

Rural Population Participation in Minsu Industry as the Method for Rural Revitalization in China

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Abstract : Because of the long-time dual structure development in urban and rural areas, the rapid urbanization in China devours the rural resources and causes the unbalanced development of cities and the countryside. On one side, the urban sprawl is swallowing the villages in the peripheral area of cities and forms the 'urban village'. On the other side, people from traditional and vernacular villages immigrate to the metropolis that their homeland becomes the 'hollowed village'. In 2005, the national state council noticed the significance of rural development and promoted the 'beautiful countryside' project when Minsu was rising. In the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (2017), president Xi Jinping announces the importance of 'rural revitalization' and states that the relationship between urban and rural areas should be an integrated development model. However, most Minsu projects in China was invested and managed by individual or group investors and focused on the profits but not the vernacular culture and rural development, and enhanced the urban-rural distinction. This paper introduces two Minsu projects in China designed by star-architects and advertised by social network media as case studies through photos and public comments collections. Architects as the servant to the investors, designed fancy houses, brings the urban life mode but expelled the real vernacular lifestyle as a cultural experience in rural areas. Moreover, to advertise the Minsu hotel, the social media propagates a distorted value that 'luxury is good taste' and motivates the vanity of people. Lastly, to maximize the profits, the investors set a high price that caused another unbalanced development in rural area since the price for one night in the Minsu hotel may exceed the monthly income of a local inhabitant. With these material, the author discusses the problems in Chinese Minsu industry and argues that the media, architects and investors play the negative role in the separation between Minsu cultural tourism and rural population. As a result, the author points out the significance of rural population participation that sharing the profits with them if we take Minsu industry as a method for rural revitalization in China.

Keywords : Minsu, vernacular, rural development, rural population participation

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