RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Re-construction of Tourism Culture from the Perspective of Authenticity

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Abstract: In recent years, the integration and rapid development of culture and tourism have proved that tourists' purpose of tourism is to deeply experience culture of tourism destination instead of just having fun. In order to meet the diverse demands of tourists about cultural experience as far as possible, besides the local culture of the tourism destination, a new culture based on tourists' demands will be constructed. The re-constructed culture bring new cultural matters and cultural appearance to tourism destination. Although   the re-constructed culture may be able to meet the demands of tourists, it also can cause cultural conflicts between tourists and local residents because of the problem of "authenticity". Finding a way to reduce the conflicts, balancing the cultural rights between tourists and local residents, both of them can benefit from tourism industry, are very important topic. In fact, in order to solve the problems, local residents play one of a important roles in the tourism industry. The cultural identification and decision-making participation of local residents, can preserve "authenticity"of culture and create rules to monitor the developing model of local cultural tourism to a certain extent.

Key words: cultural construction; authenticity; decision-making participation

In recent years,Chinese governments vigorously promote the deep integration of culture and tourism, in order to satisfy the demands of tourists for cultural experience in the process of traveling. With the continuous improvement of people's living standards, tourists nowadays are far from satisfied with the simple shallow tour or a brief glance on tourism destination during the travel. Besides pursuing "food, accommodation, shopping and entertainment", they should also pursue the deeply experience of the cultural items of the tourism destination.

In order to meet the cultural demands of tourists, tourism areas planning designer will produce products and service from the perspective of tourists' aesthetic. The commercialization ideas will select, decorate and beautify the local culture of tourism destination. The process make contributions to re-construct of local culture. It may be able to satisfy the demands of tourists, but also can cause cultural conflicts between tourists and local residents because of the problem of "authenticity".

How to meet the demands of tourists as well as local residents, offer tourism products and services that contain the characteristic of cultural "authenticity", so that both tourists and local cultural holders(residents) can benefit from the development of cultural tourism is a topic of common concern to academic circles, tourism practitioners and local people.

1. The "authenticity" in cultural tourism

The concept Authenticity comes from the Greek, the earliest function of the concept was used to evaluate the quality of the art exhibits in the museum. In 1964, this concept was recognized by the international heritage community in the Venice Charter. It mainly is used to emphasize the cultural heritages that show to people can keep original appearance in the design, technology, material, historic background perspective. In the process of cultural heritage protection and inheritance, cultural heritage and its cultural content should also be carried

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out in accordance with the original appearance of history as well.

The relationship between cultural heritage and cultural tourism is very close, so the concept of Authenticity has been widely used in cultural tourism research in recent years to measure tourists' perception and experience of cultural content in tourist destinations.If we summarize the cultural tourism as a type of tourism that all about the experience cultural heritage of the destination, then Authenticity in the process of cultural tourism is the pursuit of local cultural heritage and its original state. The more authentic the culture perceived and experienced by tourists, the more they can meet their cultural demands in tourism (Su, 2020).[1]

However, driven by the market, it is difficult to find a standard to measure the authenticity that perceived by tourists in cultural tourism. Different groups have different evaluation criteria for authenticity from different perspectives. In theory, the main evaluator of authenticity   is the cultural holder or local residents, emphasizing the identification with culture. In tourism activities, authenticity is more based on tourist identification and tends to be the subjective perception and experience of tourists. With the development of online media, under the influence of various media promotion contents and methods, tourists' initial understanding of tourist destination culture may come from the internet and media. The cultural image of tourist destinations is often decorated and "told stories" by the internet and media. Due to the influence of media, the cultural experience favored by tourists may not be the original cultural appearance of the tourist destination. To some extent, the separation of cultural holders and tourists on the issue of authenticity proves the contradiction between the combination of theory and reality in the field of cultural tourism, resulting in the emergence of cultural conflicts such as "commercialization" in cultural tourism. How to protect the authenticity of cultural projects in the tourist destination while meeting the needs of tourists, allow cultural holders to identify with the construction of new cultures and gain benefits from the development of cultural tourism has become a hot topic in the current field of cultural tourism[2].(Wu & Xie, 2019)

2. The re-construction of tourism culture

In the process of cultural tourism project development, the original culture of the tourist destination will be selected, adjusted, and decorated according to the needs of tourists, or new cultural labels and market selling points will be constructed according to the current tourist aesthetic, forming a re-construction of the tourist destination culture.

Especially the cultural re-construction generated by the promotion and marketing methods of using movies and TV dramas as tourist destinations. These manners will greatly stimulate tourists' tourism motivation. In recent years, many film and television dramas have chosen places with prominent history, culture, ethnic culture, or ecological culture as filming locations or story shooting locations to enhance the authenticity and beauty of the story. Successful film and television works not only earn high ratings, but more importantly, they can stimulate audience demand for tourism. The audiences bring themselves into the storyline of the film and television series, eager to visit the real filming site or the place where the story takes place, in order to express their love and loyalty to the film and television works. The audience and their relatives and friends will become potential tourists, and generate a tourism motivation called Holy Land Tour, a kind of tourism that enthusiastic fans visiting the location that film and television worked with in reality to express appreciation for the film and television (Yang, 2014).

Taking Longkan Village, a traditional village in Dali, Yunnan Province, as an example, it is a traditional village with relatively complete Bai ethnic folk cultural resources and natural cultural resources around the Erhai Lake. local residents have been

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[1] Junjie Su . The theoretical basis of the divergence and integration of cultural heritage tourism: authenticity [J]. *Chinese Cultural Heritage*.2020.(1):41-44.

[2] Jiaquan Wu, Dixiang Xie. Reflections on the authenticity of cultural heritage protection [J]. *Studies on Natural and Cultural Heritage*.2019.(9):1-5.

interdependent with Erhai since ancient times, so their high awareness of the ecological environment protection of Erhai and its surrounding areas has maintained a good ecological landscape in the village and Erhai. The film *Burst With Joy* sets the story and shooting background in Longkan Village. The story takes the quiet and beautiful natural landscape of the village as a clue, setting the protagonists' pursuit of "slow life" and "pure love" in Dali as the core of the film. After the movie was released, the village became a hot tourist attraction, received 700000 tourists that year, obtained a tourists increase of 17% compared to the previous year[3] (Gao, 2021). However, due to the strong colors used in the movie to describe tourists seeking "love" in Dali, many tourists come to Longkan Village in search of the protagonist's travel experiences related to "slow life" and "encountering love". Compared with local traditional ethnic culture, the labels of "slow life" and "encountering love" seem to be more popular among tourists, more and more entertainment venues for tourists such as bars opened by outside businessmen are appearing in the village, the love trap that arises due to film and tourist demands (For example, the bar workers creates chances for tourists to encounter each other, in fact their goals is to persuade tourists to consume) also appears in the Dali tourism market. After watching the film called *Burst With Joy*, many Dali people feel very disgusted with the slogan and idea of 'if you want to pursue love, go to Dali'. They believe that their hometown is a traditional Bai society that includes "fishing, farming, firewood gathering, and reading", rather than the noisy Garden of Eden where everyone can freely pursue love. Although the movie did attract tourists to the village and bring economic income related to the tourism industry, the noisy bars, conflicting values, and sleepless nights still disrupted the tranquility and quality of the village and affected the normal lives of the local residents[4].

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[3] The data was from *General Work Report on the Construction of 2014 Featured Tourism Village in Longxiadeng Natural Village, Longkan Village Committee, Dali Town Conclusion.*

[4] Yuanyuan Li. Reconstruction of ethnic culture in the process of ethnic tourism development-Take Lang Village,Anji County, Zhejiang Province as an example

The reason why these re-constructed cultures are regarded as authenticity by tourists and consumers is that they precisely meet the established expectations of tourists. The holders of traditional culture are local residents, while the main part of cultural re-construction of tourism destination are tourists. The different concept and value between the two groups have also led to cultural conflicts, even caused local residents abandon their homeland due to the change of living environment, led to the "hollowing out" of tourism destinations, cities, and villages, led to the commercialization of culture[5] (Li, 2011).

3. The coordination of cultural construction and "authenticity"

Is the re-constructed culture necessarily irreconcilable with the original culture? In reality, this is not the case either. In the context of tourism, there also are many cases that the re-constructed culture is well connected with local culture, gaining recognition, and becoming a part of local innovative cultural content. So cultural authenticity does not reject the modern re-construction of culture (Gao, 2016).

Throughout the development of human culture, it is essentially an innovative development of culture. Every culture in the world have the character of inclusion, and there is also a phenomenon about alternation of new and old culture in the process of human social development. The birth of excellent new cultures is also recognized by cultural holders and integrated into the entire cultural system for inheritance and development. The key to whether new and old cultures can be inherited lies in whether the reconstructed culture can be approved by the holders of the main culture.

The theory of Constructive Authenticity also explains this logic[6](Han & Ming, 2018). It believe that

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[J]. *Journal of Hanshan Normal College*.2011.(2):73-76.

[5] Lin Gao. The influence of "ancient town image" on ancient town community in movies and TV series-Case study on Ancient Town of Lijiang and Longxideng Village in Dali [J]. *China National Expo*.2016.(1):191-194.

[6] Junjie Su . The theoretical basis of the divergence and integration of cultural heritage tourism: authenticity [J]. *Chinese Cultural*

the definition of "original" in "authenticity" itself is subjective and controversial, just like the process of cultural evolution and development. If analyzed strictly according to the definition of "authenticity", cultural innovation used to be an unreal thing, but as society develops, a cultural group begins to accept and become accustomed to new culture, the new culture will naturally be redefined as "authenticity". If a cultural re-construction cause a strong conflict to the original culture of the tourist destination during development, causing social problems such as the loss of indigenous residents, commercialization of tourism, and price inflation, the local government and relevant departments will carry out governance work to adjust the development strategy of cultural tourism. Under effective guidance and management, the re-construction of culture can gradually be integrated and developed with local culture.

3.1 Selection function of cultural identity

The first response to cultural re-construction should be the cultural holders or local residents of tourist destinations. During this process, cultural holders identify with the re-constructed culture, accepting and adapting to the culture they identify with, and resisting and be dissatisfied with the culture they do not identify with. This cultural identification process can help local government to classify suitable tourism projects and ideas,in order to keep a healthy development trend for cultural tourism as a whole. In order for the new culture to be defined as "real" and to alleviate the conflict between old and new cultures, the process of cultural holders accepting, identifying, and recognizing differences in the re-constructed culture that cause by cultural tourism is particularly important (Wang et al., 2010).

Cultural identity is of great significance to the development and inheritance of a ethnic group's culture[7] (Wu, 2011). In a cultural society, cultural holders will derive a set of standards for cultural identity according to their cultural environment. In the process of cultural identity and recognition of

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[7] Qifu,Wu. Research on cultural identity in ethnic tourism literature [J]. *Guangxi Ethnic Studies*,.2011,01:191-198.

differences, they will screen new cultures suitable for the society. In the process of cultural identity, people can judge and absorb new cultures that have a positive impact on their own cultural development, Prevent the entry of foreign cultures that contradict one's own cultural values,thereby strengthening one's own culture and maximizing its positive development.

The current society emphasizes innovation, and a fixed cultural development concept has long been eliminated. In fact, the development of cultural tourism in the Longkan village of Dali does not exclude the entry of outside people, capital and new culture. On the other hand, the Longkan village of Dali can acquire the prosperity of cultural tourism, relied on the power of multiple innovations from outside.The innovation brought modern atmosphere and vitality for the traditional village. What's more, the re-constructed culture had drove the development of the tourism industry, increased economic income and also provided an up-to-date lifestyle for local residents.

However, not all re-constructed culture should be recognized by the local society, a culture of creating gimmicks and kitsch still can cause great controversy in the local society.

In the development of many cultural tourism projects nowadays, tourists and locals are often separated, and the true cultural holders become bystanders. However, in reality, the interaction between tourists and locals is an important link in the healthy construction and development of tourism culture. Local people will identify and screen the re-constructed culture, and tourism developers will decorate it appropriately according to the needs of tourists. They will guide tourists to experience cultural content, which will to some extent ensure the authenticity of the re-constructed culture.

3.2 Regulatory functions of residents and participation

In the development of ethnic culture in many cultural tourism nowadays, local governments or enterprises are emphasizing the development and utilization of ethnic culture. The true subject (residents or cultural holders) has become bystanders.

In fact, in the process of tourism planning,

listening to the opinions of local residents and even inviting them to participate tourism projects can greatly avoid cultural conflicts caused by tourism planners. In the historical process of community development, many communities have formed their own rules and methods of Community Governance in addition to government policies and enterprise development planning. With the process of cultural identity, local residents seek a complementary, mutually beneficial and co-development path that can benefit for tourists demands, local residents and culture protection.

Local residents' participation in community cultural governance can effectively coordinate the local culture and re-constructed culture. In addition, the process of community residents' cultural identity and recognition can ensure the healthy development and innovation of their own culture.

For example, while promoting the concept of "slow living" and developing the tourism economy along the Erhai Lake in Dali, the game between outsiders and local residents is also constantly unfolding. The local residents in Longkan village hope to benefit from the development of the tourism industry, but they also do not want excessive commercialization to affect normal life. Therefore, they spontaneously assume the responsibility of regulating tourism behavior. The local residents stipulates the village rules and regulations that local residents and those businessmen who from outside should strictly obey the rules and regulations of the village when engaging in tourism activities such as investment, accommodation, work, leisure and vacation, and should cherish the natural environment and respect folk customs.

This not only safeguards the survival rights of local residents, but also presents a "real" cultural environment for tourists, protects village culture and creates more opportunities for cultural tourism in the village.

Conclusion

In order to promote the integrated development of cultural tourism, tourism planners will use methods such as film and television filming as the main channel for promoting tourist destinations. They present the most beautiful image of the tourist destination after decoration, beautification, or screening by film and TV series to attract tourists. However, the cultural image constructed in this way may not necessarily be the true local cultural image. The newly re-constructed culture may integrate into the local culture and become a representative cultural content with vitality and creativity, but it may also cause conflicts with the traditional culture of tourism destinations due to the issue of cultural authenticity.

The culture re-constructed is not entirely worthless, as stated in the theory of "constructivist authenticity", whether the re-constructed culture can integrate into local culture and become a representative cultural content with vitality and creativity, depending on if the constructed culture can guide the good development of tourism destination culture and be accepted by local people. Therefore, in tourism planning and design, the designers and government need to   listen to the opinions of the local residents or cultural holders of the tourism destination in order to give asustainable development spaces and opportunities for the re-constructed culture. The participation of local residents in cultural tourism is a crucial aspect that cannot be ignored, and the correct way to re-construct a culture that conforms to historical logic is to simultaneously benefit both tourists and local residents of the destination.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest to this work.

Acknowledgement

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