

ICOA623: CONFLICT AND RECONCILIATION IN TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENT CONSERVATION- A CASE STUDY OF CHYONGLIN VILLAGE OF KINMEN, TAIWAN

Subtheme 02: The Role of Cultural Heritage in Building Peace and Reconciliation

Session 1: Heritage as Peace Builder, Tying and Benefitting Community

Location: Silver Oak Hall 1, India Habitat Centre

Time: December 13, 2017, 11:45 – 12:00

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Abstract: Kinmen, formerly known as Quemoy, has been known for the Quemoy Crisis following the Chinese civil war in 1949. The four long decades of military control unintentionally left the islands with a large number of traditional settlements. Kinmen National Park was founded in 1995 to protect and control the development of the villages based on zoning. Since 1999, an incentive of up to 50% of the expenses has been allocated to buildings restoration. With the scheme, many residential houses and guest houses have been conserved and reused in the past two decades. The style of the settlements has been successfully maintained and Kinmen was thus selected as one of Taiwan's eighteen potential sites for World Heritage nomination in 2010.

However, consider Chyonglin village, the most largely conserved settlement. Due to small spaces in the traditional buildings and insufficient living functions in the village, opposition to protection is strongly voiced from the community. Even wish to separate from the National Park area is expressed. One of the causes is that the plan for floor area incentive was developed without considering actual needs of the community. Besides, the younger generation is reluctant to return and live in their native village as the buildings conserved according to strict regulations in the core zone do not meet the requirements for a modern life. Conflicts are thus inevitable due to lacking effective communication between government and community. In 2016, regulations on settlement conservation were amended and more incentive plans were introduced to create new opportunities for settlement conservation.

In this paper, the conflicts arising and the reconciliation reached during the conservation of Chyonglin are studied as an example to explore different perspectives between government and community on heritage conservation and resulting issues. The study may provide crucial reference for prospective heritage conservation practices.

Key words: *peace, identity, disaster, community*

Introduction

Kinmen is a small island south of Fujian Province, China, with an area of only 150.5 km². The island is mostly known for the Quemoy Crisis during the Cold War (Military Affairs Bureau, 2009), preceded by the Chinese Civil war in 1949. At the end of the Crisis, the Communist armed forces were stopped by the Nationalist armed forces from proceeding across the Taiwan Strait and Kinmen became on the front line of the US-led containment of Communism. (Szonyi, 2008). The following forty three years of military rule led to a slow urbanisation process in Kinmen, leaving the island with a cultural heritage of numerous traditional buildings surviving since eighteen and nineteen centuries and western-style houses built in the early twentieth century with funding from overseas remittance.

The Kinmen National Park (KNP), founded in 1995 after the demilitarisation of the island in 1992, is the first national park in Taiwan aimed at conserving military monuments and cultural heritage in addition to natural resources. In order to promote settlement conservation and traditional building restoration in Kinmen, the government has since been providing incentives to encourage residential house and ancestral hall restoration and environmental improvement projects in the KNP. Among the settlements designated by the KNP, Chyonglin is a well preserved single-clan village typical of Kinmen featuring traditional buildings built in the early days.

However, due to limited spaces inside the traditional buildings and lack of facilities in Chyonglin, opposition to protection has been strongly voiced from the community in recent years. Some villagers even express the wish to have Chyonglin excluded from the KNP. The reasons include: the spaces in the traditional buildings are too small to accommodate effective reuse; younger people are reluctant to return and live in the village where facilities for modern living are unavailable; and a gap is formed between the government and the villagers due to the outdated policy and its implementation and the lack of effective communication from the government. In 2016, regulations on settlement conservation were amended and more incentive programs were introduced. In 2017, the KNP reviewed and revised the detailed plan accordingly, opening a new page in settlement conservation. In this paper, the conflicts arising and the reconciliation reached during the conservation of Chyonglin are studied as an example to explore the gap between the government and the public in their perspectives on heritage conservation and resulting issues.

Historical background

Chyonglin, a single-clan village of Tsai family since the thirteenth century, has been growing in importance with a number of its clan members selected through imperial examinations to serve as government officials since Ming dynasty in the fifteenth century. As the population increased and the area expended, the settlement grew into a vast clan system over time (Tsai, 2009: 19-21). A number of "descendent lines" have been formed in the clan with their respective ancestral halls built. As of 1840, there were eight ancestral halls in Chyonglin, representing eight descendent lines of the clan.

In order to promote settlement preservation and put restrictions on modernisation, the KNP was founded in 1995. Chyonglin is one of the main targets of the government's settlement preservation program. The village is known and valued by many for a complete group of traditional houses and

ancestral halls and a well preserved practice of clan rituals that has become rare in Chinese societies. Therefore, in addition to the KNP settlement conservation program, Chyonglin was designated as settlement in 2012 under the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act by Kinmen County Government.

The KNP implements a settlement landscape conservation plan¹. In the General Controlled Zone of KNP Master Plan 1995, each village in the KNP area is divided into three zones depending on the style and the importance of the buildings and the landscape, namely: Historical Zone (Zone 1), Living Zone (Zone 2) and Buffer Zone (Zone 3). Each zone is subject to control measures of different levels. The core area with intensive traditional buildings is designated as Zone 1. To conserve the landscape of Zone 1, changes in the current lot coverage rate, floor space ratio and height are not allowed and new buildings not permitted. The area with certain characteristics and less intensive traditional buildings in a settlement is designated as Zone 2. To conserve the spatial structure and texture in Zone 2, restoration of traditional buildings is encouraged. Finally, the agricultural and forest area surrounding a settlement is designated as Zone 3.



Fig.1– Chyonglin (Kinmen, Taiwan). Qionglin settlement revealed by aerial photography. (Yi-Jen Tseng).

In 1999, the KNP formulated the "Implementation Guidelines for Incentives and Subsidies for Conservation of Style and Appearance of Traditional Buildings"² with the aim to promote community involvement in conserving and preserving traditional buildings by providing subsidies for traditional building conservation projects. An incentive of up to 50% of the expenses may be allocated to a traditional building restoration project. As a result, more than three hundred houses have been restored and reused and the settlement landscapes successfully maintained. In addition, the "Detailed Plan for General Control Zone" was published in 2005 to provide further incentives for traditional building conservation. Having a traditional building restored or leaving a piece of vacant constructional land vacant in Zone 1 and 2 will be rewarded with a transferred development right in Zone 3 on a floor area of

¹Kinmen National Park Plan (Second Overall Review), 2012.

²Implementation Guidelines for Incentives and Subsidies for Conservation of Style and Appearance of Traditional Buildings, amended in 2015.

no more than 180% (Zone 1) and 100% (Zone 2) of the original site area. Therefore, the damaged development right in controlled zones may be compensated and rewarded.

Conflicts and dilemmas in promoting conservation

The floor space incentive and transfer of development right (TDR) program is supposed to be a good tool to implement the policy of conservation promotion in Zone 1 and 2. However, an agreement on transferring the right is hard to reach as, in Kinmen, a piece of land or a building in a village is often owned by multiple members of one family. In addition, most buildings within the conservation zones are located in the core area of a village and transferring the development right to an agricultural or forest land in Zone 3 would mean living away from the community and the facilities. Therefore, the TDR program has not been well received and there are only eight successful applications since the implementation many years ago.

Despite traditional building conservation subsidies, young people are reluctant to return to their native village because of inconvenience. A traditional building in Kinmen is typically made of bricks and stones and small in size. Due to the modest weight bearing capacity of bricks and stones, the interior is usually divided into separate rooms with limited interconnections and rather small doors and windows. Such interior does not correspond to a spacious, luminous and interconnected house commonly preferred today. In addition, air conditioners, toilets, bathrooms and other modern facilities cannot easily fit in and a significant change to the layout and structure is unfeasible due to rules and taboos of a traditional building. On the other hand, as each project is eligible for a subsidy of no more than 2.5 million New Taiwan Dollars and not exceeding 50 percent of the total project expenses, an owner of a large building is less interested in joining the conservation program given the higher proportion to be paid by the owner in a larger project (Tsai, 2011: 164). Unfortunately, a large building, which is not entitled to a reasonably proportionate financial aid, is often a representational building of a village.

Moreover, in order to promote the conservation of settlements, limits are also set by the KNP on the height and scale of a new and renovated building in Zone 2, including a maximum lot coverage of 60%, a maximum floor space ratio of 180%, a maximum height of three floors and a maximum roof height of 10.5 meters. Although the structures, materials, ornamented roof tops, outer walls or floors which recalled traditional architecture rules may be offered a subsidy of up to 800,000 New Taiwan Dollars, the design or appearance is not subject to be reviewed or approval. The incentives are provided in hopes that a traditional form, element or ornamental design will be adopted. In consequence, traditional elements or materials are not used in a holistic way on the new buildings. Besides, it is hard to fulfil the objectives of conserving traditional landscape with the amount of subsidy granted to a project, which usually accounts for no more than 20 percent to the total construction expenses. Furthermore, the controls implemented are often regarded as limitations imposed on the community development, causing disputes between the community and the government.

In order to conserve the landscape of a settlement, a private renovation of construction project in controlled zones is required to obtain an approval from the KNP. However, a lack of trust in the KNP and opposition against settlement conservation arose from the community, while a decrease in funding makes it harder for the government to meet the expectations of the community in public infrastructure and landscape maintenance.

In recent years, the soaring land price and the scarce constructional land available in the settlements attracted a flood of developers to seek and acquire constructional lots; creating such new challenges as traditional buildings are sold and torn down to build new buildings instead of being conserved. The constraints on the residents' right to benefit and the influence from the advocacies of development in the community make it more difficult for KNP to execute the settlement conservation program.



Fig.2– Chyonglin (Kinmen, Taiwan). Restored traditional building. (Yi-Jen Tseng).

Conservation Policy Revision and Prospective

The KNP, founded following the demilitarisation of Kinmen in 1992, has successfully protected local traditional villages from rapid modern development. However, due to lack of experience in settlement conservation in Taiwan at that time, the controls on construction and development were decided without sufficient elaboration. Since then, democracy has taken root in this island and the initial KNP control program has been constantly challenged by the community. Many disputes arose from the wide gap between the original conservation and control plan and the public's expectations. After two decades of implementation and a review on the control regulations, the KNP and the cultural competent authority jointly initiated a revision to the program in order to meet the current needs for development. The public was invited this time through a democratic mechanism to participate in the policy and control plan amendment process, at the end of which a draft amendment aligned with both the current situation and the public's demands was published in 2017³.

Meeting and communicating with the public

In response to the public's complaints on development constraints and strict regulations on traditional building restoration in the settlements, the KNP started a series of forums in the concerned villages for public consultation on a wide range of topics in 2014. The public opinions voiced were to be taken into

³Detailed Plan for General Control Zone of the First Category in the Kinmen National Park (draft amendment in 2017 after the first overall review).

account for the zoning usage control revision. The settlement conservation program, which used to be led by professionals on the top, is now aimed at addressing conservation as a public issue and reaching a consensus by promoting public communication, awareness, engagement and self-recognition. Public opinions are taken seriously by the government to ensure the final solution will respond better to the public and their needs.

Making a conservation program that accommodates local development needs

Under the usage control, Zone 1 and 2 were not able to accommodate population growth and modern living requirements. In response, the KNP adopts an "overall development" approach in the revised control program. Those who have lived in a designated settlement for more than five years will be qualified applicants for a new collective housing project in Zone 3. The residents whose development rights are impacted in a traditional building restoration project may jointly transfer their rights of floor place to a collective project in Zone 3. Collective housing projects are permitted in Zone 3 in the revised program in hopes to reduce the development pressure faced in designed zones due to a shortage in residential space. Nevertheless, the program requires such a project to cover an area of no less than 3,000 square metres to ensure all necessary public facilities may be installed at the site.

Keeping the core plan and major principles of the settlement conservation program

Apart from the overall development approach mentioned, no change was made to the zoning controls applicable in Zone 1 and 2. The overall development planning was introduced to ease the pressure for development by offering TDR as an incentive; encourage the residents to conserve traditional buildings in controlled zones; and reduce the number of new buildings built in Zone 2. The revised program fulfils the actual needs of the community by allowing new buildings in Zone 3 while remaining aligned with the principles of settlement landscape conservation.

Moreover, after the amendment to the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act in 2016, a traditional building in Chyonglin village is entitled to a subsidy of 30 percent of the project expenses offered by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in addition to the restoration subsidy of 50 percent provided by the KNP. In other words, a subsidy of 80 percent of the restoration expenses is offered in Chyonglin⁴. As a result, many villagers started to take action to conserve traditional buildings, which inspired residents of other KNP designated settlements to express their willingness to restore traditional buildings. It is a policy that provides another strong incentive for settlement preservation in Kinmen.

Conclusion

In the beginning, settlement preservation in Kinmen was led by the government. However, the lack of mutual trust and understanding between the public and the government resulted in opposition from stakeholders whose development rights and benefits are affected. The conservation program was not well received by the public until a review of the conservation plan was conducted, diverse public opinions were heard, resident-oriented community development activities were organised, peaceful and positive discussions were convened and a new perspective on the value of the settlements and the traditional buildings was introduced to the public.

⁴Editorial of Kinmen Daily News (March 18, 2017). "New Opportunity for Traditional Settlement Conservation". Kinmen Daily News.

The settlement conservation story in Chyonglin is a journey from conflict to reconciliation. The government is taking an active approach to settlement conservation. A higher subsidy rate is offered now as villagers used to feel their development rights and benefits were affected by control measures. The control measures were modified to meet the living requirements. As a result, many residents who used to be reluctant become motivated to take action on restoration. In this village where a consensus may be reached through a functional clan system, the impacts from conservation controls and damaged development rights were further mitigated by adequate public funding and democratic discussions. In conclusion, a settlement conservation policy will not be acceptable and feasible until the needs of the public are met and the significance of preservation is recognized by the public.



Fig.3– Chyonglin (Kinmen, Taiwan). Forum on settlements conservation. (Yi-Jen Tseng)..

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ICOA623: CONFLITS ET RECONCILIATION AUTOUR DE LA CONSERVATION DANS DES HABITATS TRADITIONNELS: LE CAS DU VILLAGE CHYONGLIN A KINMEN, TAIWAN

Sous-thème 02: Le rôle du patrimoine culturel dans la construction de la paix et de la réconciliation

Session 1: Le Patrimoine En Tant Que Constructeur De Paix, Communautaire De Types Et De Bénéfices

Lieu: Silver Oak Hall 1, India Habitat Centre

Date et heure: 13 Décembre, 2017, 11:45 – 12:00

Auteur: Jen Tseng Yi

Tseng Yi-Jen est docteur en architecture de l'Université nationale Cheng Kung, à Taiwan. Il est actuellement professeur agrégé au département d'architecture de l'Université nationale Quemoy. Ses principaux domaines d'expertise sont l'histoire et la théorie de l'architecture, la conservation et la réutilisation des bâtiments historiques et les essais non destructifs des structures en bois. Il donne des cours dans les domaines de la conservation et de la restauration des bâtiments historiques, de l'histoire de l'architecture moderne et des séminaires sur le patrimoine mondial à l'université.

Résumé: Kinmen, autrefois connu sous le nom Quemoy, s'est fait connaître à cause de la crise que cette cité a connue après la guerre civile chinoise en 1949. Quatre longues décennies de contrôle militaire ont en effet involontairement permis de préserver un grand nombre de villages traditionnels dans les îles. Le Parc national de Kinmen a été créé en 1995 pour protéger et contrôler le développement des villages en se basant sur un zonage. Depuis 1999, une incitation allant jusqu'à 50% des dépenses a été allouée à la restauration de bâtiments. Avec ce système, de nombreuses maisons d'habitation et maisons d'hôtes ont été conservées et réutilisées au cours des deux dernières décennies. Le style colonial a été maintenu avec succès et Kinmen a pu ainsi être sélectionné comme l'un des dix-huit sites potentiels de Taiwan pour une inscription au patrimoine mondial en 2010.

Cependant, examinons de plus près le cas du village de Chyonglin, le mieux conservé. En raison de l'exiguïté des bâtiments traditionnels et des fonctionnalités de vie insuffisantes dans le village, la communauté a commencé à exprimer fortement son opposition à la protection et a même été jusqu'à souhaiter se détacher de la zone du parc national.

L'une des raisons en est que le plan d'incitation a été élaboré sans tenir compte des besoins réels de la communauté. En outre, la jeune génération est réticente à retourner vivre dans son village natal car les bâtiments conservés selon les règles strictes dans le cœur du village ne répondent plus aux exigences de la vie moderne. Les conflits étaient donc inévitables compte tenu du manque de communication efficace entre le gouvernement et les populations. En 2016, les règlements sur la conservation des bâtiments ont été modifiés et davantage de plans d'incitation ont été introduits pour créer de nouvelles possibilités de conservation des établissements.

Dans cet article, les conflits et la réconciliation obtenue dans le cadre de la conservation de Chyonglin sont étudiés comme des exemples permettant d'explorer les différents enjeux et les différentes solutions susceptibles d'améliorer la communication entre un gouvernement et une communauté sur le thème de la conservation du patrimoine. L'étude peut devenir une référence très pertinente sur les pratiques de conservation du patrimoine.

Mots-clés: *paix, identité, catastrophe, communauté*