

ID 1750 | CHARACTERISTIC TOWNS - THREE LEVELS OF LINK AND DIALOGUE BETWEEN EUROPE AND CHINA

Xing Zhen¹; Ying Zhang²

¹Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning and Design Institute, Department 6;

²Shanghai Tongji University Urban Planning and Design Institute
innazhang@126.com ; 495113462@qq.com

ABSTRACT: There are many scenic, distinctive characteristic towns in Europe, such as Cordoba, Cuenca, Portofino, Kema and so on. They are famous tourist attractions, visitors often linger there. China's town plans and constructions often refer to European towns. Recently, China issued "The Notice of Fostering Characteristic Towns", which decided to carry out nationwide characteristic towns' cultivation work, it plans to cultivate about 1000 characteristic towns before 2020, China also identified 127 national characteristic towns for the first batch. This article takes the characteristic towns as the research object, and takes the field research, cases comparison and the policy analysis as the research methods, thinks the characteristic towns forms the link between Europe and China in 3 levels. It referred to Europe towns a lot in China's town plans and constructions, especially in the layout forms and architectural styles. For example, the Shannan town in Hangzhou city determines to build "China's Greenwich Town". These learning, imitation and reference form the first level of the link and dialogue between Europe and China. The Chinese governments support the development of characteristic towns by providing a number of favorable policies, which achieved remarkable results. Policy supporting comes from both local and national governments, such as local governments give Land use indicators and tax reliefs, the national government gives special funds and so on. This paper argues that this approach deserved to be promoted, European countries and local governments can also introduce similar incentive policies to promote the further development of the characteristic towns. This promotion of support policies will form the second level of the link and dialogue between Europe and China. This article prospects that Europe and China will achieve the third level of link and dialogue by promoting enterprise cooperation, such as European enterprises go to China to lead the construction of characteristic towns, Chinese enterprises go to Europe to lead the construction characteristic towns. This may create a win-win situation. These three levels of link and dialogue upgrade gradually and interact with the process, containing good social and economic benefits. They deserve attentions and active treatments.

1 INTRODUCTION

Europe has many scenic, distinctive characteristic towns, such as Spain's Cordoba, Cuenca; Italy's Portofino, Verona; France's Kema, Anec; Switzerlandand's Davos, Interlaken, Vevey; Germany's Heidelberg, Meersburg and so on. These towns have beautiful scenery, deep cultural heritage and featured industry functions. They integrate into the surrounding landscape environment, become famous tourist attractions, visitors often linger there.

The rise of the construction of Chinese characteristic towns began in Zhejiang Province. In April 2015, the Zhejiang Provincial Government promulgated the "Guidance on Accelerating the Planning and Construction of Characteristic Towns". Then, the government introduced the list of the first batch of 37 characteristic towns. The following table is part of the list. In January 2016, the list of the second batch of 42 characteristic towns was introduced.

Town's Name	Featured Industry	City
Shangcheng Yuhuangshannan Town	Fund, Securities	Hangzhou
Jiangan Dinglan Town	IT	Hangzhou
Xihu Yunqi Town	Cloud Computing	Hangzhou
Xihu Longwu Town	Tea	Hangzhou
Yuhang Mengxiang Town	Information Industry	Hangzhou
Yuhang Yishang Town	Arts	Hangzhou
Fuyang Guign Town	IT	Hangzhou
Tonghu Jiankang Town	Health Industry	Hangzhou
Lian Yunzhizao Town	Cloud Manufacturing	Hangzhou
Jiangbei Dongli Town	Equipment Manufacturing	Ningbo
Meishan Haiyangjirong Town	Finance	Ningbo
Fenghua Binhaiyangsheng Town	Health Industry	Ningbo
Onhai Shishangzhizhao Town	Intelligent Manufacturing	Wenzhou
Cangnan Taishang Town	Trade	Wenzhou
Huzhou Sichou Town	Silk	Huzhou
Nanxun Sanlianhubi Town	Writing Brush	Huzhou
Deqing Dilixingxi Town	Geo Information	Huzhou
Yuecheng Huangjin Town	Wine	Shaoxing
Zhuji Wayi Town	Socks	Shaoxing
Wuyi Wenquan Town	Spa Resort	Jinhua

Table1 - Part of the List of the First Batch Characteristic Towns in Zhejiang Province



Figure 1 - Shangcheng Yuhuangshannan Town and Yuhang Mengxiang Town

The Zhejiang Province's characteristics towns construction achieved good results. It promoted the local economic transformation and upgrading of Zhejiang Province's new urbanization progress. It is known as "Zhejiang experience". After that, other provinces began to imitate the practice of Zhejiang Province. It was also led to the national government's attention.

July 2016, the Chinese Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Development and Reform Commission and the Ministry of Finance jointly issued "The Notice Of Carrying Out The Training Of The Characteristics Towns". It decided to carry out the cultivation of national characteristics towns leading the nationwide construction of small towns. It planned to cultivate about 1000 characteristics towns in 2020. And in October 2016, It identified 127 towns for the first batch of Chinese Characteristic Towns. These 127 towns can be called national level, which have higher rank than the provincial level characteristics towns. Now the central and local governments are keen to promote the planning and construction of the characteristic towns which becomes one of their key works. It becomes a national boom, a new initiative to the economic transformation and upgrading. Cultivating the characteristic towns seizes the opportunity of the times. It becomes an important innovation to implement the supply side structural reform. It is a exploration of new type of urbanization development model.

The development of characteristic towns is of great significance in promoting the coordinated development of urban and rural areas, promoting the simultaneous development of new industrialization and agricultural modernization, and enhancing the potential for regional development. According to incomplete statistics, the declaration and planning of the characteristic towns all over China has already more than 1000.

2 THREE LEVELS OF LINK AND DIALOGUE

2.1 THE FIRST LEVEL OF LINK AND DIALOGUE

Some of the Chinese characteristic towns referred to European (also the American) towns in the planning and construction, mainly including the following two aspects. First, the reference and imitation are in the layout form, architectural style and so on. For example, the taiwushi town in Shanghai Songjiang District copied the British river town style and residential characteristics, reflecting the modern, international, ecological and tourism culture. This type of imitation and reference were common in the past years, It was blamed a lot. Opponents argue that China should build a town with Chinese characteristics rather than a European style. In recent years, this "direct copy" type of imitation became rare.

I believe that Chinese characteristic towns should not directly copy the European town's architectural style, which should be based on China's own style. Sometimes morden style is also suitable for same new characteristic towns.



Figure 2 - Taiwushi Town in Shanghai, Which has Both Supporters and Opponents



Figure 3 – Morden Style and Chinese Traditional Style are Generally Accepted

I believe that high quality of European rural environment is highly worth studying by China. It should learn from the European towns' overall environment of harmony, natural, beautiful, clean and tidy and other aspects, to enhance the overall quality and style of China's rural environment. In recent years, China are undertaking "the Beautiful Countryside Construction", which should be integrated with the construction of characteristic towns to improve the rural environment, to enhance the rural livability and ecology.



Figure 3 – High Quality of European Rural Environment is highly worth studying

Second, the reference and imitation are in the industry characteristics, for example, Jilin Province said: "Using the snow and ice advantages to build China's Davos town." Hangzhou Yuhuang Shannan town is committed to build China's Greenwich Town. Huangshan City has formed friendly cities with Interlaken, Taipinghu town in Huangshan City is committed to build China's Interlaken, a sports leisure town.

Chinese Characteristic Town's Name	Objectives
Shangcheng Yuhuangshannan Town, Zhejiang	China's Greenwich
Fuyang Guigu Town, Zhejiang	China's Silicon Valley
Jilin Province	China's Davos
Taipinghu Town, Anhui	China's Interlaken
Yuhang Yichuang Town, Zhejiang	China's Milan
Yuhang Mengxiang Town, Zhejiang	China's Silicon Valley

Table2 – Some Chinese Characteristic Towns' Objective Towns

China's characteristic towns imitate and learn from the European (American) towns from the architectural style, spatial layout, the overall environment and industry cultivation which formed the link of the first level.

2.2 THE SECOND LEVEL OF LINK AND DIALOGUE

Chinese governments had provided a number of favorable policies in the support for the characteristic towns, which had achieved remarkable results. Policy support came from both the local governments and the national government, such as the local governments giving land indicators and tax relief, the national government providing special fund support.

Specific preferential policies generally lie in the following aspects: tax policy, land policy, income policy, financial support policies, etc. These preferential policies are not only related to the main project development enterprises, settled enterprises can also be related. For example, in Sichuan Province, the provincial finance provided a special fund of 1.5 billion yuan in 3 years, integrated special funds nearly 500 million yuan, through the "Reward Instead of Subsidy" competition mechanism to support the characteristic towns' infrastructure construction. In Shandong Province, it put forward no less than 5000 acres of new construction land plan indicators each year for the 100 characteristic towns, which are separately and directly issued.

This paper argues that this practice is worthy of promotion, European national and local governments can introduce similar incentive policies to promote the further development of European towns, which will create the second-level link and dialogue.

2.3 THE THIRD LEVEL OF LINK AND DIALOGUE

China's local debt refers to the special infrastructure enterprises set up by the local government borrows debt to provide basic, public services. The local government provides security to the debt. Over the years, local debt is an important source of funds for urban development in China. Because of the risk that the local government can not pay, the Chinese central government has imposed strict restrictions on the local government's borrowing, and it is very difficult for the local governments to carry out the construction of the characteristic towns through bank loans. At present, many local governments introduce private capital and private enterprises, the use of Public-Private-Partnership model (hereinafter referred to as "PPP model") to build characteristic towns.

PPP model refers to based on the concession agreement the government and private organizations formed a partnership in order to cooperate in the construction of urban infrastructure projects, provide some kind of public goods and services. They clear the rights and obligations through signing a contract which ensure the smooth completion of cooperation. Finally, the both sides can achieve more favorable results than the individual action which means a win-win ending.

This model solves the funds bottleneck of the construction of the characteristic towns, which plays a positive role in the capital market. It revitalizes the asset resources and provides diversified financial support for the construction of characteristic towns.

It can be expected: through the construction of characteristic towns Europe and China can form the third level of the link and dialogue, which lies in the enterprise-level win-win possibility, such as the European enterprises go to China to lead the construction or operation of the characteristic towns, Chinese enterprises go to Europe to lead the construction or operation of the characteristic towns too.

3 TO DEVELOP CHINA'S CHARACTERISTIC TOWNS SHOULD AVOID THESE TWO PROBLEMS

3.1 AVOIDING EXCESSIVE AND BLINDNESS IN CHARACTERISTIC TOWNS' DEVELOPMENT

With the support of the national government for the characteristics towns, local governments at all levels are keen to launch the local characteristic towns, showing the phenomenon of the emergence of the characteristic towns everywhere in China. Emerging some problems such as "performance project" oriented development, creating things out of nothing, ugly copycat, misconfiging the resources, etc. The construction of the characteristic towns has also become a new "nuggets" to a number of housing prices. Some characteristic towns's real estate percentage is far more than other industries, which formed new house reserve. It exacerbated the property excess and did not match the national government's requirements of property de-stocking.

Constructing characteristic towns are different from the construction of large quantities of real estate projects. In the construction process of the characteristic towns, it needs not only integrate the the needs and wisdom of governments, enterprises, financial institutions, social organizations, but also integrate local culture and the future residents' and visitors' needs in the beginning. While around the same time of encouraging the construction of characteristic towns, we must pay more attention to science, sustainable development. Excessive and blindness in characteristic towns' development should be strictly prohibited. It should also avoid constructing different towns with the same outlooking.

Governments should introduce relevant policies to promote and standardize the healthy development of characteristic towns. It should be strictly prohibited of the whole town development once for all. Reserving land more than proper scale in the name of characteristic towns should also be prohibited. It should be forbidden to engage in large-scale commercial housing development by taking the opportunity of the construction Characteristic towns' industry is the key to its success, the industry should avoid vague and having no basis. The main industries should be chosen accurately and concentrated. Only in this way, it can stand and grow big. In addition to strengthening and improving their own "vertical" industrial chain, It should complete the "horizontal" gathering as well, such as the gathering of the fund, talent, technology, information and other elements. It should promote economic factors and cultural elements' highly integration and make the industrial chain and innovation chain in one, which finally will build a good, sustainable industrial ecosphere.

3.2 AVOIDING APPLYING EXCESSIVE EMPHASIS ON TOURISM

At present, most of the China's characteristics towns planned the development of tourism as the leading direction. They took the international well-known towns as development goals. But the vast majority do not have the conditions to become a world-class tourist town.

Accurate positioning is an important aspect of the development of the characteristic towns, through combine their own characteristics, identify the industry positioning, scientific planning, mining industry features, continuing humanities and protecting ecological, the formation of "production, town, people, culture" four integrated organics. It should find the most important, dominant, potential industry as the main direction, and make a difference positioning with other characteristics towns. Most of the China's characteristics towns should not put too much emphasis on tourism. The first job for them to do is to set up their own characteristics, make livable and workable, provide the good basic services.

4 PROSPECTS

The characteristic towns concerned about the livable, workable, travelable, which integrate "innovation, coordination, green, open, sharing" five main ideas, highlight the integration features of the industry, ecology, culture. It will become the model sample of China's new urbanization strategy and highlight the "people-oriented" development.

It can be expected that highly concentrated the population, industry, cultural, tourism and other resources the characteristic towns' construction is becoming a new model of China's urbanization development. China's characteristic towns' construction should focus on the following points: the characteristics of the industry development, the integrity of public services, good ecological environment, featured style and pattern, history and culture heritage protection, governance and institutional innovation, policy support and institutional mechanisms to explore.

At the same time, these three levels of link and dialogue upgrade gradually and interact with the process, containing good social and economic benefits. They deserves attention and active treatment. of the characteristic towns too.

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