

Conservation and Development of Qilou Districts
A Case Study of the Historical and Cultural District of Haikou City

騎楼地区の保護と開発
海口歴史文化街区を事例として

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1. Introduction

(1) What is Qilou?

Qilou, also known as arcade buildings or verandah-style buildings, are widely distributed in tropical areas of Southeast Asia, India, and southern China. In the early nineteenth century, Stamford Raffles, Singapore's urban designer, required all buildings to have an additional covered veranda about five feet wide in front of them to facilitate foreign trade. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Overseas Chinese returned to China and brought this architecture back to their homeland.

(2) Research Objective

(i) To identify the priority conservation needs for Qilou buildings within Haikou's Historic and Cultural District, and to analyze the degree of conservation of these historic buildings.

(ii) To determine the degree of commercialisation of Haikou's Historic and Cultural District based on the characteristics of its five streets: Zhongshan Road, Deshengsha Road, Bo'ai Road, Xinhua Road, and Xinmin West Road.

(iii) To compile and analyse the development approaches suitable to the Historic and Cultural District of Haikou based on conservation and commercial development models from different countries and regions.

(3) Research Method

(i) Identifying and classifying the contents of Qilou-type historic and cultural districts from Chinese and foreign literature. Review government policies and technical guidance, and determine Haikou's historic and cultural preservation standards.

(ii) I photographed the surrounding environment and building maintenance on Qilou Street. I also interviewed some of the shopkeepers in the area. The purpose of this was to understand their views regarding the current

state of commercialization in the historic and cultural district.

(iii) Analyze the characteristics and degree of commercialisation of each street and examine the factors that contributed to the development of this region's commercial sector.

(iv) To study the commercial development cases of other outstanding historical and cultural conservation areas and draw on their strategies and development models through comparative analysis.

2. Conservation of the Historical and Cultural District of Haikou City

(1) The restoration condition of the facades

Through the visits and investigation, I have selected five roads for the study and sample data, which are: Zhongshan Road, Bo' ai Road, Xinhua Road, Xinmin West Road, Deshengsha Road. Based on facade restoration, the Qilou buildings within the Haikou Historic and Cultural District have been divided here into three categories: completely repaired buildings, partially repaired buildings and unrepaired buildings.

	Completely repaired rate	Partially Repaired rate	Unrepaired rate
Zhongshan Road	95%	4%	1%
Bo'ai Road	41%	11%	48%
Deshengsha Road	26%	72%	2%
Xinmin West Road	45%	49%	6%
Xinhua Road	62%	17%	21%

Table 1. The level of intervention of the 5 sample streets during 2021

(2) Analyzing the reasons for Qilou's facade changes

(i) Reasons of nature: As Haikou is in a tropical monsoon climate zone, with abundant precipitation and a humid climate all year round, the buildings here require

more constant long-term maintenance than in dryer areas of China.

(ii) Historical reasons: The main port and trade center of Haikou were located in the northern part of the historic and cultural district. During 2016, under government leadership, the north area was centrally renovated and restored due to its high concentration of historic buildings. Those located in the Development Control Area, such as Bo' ai South Road and Xinhua South Road, have not been systematically protected.

(iii) Reasons for ownership: The ownership of buildings within the Core Conservation Area is mostly nationalised, so the government can provide targeted conservation and regular renovation of buildings in this area. Nonetheless, many houses located in the Development Control Area are at risk of becoming dangerous due to the lack of ownership.

3. Commercialisation of the Historical and Cultural District of Haikou City

There are different types of shops operating on each of the five sample streets. Tourist souvenir shops are the most prevalent shops on Zhongshan Road. Clothing wholesale shops dominate Deshengsha Road and Xinhua Road, but the variety of shops on Deshengsha Road is homogeneous, with mostly clothing shops. The most concentrated type of shops on Xinmin West Road is restaurants. On Xinhua Road, there are many different types of shops. Of these five streets, Bo'ai Road has the most diverse selection of shops.

4. The development model of Historic and Cultural Districts of Haikou

The development model of Historic and Cultural Districts of Haikou is more in line with the needs of the government and meeting the demands of historic building conservation. As Haikou's historic and cultural districts are developed by the government, extensive maintenance is concentrated over a long period of time and street integrity is maintained. However, in terms of commerce, Haikou's historic and cultural districts face a lack of experience. The existing commercial areas are unable to satisfy the consumer mentality of visitors. There is a reputation for many of the shops on Zhongshan Road on

social networks, but the lack of stability has led to low vitality. In addition, interviews revealed that residents lack knowledge of the Qilou architecture, which is one of the reasons why many residents did not return to the Qilou area after the renovation ended in 2016.

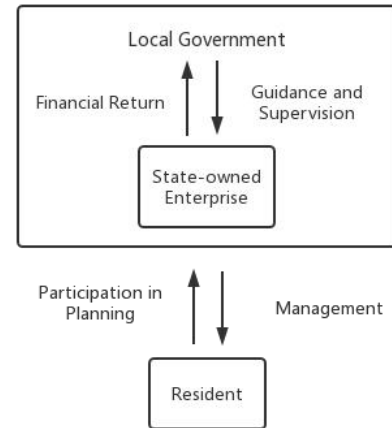


Figure 1. The Current Hainan Development Model

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

A comparison of 2013, 2016 and 2021 reveals that Haikou's historic and cultural districts have been gradually restored 'from north to south', with Zhongshan Road as the core. The five sample streets that appear in this paper also all have their own characteristics in terms of commercialisation. However, there are many problems with the current management of the commercialisation of Qilou buildings. With reference to the experiences and shortcomings in the development process of historical and cultural districts in two regions, Malaysia and Fujian Province, this paper will make the following suggestions for the conservation and commercialisation of Haikou's historic and cultural districts.

(i) Conducting regular inspections and maintenance on the Qilou buildings.

(ii) As a commercial and cultural district, the Qilou neighbourhood should develop more innovative commercial development activities.

(iii) Increasing residents' awareness of historic preservation is important.

(iv) The government and the state-owned enterprises should return some of the management rights of the historic and cultural districts to society.

Abstract: The research object of this paper is the historic and cultural district of Haikou City. Compared with 2013, 2016, and 2021, Qilou districts have gradually been restored. The five sample streets that appear in this paper also all have their characteristics in terms of commercialisation. However, there are many problems with the current management of the commercialisation of Qilou buildings. This paper will provide a general overview of the current state of architectural conservation and commercialization in Haikou's Historic and Cultural District, as well as provide some insight into how the Qilou neighbourhood may be improved in the future.