



The Change and Development of Hakka Culture from a Transportation Perspective

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Abstract

This study explores the change and development of Hakka culture from the perspective of transportation. The study first reviews the origin and formation of Hakka culture. Then, it analyzes transportation as an important driving factor for the change and development of Hakka culture from three aspects: the influence of ancient transportation on Hakka migration, the modern transportation changes and the spread of Hakka culture, and the contemporary transportation development and the innovation of Hakka culture. The development of transportation has shortened the distance between time and space, greatly facilitating the inheritance and dissemination of Hakka culture; the convenience of transportation has accelerated the dissemination of information and strengthened the cultural identity of Hakka people all over the world; and changes in transportation have accelerated the movement of population and facilitated the globalization and dissemination of Hakka culture. While promoting the transmission and dissemination of Hakka culture, transportation also faces challenges such as high costs and uneven development. Therefore, while using transportation development to promote Hakka culture, the protection of Hakka culture needs to be strengthened to ensure that the traditional culture is truly inherited and developed.

Keywords

Hakka culture; Transportation; Cultural change; Cultural development

1. Introduction

Hakka culture has a long history and has experienced significant changes and development under the influence of transportation development. Numerous scholars have conducted in-depth studies on it. Zheng Lixin (2006), Lian Chunzhao (2001), and other scholars have analyzed the historical characteristics and cultural lineage of Hakka culture from different perspectives, such as language and geography. From the perspective of the influence of transportation conditions on Hakka cultural inheritance, Wang Tianpeng (2011) and Fang Guanyin (2013) take Hakka tea pavilions as an entry point to explore the influence of tea pavilions on Hakka culture, Hakka history, and Hakka folklore in ancient transportation; since the modern era, transportation networks, information dissemination, and population mobility have all been important influences on the development of Hakka culture (Lan, D. Q. & You, K. P., 2022; Xie, M. X., 2019).

Transportation is an important driving factor for the change and development of Hakka culture, and the progress of transportation has driven the economic development of Hakka regions and provided a material basis for the inheritance and development of Hakka culture. Meanwhile, in the process of commercialization and urbanization, Hakka culture faces the risk of assimilation and dissolution. Some ancient Hakka villages have been over-developed due to improved transportation, and the originality of traditional culture is threatened. With the rapid development of society,

Hakka culture is also changing in modern society. Therefore, the inheritance, development, and innovation of Hakka culture in contemporary society, as well as the challenges and opportunities it faces, are urgent issues that need to be addressed nowadays. Future research should pay more attention to how to maintain the uniqueness and authenticity of Hakka culture in the wave of transportation development and realize the benign interaction between cultural inheritance and economic development.

This study starts from the unique perspective of transportation, analyzes in depth how it affects Hakka culture, and explores the trajectory of change and future development direction of Hakka culture under the influence of transportation.

2. Origin and Formation of Hakka Culture

Hakka culture, as an inseparable part of Chinese traditional culture, carries the historical memory, cultural genes, and spiritual pursuit of the Hakka people, and its formation is closely connected with the history of ancient migration.

The migration of Hakka people has a decisive influence on the formation of Hakka culture. The Hakka people mainly migrated from the Central Plains to the border area of Fujian, Guangdong, and Gan during the period of war and chaos in the Sixteen Kingdoms of the Eastern Jin Dynasty, and formed a unique Hakka folk lineage through exchanges and fusion with the local indigenous inhabitants (Zheng, L. X., 2006). In the process of migration, the Hakka ancestors carried with them the farming techniques and cultural traditions of the Central Plains, and fused them with the natural environment and indigenous cultures of the South, forming the unique Hakka culture.

The formation of Hakka culture is the result of multi-ethnic cultural fusion. The Hakka culture, which originated from the Central Plains culture, was widely spread to the Gan, Fujian, and Guangdong border areas through wars, population migration, and related cultural systems, and eventually formed the Hakka culture with the Central Plains culture as the main body and Confucianism as the core (Zou, C. S., 2006). During their migration, the Hakka retained the Confucian ethics, clan concepts, and farming practices of the Central Plains, while also absorbing the rice agriculture, mountain lifestyle, and beliefs and customs of the local ethnic groups in the South. This cultural tolerance and innovation have enabled the Hakka culture to maintain its traditions while displaying distinctive regional characteristics.

Language is an important carrier of culture. The Hakka language, which was gradually formed in the process of migration, is an important part of Hakka culture. It retains a lot of vocabulary and grammar of ancient Chinese while incorporating the characteristics of the southern dialects. It has become a bridge connecting the past and present of Hakka culture, the Central Plains, and the South. Some scholars have found that the Hakka dialect shares common words with southern minority languages, such as She, which may be due to historical coexistence and cultural exchanges (Lian, C. Z., 2001). In addition, the Hakka dialect has retained some ancient Chinese pronunciations, such as the pronunciation of the words “according to”, “touch”, and “Shu”, which are also found in other southern dialects, showing These pronunciations are also found in other southern dialects, showing their connection with the indigenous languages of the south (Wen, M. J. & Wen, C. Y., 2010).

3. Transportation and Hakka Culture Inheritance

3.1 The Influence of Ancient Transportation on Hakka Migration

3.1.1 Migration Paths of Hakka Ancestors

In order to find a suitable place to live, the Hakka ancestors often migrated along routes with relatively convenient transportation. The convenience of waterways enabled them to travel downstream to more affluent areas; while the expansion of land routes provided the possibility for them to penetrate deeper into the mountains and open up new homes. Li Min (2018) points out that the Meiguan Ancient Road, which crosses the Dayu Ridge and connects Dayu County in Jiangxi Province with Nanxiong City in Guangdong Province, plays an important role in undertaking the southward migration of ten million migrants from the north because of its well-connected land and water transportation network and excellent natural conditions. Through the Meiguan Ancient Road, the Hakka people were able to cross the Nanling Mountains and enter the Lingnan region relatively smoothly. Convenient transportation conditions and geographic location enabled the Hakka people to reduce road obstacles and risks during their migration.

3.1.2 Cultural Integration and Inheritance in the Migration Process

In the process of migration, the Hakka ancestors communicated and interacted with the residents of different areas

along the way, absorbing local cultural elements, while at the same time holding on to and passing on their own cultural traditions. This cultural integration and inheritance have enriched the connotation of Hakka culture to a certain extent. Tea pavilion is a kind of Hakka people combined with the local tea culture on the way of migration innovation. Tea pavilion developed from the pavilion, its history can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty. Migrating from the Central Plains to Fujian, Guangdong, and Gan, the Hakka people deeply realized the importance of a place to rest their feet during the long journey, so the construction of tea pavilions with the functions of sheltering from the wind and rain and quenching their thirst was undoubtedly of great benefit (Wang, T. P., 2011). In addition, this tea pavilion culture, in turn, led to the Hakka tea pavilion culture of mountain songs, organizational culture, couplets, inscriptions, and architectural culture, making the flower of Hakka culture even more magnificent and prosperous (Wang, T. P., 2011).

3.1.3 The Role of Ancient Transportation on Hakka Economic Exchange

Improvements in transportation allowed agricultural products such as rice, tea, and timber from the Hakka region to be transported and sold outside the region, which promoted the development of the regional economy. Meanwhile, some exquisite Hakka handicrafts such as bamboo weaving, ceramics, and wood carvings, were transported to different regions for display and sale through human backpacking, horse-drawn carriage transportation, or ship shipping. However, due to the difficulties and risks of transportation, the production of handicrafts was usually low and the circulation was slow, which could only satisfy the market demand in a few regions.

Nonetheless, Hakka merchants used transportation to spread the Hakka commercial culture and business philosophy to various regions. The commercial prosperity also provided a material basis for the transmission of Hakka culture, enabling the Hakka to build ancestral halls, temples, and other cultural sites to pass on their family culture and religious beliefs. Taking the “Jieming Post” as an example, as an important transportation post in ancient times, it provided a place for Hakka literati and merchants to rest and communicate with each other during their journeys. Hakka literati communicated with people from all over the world at the post, spreading Hakka poems, songs, and literature, while merchants exchanged business information and ideas, spreading Hakka business culture.

3.2 Modern Transportation Changes and the Spread of Hakka Culture

3.2.1 Expansion of Transportation Networks and Exchange of Hakka Culture

Since modern times, with the construction of modern transportation facilities such as railroads and highways, the transportation network of western Fujian has been expanded unprecedentedly, which has greatly shortened the spatial and temporal distance between western Fujian and the outside world, and also promoted the exchange and integration of Hakka culture with the outside world. For example, the construction of railroads has enabled the Hakka region's characteristic agricultural products to be quickly transported to the national and even international markets; at the same time, it has also attracted a large number of tourists and scholars to explore the Hakka's architecture, food, language, and traditional arts, which has promoted the dissemination and influence of the Hakka culture (Lan, D. Q. & You, K. P., 2002).

3.2.2 Acceleration of Information Dissemination and Enhancement of Hakka Cultural Identity

The convenience of transportation not only promotes the circulation of materials but also accelerates the dissemination of information. In modern times, with the popularization of media such as newspapers, radio, and television, and the rise of the Internet, Hakka culture has been able to spread across geographical boundaries to a wider audience (Xie, M. X., 2019). Hakka folk songs, stories, and history are known to more people through media platforms, and by organizing Hakka Mountain Song Festival and Hakka folklore, sports, and cultural exchanges, Hakka culture attracts more domestic and international attention, as well as enhances the cohesion between Hakka people at home and abroad and Hakka people's sense of cultural identity on a global scale.

3.2.3 Population Mobility and the Globalization of Hakka Cultural Transmission

Modern transportation changes have also accelerated Hakka migration. With the acceleration of economic globalization and urbanization, a large number of young Hakka people went out to work, study, or even settle overseas. They not only brought with them Hakka dialects, customs, and traditional festivals but also facilitated the spread of Hakka culture around the globe. Around the world, the establishment of Hakka communities and the organization of Hakka cultural festivals have become important ways of spreading Hakka culture, and have made Hakka culture an indispensable part of global Chinese culture.

3.3 Contemporary Transportation Development and Innovation of Hakka Culture

3.3.1 Boosting Cultural Exchange and Integration via Transportation Diversification

Modern transportation facilities such as high-speed railroads and highways have shortened the distance in geographic space, making it easier for people to come into contact with the cultures of different regions, including Hakka culture. Hakka cultural tourism in the West Coast, for example, on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to carry out Hakka cultural tourism on the West Coast, the launch of a series of activities such as searching for their roots to find their ancestors, Hakka people in Taiwan can understand the ancestral living areas, habits, and customs, there is an important significance of the Hakka on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to strengthen the Hakka's sense of national identity, not only Hakka people in Taiwan from the cultural, economic, political can find a sense of belonging to the mainland and a sense of national identity, the mainland's Hakka Gan, Fujian and Guangdong, where the Hakka gather, should also deeply realize that the Taiwanese Hakka are their blood brothers of the same ethnic group, thus promoting the early reunification of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait (Zhang, L., 2012).

3.3.2 Promoting the Rise of Cultural Tourism Through Transportation Facilitation

Modern transportation facilities, such as high-speed railroads and highways, have shortened the distance in geographic space, making it easier for people to come into contact with the cultures of different regions, including Hakka culture. For example, at this year's Cultural Tourism Promotion Conference held in Meizhou, five "Spring to Meizhou" boutique tourism routes were launched for the national market. These five routes are a collection of Meizhou's characteristic boutique cultural tourism resources, A-level scenic spots (attractions), and various experience projects to meet the different travel needs of tourists. In addition, Meizhou adheres to the culture to promote tourism, and fully explore the non-heritage resources, the launch of 10 non-heritage theme tourism lines, such as monuments and scenic food tours, beautiful countryside happy tours, Porcelain Hanle ancient rhyme tours, out of the integration of culture and tourism development of a new way. At the same time, Meizhou also through in-depth excavation to promote the influence of Hakka celebrities, Hakka celebrities' former residences (ancestral homes) placed into influential rural tourism scenic spots (Hu, A. H., 2023).

3.3.3 Commercializing Cultural Characteristics Through Technological Digitization

The application of digital technology and Internet platforms makes the dissemination of Hakka culture no longer limited by physical space. As the scholar said, through research and investigation of local folklore brands, classification, staging, and fixed-point study of different types of local folklore cultural resources, integration of fashion elements, the use of scientific and technological means, and the formulation of development planning to promote the integration of the two, the introduction of a series of derivative folklore cultural products can develop new markets, cater to the diversified consumer needs of customers, the formation of a new folklore culture, and the promotion of transformation and upgrading of the people's livelihood and cultural industries. Laying the foundation. For example, utilizing the brand of Gannan navel oranges as a household name, an orange soap specially designed for hotels was created, so that foreign guests can feel the orange town of Ganzhou in their hotels (Xu, L. F., & Liu, M. L., 2023).

4. Opportunities and Challenges of Hakka Culture in Transportation Development

4.1 Digital Transformation and the Rise of Smart Tourism

With the application of modern information technology, the development of transportation also provides a solid foundation for smart tourism. On the one hand, through intelligent transportation systems, real-time updating and pushing of tourism information can be realized to help tourists plan their trips more efficiently; on the other hand, using big data analysis technology, it is possible to accurately predict tourism hotspots and provide tourists with personalized service suggestions. For example, the development of mobile applications specialized in Hakka cultural tourism can not only provide functions such as attraction navigation and voice guides but also combine with virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) technology, allowing tourists to experience the history and charm of Hakka culture in a new way. In addition, the application of an intelligent transportation system can also reduce congestion, improve the management efficiency and service quality of the whole tourist area, so that tourists can get a better tourist experience.

4.2 Balance Between Cultural Preservation and Commercialization

Although digital empowerment brings great opportunities for the Hakka cultural tourism industry to promote the

commercialization of the cultural industry, it also brings the problem of how to find a balance between protecting traditional culture and promoting commercial development. On the one hand, with easier transportation and the expansion of the tourism market, some traditional Hakka villages may be affected by over-commercialization, and their original living customs and architectural features may be altered or even disappear. On the other hand, in order to attract more tourists, entertainment and consumption are sometimes overemphasized at the expense of the in-depth excavation and inheritance of Hakka cultural connotations. Therefore, while using transportation development to promote tourism, it is necessary to strengthen the protection of Hakka culture, such as setting up cultural protection zones, restricting over-commercialization, and carrying out cultural education programs to ensure the inheritance and development of traditional culture.

5. Conclusion

The development of transportation has greatly promoted the inheritance and dissemination of Hakka culture. The construction of modern transportation facilities has shortened the distance between time and space, promoting the exchange and integration of Hakka culture with the outside culture. Convenient transportation has accelerated the dissemination of information and enhanced the cultural identity of Hakka people around the world. Transportation changes have accelerated population mobility and facilitated the globalization of Hakka culture. Modern transportation facilities have shortened geospatial distances and promoted the development of Hakka cultural tourism, but they also face challenges such as high costs and uneven development. Therefore, while using transportation development to promote tourism, the protection of Hakka culture needs to be strengthened to ensure that traditional culture is inherited and developed.

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