

The Status Quo and Problems of Red Cultural Sites in the New Era and Their Exploration Paths: Taking the Luxi Region as an Example

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Abstract: Red cultural site is the carrier of red culture, containing profound revolutionary history and value of the times, we should deeply excavate the intrinsic potential of red cultural sites, pay attention to the ontological protection of red cultural sites, develop and improve the red cultural innovation projects, and strengthen the red culture itself and supporting the construction. This paper takes the old revolutionary area of Luxi as an example, conducts field investigation and visits based on the local county records and party history materials, and investigates a total of five red cultural sites and memorial halls in Luxi, focusing on the actual achievements and problems exposed in the protection and development of the current red cultural sites, to provide references and thinking for the protection, development, and innovative utilization of red cultural sites in the new era of our country.

Keywords: Red cultural sites; Memorial halls; Current situation and problems; Protection and development

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1. Introduction

Red culture is a rich treasure trove, worthy of our sustained, in-depth excavation and exploration. Red cultural sites not only help us explore and study the development and evolution of local party organizations and provide key content for the ins and outs of major historical events, but they can also play a role in patriotic education and gather the strength of the whole society as the great unifying force of the Chinese nation. A large number of red cultural sites exist in vast areas of China, assuming the function and responsibility of passing on the red spirit and promoting the red story. These rich red resources should be used as vivid teaching materials for thematic education, so that the primordial heart can be passed on from one fire to the next, and we can strive to realize the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation ^[1].

2. Introduction of red cultural sites in Luxi region

The germ of communism appeared relatively early in Shandong, and the Party organization in Shandong

had an important position during the New Democratic Revolution. Under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee, the construction of the Party organization in Shandong, especially in the western part of Shandong, has withstood the test of practice and played a significant role in the subsequent wars of resistance against Japanese aggression and liberation. In this process, the Party organization is worthwhile in perfecting the grassroots organizations, improving the way of leadership, engaging in armed struggle, selecting talents, organizing and mobilizing the masses, dealing with the relationship between the armed forces, the regime, and the mass organizations, etc., and continuously developing and expanding. All these aspects are worthy of our study and reflection and are of great significance for the improvement and development of the party organization today.

We shift our attention to those red cultural sites distributed in poor villages and remote mountainous areas, these sites and memorials are small in volume and content, located in economically underdeveloped and geographically remote areas, so there are longstanding problems. In this social survey, a total of five red cultural sites and memorials located in the west of Shandong Province were visited.

The selection of these red cultural sites and memorials is of extraordinary significance. The western part of the country belongs to the old revolutionary areas, among which Xinxian and Yanggu are closely related to the Communist Party of China in all periods of its birth, development, and growth.

3. Status and problems of red cultural sites

They not only record people's historical memories but also arouse people's awareness of the protection, preservation, and research of history and culture, becoming a material carrier of memory awakening and an important basis for cultural inheritance^[2]. Since the new era, many red cultural sites in remote locations with low visibility have also received attention, with the rise of memorial halls and funding for supporting facilities making them an important carrier for passing on the red gene and telling the red story.

3.1. Inadequate support for red cultural sites

According to the survey, these memorial halls have been assuming the function of organizing large-scale holiday commemorative activities by authorities in recent years, and at the same time, they have also become the preferred places for primary and secondary school students to receive patriotism education during spring tours and extracurricular activities.

However, it is less crowded for the rest of the time, and there are a number of factors involved. First of all, there is the transportation problem. The Jiu Du Yang Branch of the CPC is far away from the county town, and it takes 40 minutes to travel by car. Not coincidentally, the Su Village Blockade Memorial Hall is still more than two hours away from the nearest county town by public transportation. South of it is the former site of the Jiluyu District Committee, where there is not even a direct bus. The remote location and the long travel distance discourage people from visiting the sites.

Additionally, the publicity efforts and dissemination carriers are insufficient. The influence of cultural dissemination and research on red cultural sites and memorials is poor. The publicity about the red revolutionary sites investigated by the author can only be found on the Internet in a few words. The relevant publicity also failed to fully utilize the new media on the Internet, and the form of publicity is relatively single, limited to traditional road signs, slogans, and so on. It can be seen that the publicity of red revolutionary sites and revolutionary spirit needs to be strengthened.

Furthermore, the difficulty in obtaining relevant economic benefits caused by insufficient publicity is also an important issue. Relevant units should rely on history and heritage sites, fully explore red cultural resources,

and conduct market-oriented operations around the theme of patriotic education. Building up a symbiotic pattern of red cultural tourism in various forms has become the basic logic that should be followed in the construction of red sites and beautiful villages. If they rely only on state financial allocations and do not think about how to create economic benefits themselves, they will make the people concerned have no incentive to expand the influence of the red sites, and they will easily become a gathering place for lazy people.

The nature of the red cultural sites and memorials themselves determines their public welfare and free nature, and it is difficult to obtain economic benefits by selling tickets, and the economic attributes of the red culture of the red cultural sites and memorials currently surveyed have not yet effectively created their due value. The symbiotic development of red culture and tourism objectively requires the creation of value based on red resources, synergistic development of related culture and tourism industries as the core, technical information as the medium, and product services as the support, relying on the economic carrying function of the tourism industry^[3].

3.2. Inadequate construction of red cultural sites and memorials themselves

In the survey, it was noticed that these red cultural sites and memorial halls have only 1–2 staff members at normal times, and it was discovered that the docents would not be in the memorial halls at normal times, and the special docents would be booked in advance only when larger activities were held.

As an educational base, although many schools and units regularly organize visits to study, the willingness of individuals to revisit the red memorials is low. Most of the red memorial halls are not perfect at the level of construction and supporting facilities, and they have less content to display. In the investigated red cultural sites and memorial halls, basically only 1–2 floors can be visited, such as Jiu Du Yang Branch Memorial Hall has only two floors, each floor is not large, and the second floor in addition to commemorating the martyrs of the British directory, is the development of the party after the 18th National Congress, and the Memorial Hall itself has little to do. Although the Su Village Battle Resistance Memorial Hall occupies a large area, the main body of the Memorial Hall has only one floor, which is small in scale, and the rest of the area is occupied by the monument, the martyrs' graves, and the green open space. In addition, the museum has a single type of souvenir or no souvenir, and relatively few impressive scenes and interactive programs, all of which make it difficult for tourists to get a sense of satisfaction and experience from it, thus affecting the willingness to visit again.

3.3. Problems of homogenization

Comparing the construction of red cultural sites and memorial halls across the country, the current homogeneity problem of red cultural sites and memorial halls in the western region is more serious. The design style, decoration, and display content of the memorial halls are extremely similar, there is a feeling of “visiting one is visiting all.” The reason is that the style of the memorial hall is fixed, templated, and lacks innovation. Naturally, it is difficult to attract more tourists.

The small and medium-sized red memorial halls surveyed utilize the forms of picture display, sculpture exhibition, and cultural relics display, among which the picture exhibition of the Party history events in Xin County visited has only the pictures simply hanging on the wall. The uniformity of the form hides the complexity and variety of the content, which easily causes aesthetic fatigue. Through tours, tourists can only experience historical stories and political discourses that are highly repeated in textbooks and classrooms. It is difficult to have a deep memory of the displayed content. Most tours are reduced to “going through the motions” and “taking a look,” not to mention fundamentally getting the baptism of the soul and sublimation of the spirit.

4. Exploring paths for the protection and development of red cultural sites

Whether it is Kengxin Yang who called upon the villagers to unite and fight the armed uprising in Shandong, or Jianmin Zhao who repeatedly sought the Party Central Committee to rebuild the provincial party organization under extremely adverse circumstances, or the thousands of revolutionary martyrs who sacrificed their lives on the Chinese soil and gave their lives for the new China, all of them deserve to be remembered and propagated forever by our descendants. Therefore, we must pay more attention to the construction of red cultural sites and memorial halls to attract more visitors to learn about the history of the Party and the new China, which is a strong impetus for us to continue to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

4.1. Focusing on the ontological protection of red cultural sites

Red cultural sites and memorials should be scientifically planned and protection should be strengthened. Among the red cultural sites visited, the old site of the Jiluyu District Committee is relatively well-protected, and many of the old features of the original District Committee can still be seen, which can give visitors a great sense of immersion. The main hall of Su Village Blockade Memorial Hall is currently under repair, covering a larger area of the tomb of the martyrs, the monument is also relatively well-preserved, but the large memorial hall and the tomb of the martyrs only have a security guard, and the shade of the path leading to the tomb of the martyrs has been knotted into a spider's web, it can be seen that the usual protection of the red cultural site is not perfect.

Therefore, it is necessary to actively strive for the protection of red cultural sites and memorials by the relevant government departments, and constantly improve the Party history education base upgrading project. It is not only necessary to increase capital investment, but also to improve the management system. Red cultural sites and memorial halls have gradually become the focus of showing the cultural level of cities and counties, and red cultural sites and memorial halls located in remote locations should not be neglected. We should promote the inclusion of Party history education bases with a certain degree of influence into provincial and national cultural protection units in order to obtain financial support and ensure that the funds are put into practice, which is more conducive to the protection and utilization of relics.

4.2. Implementation of the red culture innovation and creativity project

In the past, patriotism and ideological and political education took a single form, and the content was rather boring. In order to give full play to the propaganda and educational functions of red culture, it is necessary to innovate forms and methods and to present them in a way that is pleasing to the people, especially the youth groups.

First of all, new media provide a broad plastic space for promoting red revolutionary culture and patriotism. It is necessary to consciously utilize the new media to obtain rich and interesting information, expand the contents of red cultural sites and memorial halls, and continuously improve the popularity and dissemination of red cultural sites and memorial halls.

Secondly, with the help of Internet communication, we need to expand the influence of red cultural sites and memorial halls. With the help of Weibo, Douyin, and WeChat, official accounts have been opened and online information platforms have been developed so that tourists can directly access the basic information and geographical location of red cultural sites and memorial halls.

Then, products are created according to the specific contents of red cultural sites and memorial halls, and cultural and creative products and viewing contents inside and outside the venues are constantly enriched. The relevant departments can develop all kinds of red cultural derivative products with obvious characteristics, such as physical commemorative dolls, story books, red merchandise, and even red cultural mobile games. At the

same time, a series of interactive projects can be added to the venue, such as a virtual reality experience, etc., with the help of scientific and technological power to integrate red culture into the tour process, which will leave a deep memory in the tourists as well as get a certain amount of economic benefits.

4.3. Strengthening red cultural sites

We must pay attention to the in-depth excavation and communication of red cultural content, update technical means, and enrich story content. Only by filling in the details and telling good stories with our hearts can we truly attract more tourists and let more people get spiritual inspiration and patriotic education. “All creative techniques and means are for the service of content should correctly utilize new technology and means to stimulate creative inspiration, enrich cultural connotation, and express thoughts and emotions, so as to make literary and artistic creation present a new realm with more connotation and potential”^[4].

In addition, the efforts to build a team of red revolutionary culture interpreters also need to be improved. Some interpreters can only retell the red story but lack interest and love for it, and they have insufficient knowledge of the cultural connotations behind the story, leading to the expression of mechanical stereotypes. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the professional training of the lecturers and form a group of politically competent, professionally skilled red cultural and tourism team who have a strong red spirit but are also willing to popularize the propaganda, to lay solid human resources guarantee for the development of red tourism and cultural construction^[5,6].

4.4. Eliminating the effects of homogenization and formalization issues

Behind the problem of homogenization of memorial halls is the formality and superficiality of the construction of red cultural sites. Patriotic education should not be superficial, and the construction of red cultural sites should not be just a face-saving project. The new era must focus on the construction of red cultural sites, but also to tell the heroic and exemplary deeds and to realize red education for the people. Therefore, we must pay attention to the elimination of homogenization and formalization, and strive to realize the embodiment of the characteristics of the red cultural sites and memorial halls themselves, which should be reflected in the venue’s decorative design and explanation of the flow of the arrangement of the visit, as well as in the uniqueness of the story of the martyrs^[7,8].

It is necessary to continuously improve the depth and breadth of research on Party history, to keep digging for more content and adding more details based on existing information, and to tell the story of Party history and China well. Iron still needs its own hardness, only by mapping out the story it represents can we fully develop and utilize the red culture^[9].

5. Conclusion

Red cultural sites are important carriers of red culture and spirit, and we must insist on their development and management, protection and planning, and innovation and inheritance. Red culture is accumulated and created by our modern generation’s ancestors with their hard work and blood and tears in the wind and rain. This culture contains the spiritual core that is universally recognized and embodies the great indomitable spirit of the Chinese nation including hard work, bravery, and willingness to sacrifice. These excellent cultures have played an important role in the survival, development, and prosperity of our country, and their rich connotations are highly compatible with the psychological and emotional structure of the Chinese people^[10,11].

Protection and development of red cultural sites, especially in remote areas of the red cultural sites, the inheritance, development, and innovation of red culture have great practical significance and application value.

It is conducive to further exploring the rich history of the Party in the western region, inheriting the regional red gene, inheriting and constructing the regional “red story” in the “Qingping Spark, Red Feelings,” and creating a red story in the “red hotspot” areas of the western region; it is conducive to the party facing the complex governing environment in the new era, enhancing the party’s long-term governing ability, advanced nature, and purity, promoting the party’s politics, ideology, organization, style, discipline, and system construction, and promoting the party’s always being the people’s heartfelt support and the courage to self-revolution, the Marxist ruling party that has withstood the test of various storms. To learn from history and educate people, the protection and development of red cultural sites and the promotion of the great red spirit can inspire the majority of party members and the people to take the initiative to learn from our forefathers, dare to take responsibility for the role of the courage to work for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation to move forward ^[12,13].

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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