

# 芎北水文化的城鄉共好實踐圖像

## The practice of the common good for urban-rural development from the water culture of Xiong-Bai area

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This study aims at the Hakka culture of Shangshan village, Shiashan villiage and Tonghai in Zhubei City. There are two research topics: ‘field study on water facility’ and ‘study on water powered rice mill.’ Based on the research result, the aim of the project is to develop a mechanism of creating the common good between urban and rural areas: ‘the cultural relics exhibition of the water powered rice mill.’

The project director, assistant professor Tien Chien Lee and the research team have spent two years on extensive field studies of the local area and innovative projects. The team met the owner of the water powered rice mill and learned his expectation for activating the place in 2020. They also organized six workshops and invited volunteers to clean up the space, reopening the one-century-old building which has closed for two decades. In 2021, the research team published the initial issue of the local magazine ‘犁頭山水話’ to introduce the water powered rice mill. At the same time, a group of six humanities and social sciences students of National Tsing Hua University held a cultural relics exhibition: ‘Roll It! The Water Powered Rice Mill’ in the September. Following that, they are conducting an activation project for the water powered rice mill as an ‘education museum’ cooperated with the Zhubei City Hall.

Hidden in the 2nd Tonghai street, the water powered mill locates at a peaceful Hakka rural area surrounded by abundant farm fields. The water powered rice mill was established in 1928, the year when the present owner Shusing Zheng who is now in his 93th year was born. Zheng’s father named the place ‘Fusin rice mill’ during the Japanese period. Zheng took it over when he was 14 years old after graduation from school. He expanded the business and once owned three rice mills in the heyday, providing service for Tonghai, Aiko, and Shiashan villiages. At present, Shiangwei Zheng, Zheng’s second son, took it over again when Zheng was aged.

As time passes, the building of the High Speed Railway results in the land expropriation of a large amount of farms. The demand for rice mill finally declined. The water powered rice mill in Tonghai was forced to temporarily closed in 2001 and fully closed in 2007. The structure of the rice mill is built by both woods and bricks with two floors. The Zhengs said the building was designed by a master from Fengyuan in the Japanese period. The rice mill is driven by a tributary of Touqian river. The water power also helped to provide electricity for power generator which made the Zheng’s the first family who enjoyed electricity in the area. According to a local history worker, Chingjie Wu, the rice mill is likely to be the only well reserved water powered rice mill construction.

At the opening ceremony in September 10, a number of influential attendants participated in the event, including representatives of the Zhubei City Hall and the department of cultural affairs, the Qionglin Township mayor Zhenbiao Huang, 6 principals of nearby schools, more

than 10 chairmen of community committee, 8 literati, and a dozen of academics and industry representatives with extraordinary expectation. After the ceremony, professor Lee visited the mayor of Zhubei City, Mingan Ho. With his support, the project of ‘the water powered rice mill education museum’ proposed by the Zhubei city hall is highly expected.

After the ceremony, this project held the first phase of the exhibition in September 11 and 12 which received positive feedback from participants. Out of 21 respondents, as high as 95% of them are willing to share the information about the exhibition and tour to their relatives and friends. Higher than 80% felt ‘great’ for the exhibition tour. 95% answered that the traditional agricultural skills need to be ‘actively promoted’ and ‘learned by their children.’

The exhibition continues from the end of the October to the end of the November with 20 sessions of exhibition and farm tours. These events were attended by Hakka language learning group, the kindergarten and grade 3 and 4 students of Tonghai elementary school, employees of Hsinchu Biomedical Science Park, the play group of the Society of Wilderness, and students and teachers of National Tsing Hua University...etc. The influence of the exhibition continues. The Tonghai area and Hsinchu Biomedical Science Park are separated only by a road. Most of the employees who work in the latter have never been to Tonghai and had a chance to discover the beautiful and abundant natural sight and cultures. The exhibition functions as a bridge between the science park and the area, building a pivotal infrastructure for the common good between urban and rural areas.

In addition to the exhibition and magazine, the project proposes a model for reviving local culture: Cultural Survey→Magazine Report→Thematic Exhibition→Featured Product and Service. In this model, cultural survey aims to sort out local culture property; Magazine is to promote the culture to the public; exhibition is to create personal experience of cultural properties for those who are interested; culturally featured product and service are designed to translate traditional cultural properties into a way of modern lifestyle.



The exhibition of the cultural relics of the water powered rice mill in the project can best exemplify the model for reviving local culture. From the cultural survey to the magazine report and the exhibition, a series of actions have earned the support from the Zubei city hall to reserve and revive the place as an education museum, as a field of off-campus teaching for surrounding schools, and as a place for parents and children to enjoy quality cultural education.

Based on the research result, the team continuously applies ‘Humanity Innovation and Social Practice Project on 2022, titled ‘ The revitalization of the traditional Hakka residences and the rural culture.’ The project target another Hakka historical site, the traditional Hakka Residences. The aim of the project is to explore the possibility of merging a traditional building into modern life.

In the end, the two documentaries of the project are as attached.

The documentary of the a-century-old water powered rice mill in Tonghai

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooPq3wAxx-8>

The short film of the opening ceremony of the Exhibition of the Water Powered RiceMill.’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42yuuC8b2wY>