

Foshan Sangyuanwei Agricultural Proverbs and Their Cultural Connotations

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Abstract: *Agricultural proverbs are concise, catchy and profound proverbs left over from the agricultural civilization. Many of them have been proved to be used to guide agricultural production practice after repeated practice. They are the summary of the agricultural production experience of ordinary people and the crystallization of people's collective wisdom. Agricultural proverbs are also the language carrier of silkworm culture, ecological culture and traditional culture. A large number of agricultural proverbs in Foshan Sangyuanwei, have been passed down from mouth to mouth among the people and become symbols of Lingnan farming culture. The essence of Lingnan culture is contained in the simple words and abundant words.*

Keywords: *Foshan Sangyuanwei; Agricultural proverbs; culture*

On December 8, 2020, Foshan Sangyuanwei was selected as the seventh batch of World Irrigation Engineering Heritage, becoming China's first world-class heritage with in surrounded pond water conservancy as the main body. Sangyuanwei has rich historical and cultural connotation and value, and its historical, cultural, scientific and technological, ecological values are the four "keys" to its success in applying for world Heritage. In terms of culture, how to excavate the cultural connotation of Sangyuanwei so as to promote the protection and sustainable development of Sangyuanwei heritage is of great academic value and significance to comprehensively promote rural revitalization. Foshan Sangyuanwei is a famous large dike in the Pearl River Delta of China. It is located in the lower reaches of Xijiang River, one of the main streams of the Pearl River in Nanhai and Shunde districts of Foshan City, Guangdong Province. It is the main dike of the main streams of the West and North Rivers, divided into east and west, to resist the floods of the West and North Rivers. In Sangyuanwei, people widely planted mulberry trees, reared silkworms and finished silk reeling. In order to better summarize the production technology of mulberry planting and sericulture, people created a large number of agricultural proverbs in the practice of agricultural production.

"The history of language and the history of culture go hand in hand. They can help and inspire each other." [1] says British linguist Palmer. American linguist Sapir put it more accurately, believing that "there is something behind language. Language cannot exist without culture. Culture is the sum total of habits and beliefs inherited from a society. It can determine the organization of our lives." [2] Cao Zhiyun, a contemporary Chinese linguist, also said, "Language and culture are inseparable. One can understand the corresponding culture from the perspective of language, and observe the corresponding language from the perspective of culture. Therefore, Chinese dialects are closely related to regional culture." [3] The above scholars explained the close relationship between language and culture, dialect and regional culture from different perspectives of history, culture and language. Agricultural proverbs are concise, catchy and profound proverbs passed from mouth to mouth among farmers in the agricultural civilization period. Many of them are proved to be used to guide agricultural production practice after repeated practice. They are the summary of the agricultural production experience of ordinary people and the crystallization of people's collective wisdom. It is the language carrier of silkworm culture, ecological culture and traditional Chinese culture, and contains the essence of Lingnan culture behind the simple and rich words.

1. Mulberry and silkworm culture connotations of agricultural proverbs in Sangyuanwei

China is an ancient agricultural country, but also a big agricultural country. During the period of agricultural civilization, farming proverbs became the guide to guide farmers and played an extremely important role in agricultural production. Foshan Sangyuanwei is named after the mulberry garden, which is widely planted in the pond.

Silkworm culture is an excellent agricultural cultural heritage accumulated and summarized by the working people in agricultural production practice for thousands of years, which has witnessed the development of China's social economy and civilization. Since ancient times, mulberry planting, sericulture, silk making and silk weaving have become a unique cultural form in China. Mulberry is a cash crop because it is the main food source for silkworms, which spin silk and spin cocoons, which are then reeling to make silk. The price of silk has always been expensive to bring good economic benefits and rich happy life to the people in Sangyuanwei. Therefore, the local had once appeared waste rice planting mulberry, widely planted mulberry plants and raised silkworms situation. The agricultural proverbs which have been spread in the folk land for a long time contains rich silkworm culture implication. Zhang Lin, a poet in the late Qing Dynasty, wrote a poem titled "Zhuzhi poems in the Longjiang River" describing the flourishing scene of mulberry planting, fish raising, sericulture and silk reeling: "The cocoon-stripping thatch stands by the water, while the soft mulberry wall is green and contains smoke. After all, fish silkworm harvest is good, ten acres of base pond wins the field." This poetry reflects the history of the people of Shunde, Foshan, using mulberry ponds to raise fish, mulberries and silkworms in large quantities, which is the reflection of the silkworm culture of Lingnan in the poetry.

In the production practice of mulberry planting and sericulture, lingnan ancestors also summed up a set of mulberry planting and sericulture technology, accumulated rich experience in planting and raising, and passed on agricultural proverbs with harmonious rhyme to guide agricultural production practice. For example, in the season of mulberry planting, the agricultural proverb "winter mulberry, mulberry leaves flourishing next year" is to tell people if they want mulberry leaves flourishing, need to timely and moderate pruning mulberry branches in winter, preserve the nutrients on the branches, to ensure the next year's high quality mulberry harvest; "Qingming festival needs to be clear, mulberry trees hang silver bottles" said the Qingming festival if the weather is fine, mulberry trees will grow luxurious. Mulberry leaves can be sold at a good price. In silkworm raising technology, agricultural proverbs also said how to use mulberry leaves to raise silkworms to achieve the best feeding effect, such as "silkworm raising without clever way, eat less old" "spring silkworms don't eat small full leaves, summer silkworms don't eat small summer leaves" "small silkworms eat thin leaves, big silkworms eat thick leaves" "Better call silkworms are old and mulberry leaves are continuous, do not make mulberry leaves are discontinuous, silkworms are not old", and so on. Silkworm raising in addition to the mulberry leaves on which it grows, also need to see the weather and season, such as "Having silkworms without having silkworms, to see on the second or third day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar", if this time coincides with abundant rain, mulberry lush, mulberry leaves enough, can raise more silkworms, on the contrary, no silkworms. The higher the silkworm production, the more silk, the economic benefits of the people will be higher. If the right time and favorable location are the prerequisite conditions for sericulture, the hard work of sericulture people is the key factor for success. The agricultural proverb said, "To clean up Silkworms' excrement every day, to clean and spray the silkworm rooms every day." The essence is to teach people rearing silkworm but not to be lazy. Therefore, planting mulberries and raising silkworms, the climate, the geographical position, the manpower is short of one cannot, only comply with the natural law, and creatively uses each kind of ecological resources, achieves the natural climate, the geographical position soil, the manpower cultivates the organic union, can guarantee the silkworm industry production smoothly develops.

2. The ecological cultural connotations of agricultural proverbs in Sangyuanwei.

Foshan is located in the hinterland of the Pearl River Delta, where salt and fresh water converge, creating unique geographical culture and ecological culture. Ecology is a science that studies the relationship between organism and surrounding environment, while ecological culture is a culture in which man and nature coexist in harmony.

Lingnan water town is gentle and graceful, known as the "land of fish and rice" reputation. Qu Dajun, a famous scholar in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, said, "There is a village called Jiujiang in Nanhai.....The land is small and fish occupy half of it. The pond is fed with fish. Dike with mulberry trees. Men sell fish fries. When a woman feeds silkworms, there is no idle land. And there are no idle people, cover the beauty of custom also." ^[4]

Nanhai jiujiang in mulberry field, around the local people to breed fish in the pond, the pond near base or around planting mulberry, mulberry sericulture, in silkworm excrement (called "silkworm sand" locally). As bait fish and fertile pond sludge as fertilizer mulberry trees, base enclosed kind of mulberry, mulberry sericulture, the silkworm sand, feed the fish pond sludge fertilizer ecological chain,

use both each other, promote each other. To achieve the good effect of both fish and silkworm. Compared with traditional agricultural production mode, "Mulberry base-fish pond" has the advantages of good ecological benefit and high economic benefit. Agricultural proverb "Mulberry grow luxuriantly, silkworm is strong, fish is fat; Pond fertilizer, good base, silkworm cocoon get a good harvest, "embodies the Lingnan's people in long-term production of struggle, to create a set based on the ecological balance, vegetables, silkworms, fishery causal scientific methods of production, is the" mulberry base-fish pond" in the Pearl river delta Lingnan water village ecological circular agriculture mode, reveals the working people diligence and wisdom. The unique agricultural ecological mode of "mulberry base-fish pond" nourishes the ecological agriculture of Sangyuanwei and promotes the local economic development.

Ming and Qing dynasties, Foshan large area of planting mulberry and raising silkworms making Sangyuanwei within the silk industry developed, especially the Xiqiao, Nanhai, Foshan, China, became the most famous sericulture township, silk town. There is a saying in the water village, "Flourishing silk, full harvest". It means that planting mulberry and raising silkworms, making silk and weaving silk will bring rich profits to the local people. The local developed silk industry also promoted the development of national industry. Chen Qiyuan, a famous entrepreneur in modern times, founded "Jichanglong" reeling factory in his hometown Xiqiao, Nanhai, which became the first machine-powered reeling factory in China. Its silk products sold well at home and abroad and made an important contribution to the exchanges and development of world civilization, economy and culture. Today, Xiqiao is still famous for its textile industry. Agricultural proverbs said, "Minle(Located in Xiqiao town) has a sinus, every family textile sound" "a ship of silk, a ship of silver back" is the historical witness of the developed folk music silk weaving industry in Xiqiao, Nanhai, Foshan. Good agricultural ecology has brought a stable and prosperous life to the people in Sangyuanwei.

3. The traditional cultural connotations of Sangyuanwei agricultural proverbs

Agricultural proverbs, with refined language, harmonious rhyme and thought-giving, reveal the essence of complex things and have always been loved by the people. The Chinese traditional culture contained in agricultural proverbs is the root of Lingnan rural culture. It contains excellent traditional ideas, humanistic spirit and moral standards, which can give full play to its important role in rallying people, educating the masses and making people honest. Lingnan has profound cultural accumulation and distinct regional characteristics. Many agricultural proverbs that are closely related to life are passed on by the common people. Among them, there are also many agricultural proverbs rich with unique value ideal and brilliant wisdom of life, bearing the gene of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, become a profound guide to life.

It is obvious that agricultural proverbs played a practical role in guiding agricultural production in the period of agricultural civilization. But today, the more important value and significance of these proverbs lies in that they have come out of agricultural production and entered the daily life of ordinary people, reflecting the national character and cultural spirit of farmers and even the Chinese nation. Such as "a good word are warm in three winters, unkind words are cold in June." It advocates friendly exchanges and harmonious coexistence among people. "Do not advise you to hit the birds in the spring, the son in the nest hope mother return." It exhorts people not to destroy the natural ecology, but to pursue the harmonious coexistence between man and nature. Another example is, "We know the hard work of cattle when ploughing the fields, and the kindness of parents when raising children." "Get people's grace for a thousand years, get people spend thousands of years in spring." It is hoped that people should always have a heart of gratitude to their parents, to others and even to the natural things in the world. For thousands of years, the Chinese nation has always taken industry and frugality as a virtue. In farming proverbs, people praise industry, despise laziness, believe in thrift, and oppose extravagance and waste. A large number of agricultural proverbs in Sangyuanwei embody the cultural psychology rooted in the soil of traditional agricultural economy, such as "work hard in the fields in three autumn and harvest in the next year." "If you work hard, you make treasure. If you are lazy, you make grass." "As long as the heart, the field of gold", and so on; And "thrifty people will eventually get rich, paste grain children will fail." Admonish people to work hard, rely on industrious hands to create wealth; Life should be thrifty, not extravagant. "Farming without raising pigs is like a scholar without studying." "To have children without study is like ploughing pond without fish." Is to encourage people to uphold the good tradition of farming, do a good job. "Good mothers give birth to good children. Good seedlings of cereal crops give birth to good rice." "Na(媽)," means the mother; "Son" corresponds to "Na(子)", meaning "child". It vividly illustrates that only good mothers can

raise good children by comparing good rice with good seedlings. "The thin field is uncultivated, and the cultivated field is contested." After someone has done something, everyone will compete to do it, encourage people to do things to have the "cattle" pioneering spirit; "Two litres of good fields, half my bed with a thousand big houses." Guide people to eat to degree, not insatiable. Under the background of the national agricultural revitalization strategy, the excellent traditional cultural spirit contained in agricultural proverbs is still of great educational significance and enlightenment today.

Agricultural proverbs are an important part of Chinese agricultural cultural heritage. Chinese President Xi Jinping once pointed out: "We should promote the revitalization of rural culture, strengthen rural ideological and moral construction and public cultural construction, guided by socialist core values, and deeply explore the ideological concepts, humanistic spirit and moral norms contained in excellent traditional farming culture...". As early as in the Period of the Republic of China, scholar Fei Jiexin said in the preface of his book "Chinese Agricultural Proverbs": "Agricultural proverbs are the crystallization of farmers' experience, and they regard them as the criterion for establishing a career. Those of us who aspire to improve agriculture should study agricultural proverbs, by which we may acquaint ourselves with the customs and minds of the peasants, and thus enlightens them with their knowledge."^[5] It is of great research value and significance in the context of Rural revitalization in China. Today, although many farming proverbs are far away from us, it should not be forgotten, because it contains excellent traditional culture is the root of Chinese rural culture, but also the background of Chinese rural civilization.

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