



From "Fishing Village" to "Internet Celebrity Beach": Image Alienation and Multi-Subject Dialogue under the Media Intervention of Xiaohongshu—Take Haiyan Village, Kunming as an Example

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Abstract. In recent years, many urban edges that have been packaged and transformed by artists have quietly become popular on social media with the image of Internet celebrities, attracting more and more people to check in and spend, and gradually being regarded as local scenic spots. This research takes Haiyan Village in Kunming as an example. It uses the combination of visual anthropological composition, data comparative analysis and online field survey to conduct in-depth research. It integrates the changes in the image of Haiyan Village in recent years and conducts comparative research, and collects the real voices of local people and tourists on social media in the form of online ethnography. Research shows that under the influence of media algorithms, such marginal space has completed the opposite "symbolization" transformation. At the same time, the "symbol capital" of such fields is transformed into "economic capital" through platform algorithms and commercial realization, causing a series of problems such as discourse negotiation and resource competition between subjects in space. These practical problems damage the fairness of space existence, causing the village to fall into an invasion crisis of exchange value to use value.

Keywords: Haiyan Village, Media Image, Internet Celebrity Economy, Symbol Capital, Spatial Justice.

1 Introduction

Digital communication media is booming, and various social media platforms make it easy for people to understand all kinds of dynamic information and resources. The marginal space of urban and rural junction areas is also undergoing a transformation of "mediaization" - it no longer represents "dirty, chaotic and poor". Under the packaging of various artists and emerging industries, it quickly completes the transformation of being social media and labeled by traffic [1]. However, it should be noted that social media is not a pure transmitter here, but a role with power-over-depth [2]. All kinds of algorithms show the "beautified" picture of this process to hundreds of thousands of

people, and the traffic turns into rent and real commercial value, which means that different discourse subjects such as local governments, artists, capitalists, aborigines, etc. need to compete directly for the right to speak.

This study takes the marginal villages with typical informal characteristics as an example. It is specifically developed from the symbol transformation of Haiyan Village, the visual preference mechanism of social media and the dialogue of plural subjects, and sorts out the complete path of such marginal space from visual symbol construction to capital flow transformation, and then to discourse consultation and resource competition. The ultimate research goal of this study is to reveal how the platform transforms the "sybotic capital" of such space into "economic capital" through platform algorithms and commercial realization, and to try to answer how aborigines can master the digital discourse and not be marginalized in the face of this era dominated by traffic algorithms, so as to achieve fairer resource sharing.

2 Literature Review

Xiao Ning and Duan Wenting started from the perspective of landscape society from the perspective of landscape society in the article *"Research on Cultural Space Production of Tourism 'Internet Celebrity Village' - Taking Haiyan Village in Kunming"*, they adopted a combination of network text analysis and content analysis to study the spatial production and dissemination of Haiyan Village in Yunnan, and analyzed the identity and role of the government, enterprises, villagers and tourists in combination with the rural tourism culture model, and made contributions to this research in terms of tourism culture and spatial structure of Haiyan Village [3]; At the same time, Zhou Zheng is putting forward the analysis framework of "algorithm geography" in the article *"Algorithm-Driven Urban Space Reconstruction: Analysis Based on Xiaohongshu Travel Notes"*, which reveals the triple mechanism of social media participating in the reconstruction of urban space and provides a new theoretical perspective for understanding urban space politics in the digital age [2]; Sun Meiling and Cui Yixin pointed out in the article *"How to Weave Space: The Media Shaping and Generation Logic of 'Internet Celebrity Checking Place' in Social Platforms - Based on the Case Study of Beijing Tsubuya Bookstore on Xiaohongshu"* that the algorithm logic of Xiaohongshu is essentially a value screening process with the CES scoring system as the core. The platform determines the distribution energy level of notes after the initial traffic pool by quantitatively weighting dimensions such as likes, favorites and interactive comments. This means that the media presentation of Haiyan Village and other spaces is not a random display, but the result of the algorithm screening and redistribution of content originality and social quality according to the interaction weight. This study takes Xiaohongshu as the main sample, which confirms that the CES scoring system is inclined to the traffic of content with "high interaction potential" [4].

However, the existing research rarely combines the theoretical framework with specific examples to explore how the ranking rules and aesthetic preferences of social media platforms empower foreign operators and weaken the capital discourse of local aborigines. Relying on Lefevol's spatial trinary theory, this article collects and analyzes

the opinions of netizens of different identities to reveal the impact of media preferences on spatial justice and supplement the existing research gaps.

3 Research Method

3.1 Multimodal Content Analysis Method

The study selected TikTok and Xiaohongshu, the core positions of the current tourism "planting grass" and visual consumption, as data sources. Search with "Haiyan Village" as the keyword in the two platforms, follow the principles of "relevance priority" and "heat priority", and intercept the top 100 notes containing pictures or videos in the comprehensive sorting. The sample collection time interval is set as Haiyan began to transform (2020) to the present (2026).

By disassembling the 100 samples collected, it was found that the image of Haiyan Village on social media showed a high degree of "visual tacit understanding". First of all, the protagonist of the picture is almost monopolized by the three things of "sunset, lake, and Internet celebrity store". In the vast majority of popular notes, Haiyan Village has been simplified into an aesthetic symbol with only "orange tone", and those elements that represent the true appearance of the village, such as roadside trash cans, random wires, and dilapidated houses, have been "washed" by bloggers through composition skills or post-processing. Secondly, a very obvious phenomenon is the "invisibility" of the aborigines. In these hot contents, it is difficult to see the real living conditions of the villagers. They occasionally appear in the camera, just as a vague shadow in the background, or a symbol that adds "ancient flavor". Finally, copywriting and labels are also constantly strengthening this prejudice. Everyone is using the words "healing", "romantic" and "pretending to be in Dali" to define this place. "Internet celebrity punching place" is essentially a template that standardizes the experience of all tourists [5]. This forms a psychological hint: Haiyan Village no longer seems to be an inhabited village, but a "digital paradise" that exists specially for taking photos and escaping from reality. This image of the external world presented after careful selection by the medium is called the "mimetic environment", which affects people's understanding, judgment, decision-making and behavior of the outside world [6].

3.2 Flow Control Experiment

In order to verify whether there is a difference in traffic distribution between social media platforms and "Internet celebrity aesthetic narrative" and "critical narrative", this study released two types of comparison notes synchronously on the Xiaohongshu platform: two types of AB published 10 contents at the same time on the same account, forming 10 control groups. Among them, Class A focuses on the primitive houses and buildings in Haiyan Village, the villagers who are washing fish, and some open spaces full of dilapidated debris, restoring the original appearance of this ancient fishing village without commercial transformation; Class B shows the "moment of film" in Haiyan Village from a specific angle, and the camera is aimed at the shops that are popularized and commercialized. , scenic spots, using visual rhetoric to show a highly artistic

digital space. After 24 hours, the traffic data of these notes is counted, and the preferences and screening mechanism of the platform algorithm are observed.

After 24 hours, 10 Class A note data (likes and collection/comments/browsing) are: 0/0/79; 2/0/120; 2/1/220; 0/0/257; 1/0/95; 3/1/201; 1/1/88; 2/1/166; 0/0/105; 2/1/118. The data of Class B notes are: 5/3/188; 12/3/285; 3/2/110; 20/1/204; 12/8/111; 9/0/206; 10/0/311; 15/5/380; 40/4/402; 4/0/98.

This experiment shows that under the condition that the account number, release time and copywriting type are the same, the platform will give priority to the Internet celebrity image promotion opportunity. The data shows that the algorithm has obvious distribution preferences for symbols with "visual tension", so that Group B notes can quickly break the initial traffic pool and get continuous exposure. This kind of aesthetics is also easier to attract netizens to comment and leave messages, which is more in line with the aesthetic needs of the public than documentary themes. The tilt weight of this traffic pool is an essential platform algorithm's screening of "visual communication efficiency". This signal with "visual tension" invisibly establishes a set of aesthetic access thresholds, so that documentary content with more life thickness often has a natural disadvantage in the game of traffic.

3.3 Online Field Survey

In order to capture the collision of views of different subjects, this study delves into the user evaluation part of social media notes, comment areas and consumer platforms, collects the real voices of different subjects, and analyzes the contradictions between different subjects through online field surveys.

The problems in the representative comments of tourists mainly focus on the problems such as high food prices, unreasonable parking fees and chaotic traffic management. The tourism supporting services are seriously lagging behind, resulting in extremely low overall cost performance and poor consumption experience.

Through in-depth observation of the social media comment area, this study found that there is a significant difference of interest in Haiyan Village in the process of spatial production. On the one hand, there is an obvious aesthetic premium for the "Internet celebrity landscape" dominated by capital, and the high unit price reflects the harvest of symbolic capital on the consumer market; on the other hand, due to the lack of digital narrative ability, the goods provided by the aborigines are still stuck in the primitive stage of low-end and low prices, forming a huge price gap. In addition, the frequent contradictions such as "high parking fees" and "battery car soliciting" in the comments reveal the current situation that aborigines try to make compensatory profits through physical access after losing the right to define space.

These voices show that although the media transformation of Haiyan Village has brought huge traffic, at the actual level, deep spatial contradictions and reputation crises have arisen between different subjects due to the lack of transparency of the distribution mechanism and the inequality of the right to speak.

4 Discussion and Analysis

4.1 Visual Purification and Speech Deprivation in Landscape Society

According to Gui Debo's theory of 'landscape society', the life of modern society is presented as a huge landscape accumulation [7]. Statistics show that the coverage rate of the symbols of sunset, sea surface, exquisite coffee in popular notes is as high as more than 90%, while elements such as sewery canals, low earthen houses, and aborigines' labor, which represent the original state of marginal villages, have almost disappeared in the picture. Therefore, in order to retain users' attention, the algorithm chooses to give priority to those content with low aesthetic cost and can quickly provide dopamine. This "visual cleaning" reflects the strong intervention of the media in spatial production: The algorithm induces creators to conduct self-examination through the traffic reward and punishment mechanism, which leads to the fact that the physics of Haiyan Village is facing the problem, replaced by a rhetorical and de-life-oriented 'landscape'.

In the sample of multimodal analysis, the characteristic of the aboriginal visual absence is a structural presentation. The author found that in most of the hot notes, the aborigines did not seem to be intentionally erased, but an unconscious strategy: Slighted by the common aesthetic focus of the algorithm and the creator. Even if the aborigines appear in the picture, they are mostly in the form of 'fuzzy silhouettes in the distant view' and 'as the background of folk decoration'. This form of alterristic reproduction is a serious projection of the subjectivity of social media space production. There is another kind of visual choice inequality hidden here: urban bloggers who hold mobile terminals and have a certain aesthetic right to speak enter the same space with the aborigines of marginal villages who are others and are stared at. The vision of seeing is purposeful: searching for image symbols that conform to the logic of platform communication. Under such emphasis, the real life subject of the aboriginal space, its real life content: the visual experience of the aborigines identified by the algorithm as unrelated to the core information and the landscape, is downgraded to the background object of being stared at at the composition level. An invisible imbalance of visual power does not have a rigid oppositional impact, but it eliminates the self-narrative ability of the aboriginal subject, laying an ambush for the subsequent distribution of spatial interests.

4.2 Space Justice and Discourse Competition

Lefevol believes that space should first be born for people (right of use), but after being intervened by capital, it becomes a product (right of exchange) [8]. The rheological change of Haiyan Village also proves that the center of gravity of space production has shifted from material construction to digital characterization. Social media is not only spreading Haiyan Village, but also producing Haiyan Village. In Lefevol's vision, such 'digital production' will bring a comprehensive invasion of exchange value to use value, and Haiyan Village will alienate from the life of the aborigines to the visual raw material of traffic capital.

Under the intervention of art and the influence of Internet celebrity economy, the artistic atmosphere and aesthetic experience in Haiyan Village have realized the realization of economic capital [9]. Among them, it involves the sharing of interests of different subjects - Internet celebrity stores and capitalists are artistic packaging on Xiaohongshu, the space premium is successful, and the geographical location is good, and the coffee shop decorated with "Internet celebrity's sense of film" dares to set the price high; but at the same time, the villagers lack the ability of digital narrative and can only earn small profits through some basic, low-end cheap services. When the aborigines realize that they cannot continue to profit from "aesthetics", they will use the only remaining physical access interests in their hands as compensation, such a vicious circle. This kind of interest distribution that lacks institutional guarantee not only fails to achieve the purpose of spatial justice distribution, but also is a fatal blow to the reputation of Haiyan Village. It can be said that this artistic transformation of media intervention, if it does not give rise to a capital mechanism that prioritizes the interests of aborigines, then the urban village transformation plan is very likely to alienate between different subjects [10]. The essence of this imbalance in the distribution of interests is the projection of the essence of the digital divide in space. Therefore, if the invisible class solidification of the landscape reconstruction of Haiyan Village cannot be repaired in terms of technological empowerment and policy guidance, then the spatial production dominated by this algorithm will eventually be reduced to an aesthetic exile and economic harvest of the original life form.

5 Conclusion

This study focuses on the case of Haiyan Village and talks about the intervention of social media aesthetic preferences on the aesthetic interest of rural landscape. Haiyan Village, as a marginal village space in the sense of the field, the original ecology and national labels of the spatial image symbol in the past few years are shifting to the aesthetic direction of Internet celebrities, and these "Internet celebrity aesthetic narratives" are similar. Haiyan Village, as a real scene of fishing and hunting and living in Dianchi, is being overwhelmed by a group of homogeneous "Internet celebrity symbols". This spatial transformation is essentially the comprehensive occupation of local space by the "landscape society". Haiyan Village is downgraded to a digital image that can be consumed on the screen, and the real social attributes and residential functions are dissolved by the marginalized traffic logic. This confirms that the aesthetic hegemony of the algorithm has seriously led to the imbalance in the manipulation of the distribution of interests in space: foreign capital that has mastered the digital discourse easily occupies the landscape premium, and the aborigines who lack narrative ability are squeezed into low-end labor and defensive marginal rent. This vicious circle not only affects the fairness of space, but also dispels the significance of such marginal areas as carriers of urban cultural diversity.

The focus of more attention in future research should also be on exploring how to avoid the consequences of attracting the aesthetic hegemony of Internet celebrities with the spatial culture that can be defined by the media in the transformation of marginal

communities in the future. The author believes that the focus of breaking the aesthetic hegemony of Internet celebrities is still the reconstruction required by such subjectivity at present. In the process of landscape reconstruction, the power of the life discourse of the aborigines is found back. Only by balancing the tension of algorithmic narrative and physical reality can these marginal villages be expected to put aside the fate of "flight flowers" of Internet celebrities and return to the spatial background of the original important spatial carrier of urban cultural diversity.

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