5A tourist area in 2017 . Its development pays more attention to the protection of the architecture and style of the water town. However, due to the lack of protection of the Xitang culture itself.Many public spaces in the ancient town are regarded as transportation and rest spaces for tourists, and various tourist facilities have been added for the convenience of tourists. As a commercial space to increase income, the entire ancient town has been over-commercialized, so there is less and less space as a medium for spreading ancient town culture. Only a small space at a given time can be used to spread culture.

## **4. Strategies for the protection and development of Xitang Ancient Town**

### **4.1 Strengthen the protection and management of ancient towns**

#### **4.1.1 Strengthen the protection and management of ancient town culture**

Culture is the soul of tourism in the ancient town of Xitang. Only by continuously protecting the culture of the ancient town can the long-term development of tourism in the ancient town of Xitang be realized. The development of the ancient town of Xitang must " protect the ancient town and develop new towns . " It is necessary to strengthen planning and use it as the general program for the protection of cultural development, protect its originality, integrity, authenticity and diversity in accordance with the requirements of cultural heritage, have a clear spatial structure, and actively introduce the guidance and participation of experts and scholars.

#### **4.1.2 Strengthen environmental protection and management of ancient towns**

Environmental quality is the soul of scenic spots. Through various propaganda media, regular announcements on environmental protection are issued to families, businesses and institutions, so that the people are widely familiar with the important value and rich resources of Xitang Ancient Town.The environmental management of ancient towns is mainly reflected in landscape renovation and environmental sanitation management. Secondly, in accordance with the requirements of 4A tourist attractions, timely repair and update various public facilities, and improve the beautification projects and traffic management of scenic spots<sup>[4]</sup>.

#### **4.1.3 Strengthen the comprehensive management of the tourism market**

Excessive commercialization is a common problem in most ancient towns. The focus of tourism market management is to control the overall number, industry and price of the tourism market. First, we must strengthen the management of unlicensed licenses, and second, we must standardize the management of commercial forms and market prices to avoid vicious competition. In addition, establish county-level civilized institutions, municipal-level civilized demonstration units, and provincial youth civilized activities to avoid major tourism quality complaints and form a good tourism order.

### **4.2 Actively cultivate the core attraction of the ancient town**

#### **4.2.1 Actively develop experiential tourism products**

Xitang is famous Yangtze River Delta " live in the Millennium town " .to save the lives of the original flavor, which is the core value of the ancient town of Xitang, Xitang Town Tourism purpose is to experience town life. Therefore, the focus of deepening the development of tourism products is to develop experiential tourism products. There are many special cultures in the ancient town of Xitang, such as the Wine Culture Exhibition Hall and the Button Museum. However, the essence of this culture is not fully displayed in front of tourists, and we cannot understand the essence of

this folk culture. Therefore, taking advantage of the local cultural characteristics of Xitang and developing experiential tourism can increase tourist interest and extend the travel time<sup>[5]</sup>.

#### 4.2.2 Enrich tourist products in scenic spots

The ancient town of Xitang has the most complete group of ancient buildings, with a long history and rich cultural heritage, as well as many related historical relics and legends. Such as the old and new "Ten Views of Pingchuan". There are currently 11 tourist attractions developed. But most of the "Ten Scenic Spots of Pingchuan" have not been developed. Therefore, we can speed up the development of these tourist attractions and scientifically design tourist routes. Not only can it enrich tourism products, but it can also increase the time of tourists and accelerate the transformation of Xitang Ancient Town into leisure tourism.

#### 4.2.3 Make intangible cultural tourism products

The ancient town of Xitang has profound historical and cultural heritage and rich intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, we can make full use of this intangible culture to reflect the humanistic characteristics of Xitang. Tian Ge is a song that farmers sing when they are working in the fields. It is a unique intangible cultural heritage of the local area, and its popularity is not very high. It can be added to the activities of singing field songs in the ancient town. When tourists are walking on the street or visiting Qingzhou Mountain, they can hear the heartbeat singing, reflecting the unique beauty of the local area; it can also expand the folk cultural celebration activities; In addition, Xitang can also display the traditional customs, production techniques and other traditional characteristics of local residents, continuously increase the proportion of intangible cultural tourism products in tourism, and extend the time of tourists in the ancient town<sup>[6]</sup>.

### 4.3 Improve residents' ability to participate in tourism

At present, the aging phenomenon of ancient towns is relatively prominent, the overall cultural level is low. Community residents only have the enthusiasm to participate in tourism, but lack the ability to participate in tourism, and cannot achieve the cultural connotation of protecting tourism resources. And the purpose of unique charm. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen residents' cultural literacy and improve their ability to participate in tourism services. Only in this way can we provide tourists with high-quality tourism products and maintain the charm of ancient town culture. On the one hand, through government education, improve community residents' awareness of tourism and environment, and stimulate their desire and enthusiasm for participating in tourism services; on the other hand, strengthen tourism reception and service skills training, distribute brochures, and organize seminars. Providing community residents with existing tourism activities can explain tourism planning and management concepts, improve community residents' awareness, and actively adapt to the development of Xitang's tourism industry. Only high-quality tourism services and coordinated host-guest relationship can reflect the characteristics of the region's products<sup>[7]</sup>.

### 4.4 Expand the tourism market

Xitang Ancient Town has problems such as the concentration of tourism space and the concentration of target markets. If the space is too concentrated, it can be developed through "unpopular scenic spots", fully accept the opinions and suggestions of tourists to adjust, strengthen external publicity, adopt effective marketing methods, and enhance Tourist attraction can alleviate the imbalance of passenger flow. In addition, Xitang tourism real estate development plan can also be implemented. Through strict planning and reasonable structure, Xitang real estate industry can be developed to achieve a new situation of complementary tourism output and comprehensively expand the tourism industry. Too much focus on the target market, it is necessary to expand investment, strengthen advertising, and comprehensively convey all kinds of information about Xitang tourism in order to gain recognition from domestic and foreign tourists.

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