

Underwater Cultural Heritage Culture Routes: Green Island Lighthouse and SS President Hoover Shipwreck as Examples

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ABSTRACT

All underwater cultural heritage sites are related to people in land. To promote and demonstrate the protection of valuable and important underwater cultural heritage works, is not only to establish museums, organize exhibitions, produce films, or publishing related publications, but also can combine elements with the people, things, and affairs related to the land area. Examples such as the lighthouse on the beach, the residents on the shore, the recovery of underwater objects, and the underwater archaeology sites can be used to develop into 'Underwater Cultural Heritage Culture Routes (UCHCR)', so that everyone could use the planned 'UCHCR' to have a deeper understanding of the ins and outs of the entire underwater cultural heritage and complete historical stories.

In 1937, the SS President Hoover sank in Zhongliao Bay of Green Island, which was on an important international waterway in the western Pacific, East of the city of Taitung. In order to thank the local residents that helped rescue the victims, the Green Island Lighthouse was built by the American Red Cross the following year. We intend to use the Green Island Lighthouse and the SS President Hoover Shipwreck as an example to plan the 'UCHCR', combined with the Green Island Lighthouse, the Green Island Visitor Center, and the Green Island Underwater Archaeological Station to tie all the shipwrecks' story around the island. Because the island is famous for its clear water and good visibility, richness in corals, diversity of maritime life, and its abundance of underwater cultural heritage, we could also plan for divers the in situ diving guide routes and enlist the local divers to guard the site as volunteers, in order to let the shipwreck site not be a single underwater cultural site, but to enrich the tourist oriented activities and the interest in the island traveling.

Key words: Underwater Archaeology, Green Island, Green Island Lighthouse, SS President Hoover Shipwreck, UCHCR

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Figure 1: SS President Hoover on Green Island. (<http://www.willdavis.org/Dollar.html>, accessed on 1 June 2021)

INTRODUCTION

In 1987, the European Commission listed Camino de Santiago as the first European cultural route. At present, 33 cultural routes have been approved successively. The development of cultural routes is an international trend and can drive local tourism in the ascendant. In fact, underwater cultural heritage is related to people in the land. More specifically, all underwater cultural heritage sites originally belong to objects in the land above the water level made by human beings, but they are not easy to be seen after they sink under water. In order to promote the protection of underwater cultural heritage, Taiwan's exclusive underwater cultural heritage cultural routes should vigorously be promoted by integrated underwater sites systematically with relevant people and historical backgrounds. In combination with local government, central government, and folk cooperation, to develop underwater cultural heritage cultural routes should be the correct direction for promoting the education of underwater cultural heritage.

Green Island is located in the southeast corner of Taiwan, with an area of 16.2 square kilometers. Because of its clear water and marine animals or plants, it attracts countless divers and tourists every summer. Most tourists coming to Green Island are for playing in the water, riding motorcycles and taking hot springs during the day, and watching animals and stars at night. Although there are many water activities,

they have nothing to do with underwater cultural heritage. The Bureau of Cultural heritage (BOCH), Ministry of Culture, conducted the educational workshop for protecting underwater cultural heritage over the last 4 years for senior diving instructors in Green Island. The author did realize that all of these senior diving instructors first learned about the underwater cultural heritage only after participating these BOCH workshops. Although the workshop activity gathers approximately 50 diving instructors every year, its educational speed is relatively slow. On the other hand, the development of cultural route has become the universal value of international concerns. This paper will discuss about establishing a underwater cultural heritage cultural route (UCHCR) in Green Island by combining underwater shipwrecks, the Green Island Lighthouse, and event stories associated with them in order to enrich the tourism connotation. This plan could offer a deeper understanding of the context of the underwater cultural heritage in Green Island and its complete historical stories, and a good way to achieve the educational purpose of promoting and protecting the underwater cultural heritage in Green Island.

REASONS FOR ADVOCATING THE GREEN ISLAND UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE ROUTE

The cultural route combines tangible and intangible cultural heritage and historical events related to the route. I would like to emphasize that cultural routes are not only on land, but also under lakes, oceans and rivers. As diving tourists to Green Island watch underwater animals, plants, and seabed topography, why not do they also watch underwater cultural heritage in the same time? The reasons for advocating the underwater cultural heritage route of Green Island are as follows.

THEY ARE MANY TOURISTS AND DIVERS TO GREEN ISLAND

Green Island is located on the Black Current in the Pacific, with marine resources, clear sea water, and varied underwater terrains, not only attracting tourists, but also many diving lovers as well. Green Island has only about 3,000-4,000 residents, while the tourist population can reach 357,633 per year (Table 1). Every summer in July and August, it receives more than 70,000 visitors per month, which are almost 20 times as many as the island residents. They are nearly 6,000 seasonal villas rented only to the visitors. Most tourists want to experience snorkeling or diving in Green Island, as it is a good place for snorkeling and diving potentiality.

GREEN ISLAND IS RICH IN UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE

Around Green Island, the ‘Green Island 1’ (Photo of the lower left corner of Fig. 3) and the famous sunken ship of American liner ‘SS President Hoover’ exist. Both are designated as important underwater sites in Green Island, which are listed by the Ministry of Culture. Although the number of underwater sites in Green Island is not as large as Penghu, the number of underwater artifacts recovered around Green Island accounts for 38% of all underwater artifacts recovered in Taiwan; Green Island is rich in underwater cultural heritage. ‘SS President Hoover’ sank only 8-10 meters deep outside the Gongguan port (公館港). In 2020, BOCH set up a signboard at the underwater site of ‘SS President Hoover’ (Photo of the upper right corner of Fig. 3). This underwater site is not far from the seashore with shallow depth, which is relatively safe for any divers.

MANY STORIES RELATED TO THE WRECK OF ‘SS PRESIDENT HOOVER’ IN GREEN ISLAND

‘Green Island 1’ wrecked more than 100 years ago; there are not so many written historical data on this shipwreck. However, the information on ‘SS President Hoover’ is relatively rich. ‘SS President Hoover’ was built in 1930. On 11th December 1937, ‘SS President Hoover’ ran aground immediately in front of the Gongguan port in Green Island. With the concerted efforts of the island residents, all the personnel on ‘SS President Hoover’ were rescued without any casualties. Fig. 1 shows that the island residents helped the passengers from ‘SS President Hoover’. After this wreck accident, the American Red Cross raised funds to build the Green Island Lighthouse on Green Island mainland in 1938. The island residents also left many touching stories about rescuing the crews and passengers, and they also used the shipping materials abandoned by ‘SS President Hoover’ for building or using domestically.

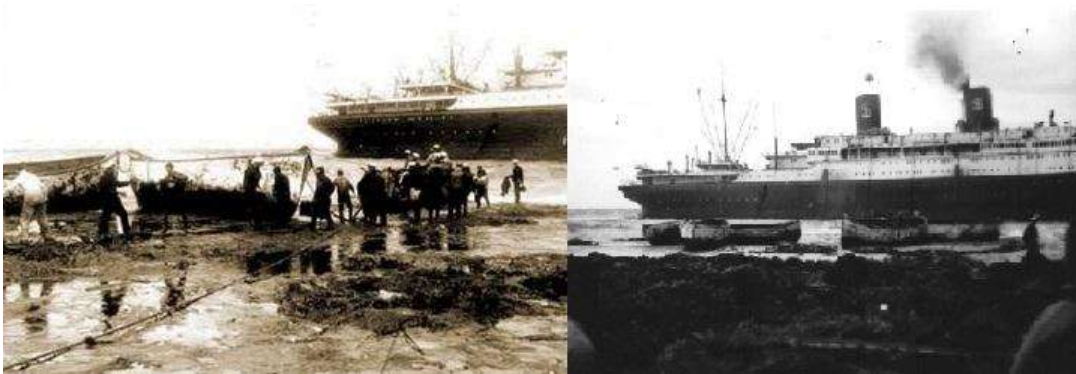


Figure 1: SS President Hoover on Green Island. (<http://www.wilddavis.org/Dollar.html>, accessed on 1 June 2021

UNFAMILIAR UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES

General tourists come to Green Island only for sightseeing and mainly for snorkeling or diving around the island. Almost all of them are unfamiliar with underwater cultural heritage sites around Green Island. Even local island residents are almost completely unknown about the shipwreck site of ‘Green Island 1’. Only a few elderly people still remember the sinking story of ‘SS President Hoover’, but they gradually have forgot it. Presumably, therefore, BOCH has the obligation to strengthen the promotion of underwater cultural heritage found around Green Island, and, in addition, to let people know about it as their right to know.

INVENTORY OF UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GREEN ISLAND

Green Island is composed of volcanic agglomerates. Due to the dense reefs and dangerous winds and waves during winter season, many ships used to collide against reefs. In the inventory of underwater cultural heritage in Green Island, two underwater sites, viz. the ‘Green Island 1’ and ‘SS President Hoover’, are listed. As related building heritage, the Green Island Lighthouse and Green Island Hermit Crab House Agency are: the latter’s wooden beams and columns were originally removed from ‘SS President Hoover’. As related intangible cultural heritage, moreover, BOCH made the interview film of the passengers from ‘SS President Hoover’.

UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE AROUND GREEN ISLAND

‘SS President Hoover’ Underwater Site: ‘SS President Hoover’ built by the Dollar Steamship Line on 9th December 1930, ‘SS President Hoover’ was a passenger ship with a displacement of 33,800 tons and a cost of 8 million dollar. It was equipped with an advanced steam turbine generator and twin electric propulsion propeller shafts. It mainly sailed from San Francisco, to Hawaii, Kobe, Shanghai, and Manila, and then back to San Francisco. On 22nd November 1937, ‘SS President Hoover’, carrying 503 passengers, set sail from San Francisco to Japan and then to Manila. In order to avoid the Sino-Japanese War zone, instead of taking the route from Shanghai through the Taiwan Strait, they detoured south along the unfamiliar route on the east coast of Taiwan. Due to the war all lighthouses in Taiwan were turned off, and so ‘SS President Hoover’ navigated by dead reckoning. On the night of the accident, the northeast monsoon was strong, so that the course was inaccurate. Around 1:00 am at local time on 11th December, ‘SS President Hoover’ hit a 500 meter long reef in Zhongliao Bay (中寮灣) at the north of Green Island, and the cabin and engine room were damaged. In the afternoon of the same day, the Hamburg America Line cargo ship D/S Preußen came to rescue ‘SS President Hoover’ immediately after receiving the distress signal, but the freighter was unable to get close due to bad waves and shallow water. The island residents thought at first that the accident was a war attack when they heard the loud noise. Later, however, they came to save the disastrous passengers, as they found that a large ship ran aground. Fig. 1 shows that ‘SS President Hoover’ ran aground. In 2012, Taiwan's underwater archaeological team found the wreck site of ‘SS President Hoover’ at a water depth of 8-10 meters near the Gongguan port. 210 underwater objects have been recovered from the site since then.

‘Green Island 1’ : The ‘Green Island 1’ is located at the southwest of Green Island and the water depth estimates approximately 39 meters on average. The shipwreck ruins distribute at the depth of 27-40 meters; the wreck ranges from north to south the length of 40 meter, from east to west at the width of 60 meters, being scattered altogether over 2,400 square meters. The shipwreck deck assumes four cardinal points. Around its hull, the wreck reveals massive decks as well as separated decks, each of which has drift angles; their preservation situation is good. They also still have copper nails and copper sheet gables at their center. The hull was buried under the sea sand, and perhaps underneath the hull, there may still remain buried cargo. It started to be investigated from 2013, until now, being discovered three lignin hulls altogether. Among the recovered objects are 503 Qianlong (乾隆) copper coins and Daoguang (道光) copper coins, which seem to have been used as ballast stones, glassware such as French beverage bottles, Chinese olive seeds, Chinese ceramic porcelains, Western ceramics, metalware, and so on. Judging from its construction type and discovered wooden materials, this ship is more than 100 years old and probably returned from northeastern Asia on the way to a trading port in western mainland China. The ‘Green Island 1’ is a good and vitally significant underwater archaeological site for the purpose of studying in for the Asian trading history, the navigation history, and the history shipbuilding in the 19th century.

GREEN ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

The Green Island Lighthouse (Photo of the upper-middle left of Fig. 3) was built on the northwestern tip of Green Island on Zhongliao (中寮) highland, as a route marker in the area, because ‘SS President Hoover’ did collide against the nearby reef in 1937. In order to appreciate the rescue assistance by island residents, the United States donated money to the American Red cross for building a lighthouse. The

Green Island lighthouse was designed by Japanese technicians and built with the labor assistance of Island residents in 1938. The 33.3-meter-high Green Island lighthouse made by reinforced concrete originally had a round black-and-white horizontal line with third-class kerosene incandescent lamps. It was bombed and damaged by Allied aircrafts during WWII. In 1948, the fifth class temporary DC flash lamp was repaired and refitted; the tower body was white and its lamp height was 48.2 meters. In 1973, a new fourth-class rotating lens AC electric lamp was installed, and an additional radio benchmark was built in 1988, but it was removed in 2006. There is a simple toilet in the tower in order to welcome President Jiang Zhongzheng's (蔣中正), which is absolutely unique in Taiwan.

GREEN ISLAND HERMIT CRAB HOUSING AGENCY

In 2012, a group of young people dressed hermit crabs with faucets, light bulbs, and empty bottles as shells of hermit crabs, launching the Hermit Crab Resettlement Project. They rented a Gulian House (咕啾屋) in Green Island with a history of more than 80 years and established a Green Island Hermit Crab House Agency to give hermit crabs natural shells. The beams in the Gulian House are ship timbers disassembled by the owner from ‘SS President Hoover’ and reused for this house (Photo of the lower-middle left of Fig. 3). According to the owner's nephew, Yao Liji (姚麗吉, former principal of the local elementary school), ‘this old house has been repaired and replaced many times, and the ship timbers removed from “SS President Hoover” is the most durable and they are still there’.

MS. ZHOU YUAN, A PASSENGER OF ‘SS PRESIDENT HOOVER’, DOCUMENTARY FILM

When Ms. Zhou Yuan (周遠) was 4 years old (Fig. 2), his diplomat father with whole family embarked ‘SS President Hoover’ at Honolulu sailing to Manila in 1937. As most passengers on ‘SS President Hoover’ at that time were foreigners, Ms. Zhou Yuan’s Chinese family was a minority among its passengers. After the ship collided against the reef off Green Island, all passengers were rescued being taken back to the land safely; they succeeded in taking a rest in a local elementary school and sleeping inside small classrooms between small desks and chairs. Because the father of Ms. Zhou Yuan could speak both Chinese and Japanese, her family were received a special treatment by the principal of the Public School of Huo Shao Dao (火燒島公學校); they managed to sleep on Japanese tatami (榻榻米) at the principal’s house. Ms. Zhou Yuan is now 91 years old (Fig. 2), living at Los Angeles in the United States. When the author talked about ‘SS President Hoover’ with Captain Zhou Chuanjun (周傳鈞) of ‘Free China (自由中國號)’, the captain said that his wife, Ms. Zhou Yuan, was a ship passenger of ‘SS President Hoover’ at that time, and that his wife hopefully would have an opportunity to visit Green Island again. BOCH interviewed and filmed Ms. Zhou Yuan in 2021 at Los Angeles.

GREEN ISLAND UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY WORK STATION

BOCH entrusted the Institute of History and Language of Academia Sinica to investigate underwater cultural heritage around Taiwan. In 2014, thereafter, ‘Green Island 1’ and ‘SS President Hoover’ were successively found off Green Island. For the long-term investigation, the Green Island Underwater Archaeology Workstation of BOCH has been established by borrowing a part of the Marine Research Center of the Central Research Institute in Green Island; it is being used as the base for the underwater archaeology team of BOCH in order to engage in underwater archaeological research around Green Island

(Photo of the lower right corner of Fig. 3). Every summer, the underwater archaeology team comes to Green Island to investigate or to monitor underwater cultural heritage sites, and holds for senior diving instructors the workshop of the underwater archaeological trails for their protection and guide. which is an important way to protect the underwater cultural assets around Green Island.

ROUTE PLANNING AND STRATEGY OF UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GREEN ISLAND

The plan for creating an underwater cultural heritage cultural route in Green Island is based on combining the people, tangible cultural heritage, and historical story related to the underwater cultural heritage under the water and on the land, and deeply combining the underwater cultural heritage with history, culture, and tourists. Then, cooperating with Taitung, tourism units and private tourism companies in Green Island also could help to create the underwater cultural heritage cultural route. Its water zone is mainly composed of the underwater shipwreck of the ‘SS President Hoover’ and the underwater signboard of ‘SS President Hoover’, being at the depth of 10-20 meters only. The land zone is mainly composed of the Green Island Tourist Center (Photo of the upper-left corner of Fig. 3), the Green Island Lighthouse, the Green Island Hermit Crab House, and the Gulian house. Visitors to Green Island always pass in front of these heritage places, when they go to the airport, the fishing port, the passenger service center, or accommodations including hotels, or rental motorbike shops. The Green Island Underwater Archaeology Workstation of BOCH and the diving shop will be used for exhibition or promotion places, so that tourists clearly know that Green Island has rich in underwater cultural heritage having an underwater cultural heritage cultural route.

UCH CULTURAL ROUTE PLANNING STRATEGY IN GREEN ISLAND

Underwater Cultural Heritage Cultural Route for Divers: At the Green Island Tourist Center, qualified personnel will instruct potential diving visitors in general information by introducing films, which show us the underwater cultural heritage sites and items around Green Island, explaining how to safeguarding it, and so on. After learning the ethical rules of underwater cultural heritage, divers go to the Green Island lighthouse, Hermit Crab House Agency, Gulian House, and then take the boat from the Gongguan port sailing to the underwater site of ‘SS President Hoover’, and finally dive into the site. View at the signboard, learn about the sinking story of ‘SS President Hoover’, take photos, and then the tour guide led diver to dive around the site of ‘SS President Hoover’. It takes us about 3 hours as shown in Table 2.

Underwater Cultural Heritage Cultural Route for Tourists: At the Green Island Tourist Center, qualified personnel will instruct tourists, who are expected not to dive into water, in general information on the historical stories of both the ‘Green Island I’ and ‘SS President Hoover’ and its related stories. After that, they go to the Green Island Lighthouse, the Gulian House of the Hermit Crab House Agency to see the house wood materials form ‘SS President Hoover’, and then they are taken by boat from the Gongguan port to ‘SS President Hoover’ site above water, receiving the explanation of the incident of ‘SS President Hoover’ with electronic tools. They could take photos from the boat, and then bound for the site of ‘Green Island 1’ above water, receiving the explanation its history or discovery processes. Finally, they circle the Green Island by boat and return to the Gongguan port. It takes us about 3 hours, as shown in Table 3.

STRATEGY

Training Underwater Archaeological Trails Guides and Issuing the License: A lot of countries are willing to open underwater cultural heritage in situ to public access. It is important to make this human legacy accessible to these sites as many people as possible, for providing communities with a tangible connection to their past, fostering local pride and stimulates people's awareness, and respecting for underwater heritage, in order to achieve the win-win goal. Because almost all underwater cultural heritage sites are under the water, therefore underwater archaeological trails guides must have the high-level diving license, with the knowledge of protecting underwater cultural heritage generally and of understanding its historical backgrounds. Therefore, the government should frequently hold the training workshops of underwater archaeological trails guides for the purpose of training qualified tour guides in conformity with the Underwater Cultural Heritage Preservation Act.

Opening the Site of Underwater Cultural Heritage in Situ to the Public: According to the Underwater Cultural Heritage Preservation Act, both underwater archaeology and opening the site of underwater cultural heritage in situ are put in the same branch of law, suggesting that it is not so easy to do so. The underwater cultural heritage in situ must be under the zoning of underwater cultural heritage protection areas; even now, however, no underwater cultural heritage item was registered under the zoning of any underwater cultural heritage protection areas.

Cooperating with a Local Diving Shop and Creating the Trail of 'SS President Hoover' in Situ: Encouraging a local diving shop to lead diving tourists, who see not only marine biotope, but also observe the underwater cultural heritage around Green Island is really necessary, to let the sightseeing resources multi-dimensional giving more choices, to put the underwater site of 'SS President Hoover' as well as the 'Green Island 1' into the diving spots' list for tourists, to communicate the knowledge of protecting underwater cultural heritage with tourists, and to let the tourist divers have the chance to see underwater cultural heritage on the slightly deeper seabed around Green Island.

Developing the Integrity of the Underwater Cultural Heritage Cultural Route for Tourists in Green Island: To take into consideration the tourist who cannot dive, the travel agencies, hotels, or motorbike rental shops should be united all together to plan the underwater cultural heritage cultural route for non-divers. It includes land-based historical scenic spots with the preparation of circling Green Island by boat in place of diving. Indeed, at first, the boat directs to the underwater sites of 'SS President Hoover', and 'Green Island 1', and there on the surface of the sea tourist could listen its historical and background from tour guides having issued licenses or electric tools, letting tourists have more multi-dimensional new choices and establishing as rich and scenic attraction the underwater cultural heritage cultural route in Green Island.

UCH Exhibition and Promotion: Taiwanese tourist goes back and forth to Green Island from the airport at Taitung air by airplane, or from the fishing port at Taitung Fu-Kang (富岡) by boat. Therefore, the airport, the train station, and the fishing port at Taitung are transit places for all tourists to Green Island. In particular, the lobbies at the airport or at the fishing port is a good place to exhibit underwater cultural heritage items and their explanation panels, because the passengers have to come to the airport or the fishing port 30 minutes before departures in order to do their boarding registration. They will be the best place for the education and promotion of underwater cultural heritage information, too. Besides, both the

Green Island Tourist Center and the Green Island Underwater Archaeology Workstation of BOCH are also ideal places to hold the similar exhibition.

CONCLUSION

The underwater archaeology team by BOCH has done remarkable achievements over the past 20 years in Taiwan. More than 20 shipwrecks have been identified, ranging from the era of Song Dynasty to WWII, 6 underwater sites have been registered, and recovered 1631 underwater items have already been in our hands. In addition, BOCH has launched many educational promotion works.

The United Nations encourages the participation in the implementation of public archaeology for the purpose of promoting the protection of underwater cultural heritage property towards all the people. The United Nations stresses that underwater archaeologists should share the knowledge of site research results and findings, because underwater cultural heritage is not easy to be seen by people on land. Encouraging people to access to underwater cultural heritage sites, letting more people understand the importance of underwater cultural heritage, or working together with them to supervise and manage our underwater archaeological sites, is better than hiding them under the water.

Green Island has good quality of marine water and has some good underwater archaeological sites, such as 'SS President Hoover' or the 'Green Island 1'. We should integrate the government, private companies, and a local diving shop to promote the underwater cultural heritage cultural route to attract divers and non-diving visitors to access the underwater cultural heritage sites around Green Island. The example of other places such as the Penghu Islands is a suggesting fact for Green Island as well.

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Biography

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