

A study on the development of cultural tourism products in Tianjin

--a case of new year paintings in Yangliuqing

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Abstract

The folk custom tourism has become an important form of cultural tourism in the international leisure tourism market. Yangliuqing new year painting is a typical representative of cultural and artistic inheritance in Tianjin city. It is urgent to analyze how to effectively promote the development of experience tourism in Yangliuqing town. In this work, the author analyzed two key factors, including inheritance and historical civilization. As shown in the analysis, the organic combination and integration of tourism and culture can promote the upgrading of the tourism product at the cultural level, and boost tourism economy.

Keywords: *cultural tourism; new year paintings; consumption behavior.*

1 Introduction

The folk custom tourism has developed into an important form of tourism^{1, 2}, and gradually developed into the main content of tourism, such as product development, folk custom appreciation, humanistic experience and so on. The main line of tourism activities based on folk custom tourism is the experience and appreciation of folk culture.

Tianjin is located in the North China Plain, the confluence of the major tributaries of the Haihe River. Haihe River meanders through the city of Tianjin. The ancient canal industry as the main industry had developed for over 600 years in Tianjin. Tianjin has created its own city style with the unique combination of both ancient and modern characteristics. Yangliuqing town, as one of the most prosperous areas, is located in Xiqing District of Tianjin City. Yangliuqing is the folk art center during Ming and Qing Dynasty, where one of four Chinese woodcut new year paintings was spawned. Yangliuqing new year Painting folk art was started in Chongzhen period of the Ming Dynasty and prevailed from Yongzheng

period to the early period of Emperor Guangxu. Due to the rising of lithography, the folk woodcut new year painting gradually started to fade³. Most of the subjects are based on the traditional Chinese operas and fairy tales. Among the broad range of topics, Baby is the subject mater of Yangliuqing new year painting, which symbolizes happiness and auspiciousness. A cartoon-style rendering method is used in the woodcut new year painting with full composition^{4, 5}, exquisite brushwork and bright color. The facial features, clothing and other important parts are influenced by the Chinese traditional painting including the painting academies in the Qing Dynasty. Therefore, it can be a very meaningful thing for tourists to experience the new year paintings making process in order to get a better understanding of the folk culture⁶. At the same time, people can get more acquainted with cultural evolution about the city of Tianjin. For the tourism industry, it is an important process to increase tourists' consumption possibility greatly.

In this study, it can be necessary to point out that the development of experience tourism in Yangliuqing town is an important way to promote the tourism culture. We analyzed the effect of the main factors on the local tourism industry in detail, and put forward some countermeasures to solve some problems during the process of tourism culture communication. Meanwhile, experience tourism played an important role to provide the culture information to the consumers. In addition, we discussed the effect of the organic combination and integration of tourism and culture on promoting the upgrading of the tourism product and the development of tourism economy.

2 Analysis of main factors

The folk custom tourism will have a more broad prospect for the development of the tourism industry at the aim of enriching the connotation of tourism activities. There is no denying that the folk culture is an important element of China's traditional cultural heritage. As far as cultural characteristics are concerned, there are two main aspects, one is inheritance, and the other is historical civilization. Inheritance is mainly affected by local customs, habits, human characteristics, regional culture and so on, through which one culture is inherited from generation to generation, gradually changes over time, and then evolves into a regional culture with the characteristic of the time. Historical civilization is an important form of record reflecting a regional economic and cultural conditions. The cultural inheritance can be clearly seen from the developing history of Yangliuqing new year painting, as shown in Fig. 1.

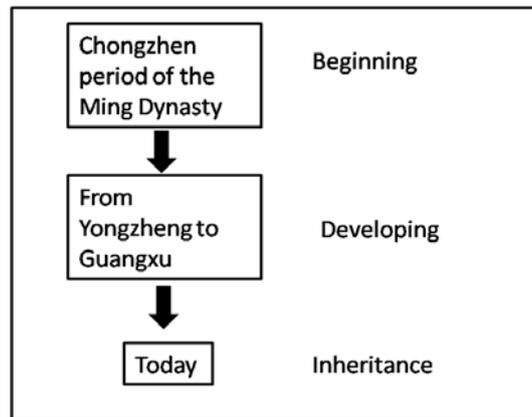


Fig.1- The history and inheritance of Yangliuqing new year painting folk art.

As far as Yangliuqing new year painting is concerned, it is of great significance to use this carrier for the celebration of new year. With the development and integration of economy and culture, the definition of tourism product concept is more extensive. Generally speaking, tourism products can be referred to the sum of all the products and services consumed by tourists in the form of currency. Tourism products have been shown as not only a tourist route for tourists, but also more of a tourist experience, such as cultural tourism. Therefore, tourism has become an important carrier for the inheritance and promotion of culture. Tourism consumption activities show strong cultural characteristics during the process of tourism management activities. The essence of tourism consumption activities is cultural interaction. The main process is experiencing and consuming culture. As for cultural tourism, it not only excavates and produces culture, operates and sells culture, but also renews and promotes local culture. The obvious characteristics and diversity of the cultural tourism industry have a broad prospect for the development of the tourism industry. The outstanding characteristics of the folk custom tourism will be a big help for the sustainable development of tourism economy.

3 Discussions

Yangliuqing new year painting is a typical representative of cultural and artistic inheritance. Before the development of the modern printing industry, Yangliuqing new year painting was one of the main ways to celebrate festivals. People traveling to Yangliuqing town can not only enjoy the fine and exquisite art of Yangliuqing new year painting, but also experience the whole preparation process of Yangliuqing new year painting from A to Z. The preparation process of the new year painting includes drafting, board framing, hand-engraving, printing, coloring, and mounting, as shown in Fig. 2. The cultural experience is an important step for the tourism of Yangliuqing new year painting. It shows the cultural connotation of the new year painting very well, and also enables the tourists to appreciate the ancient art of

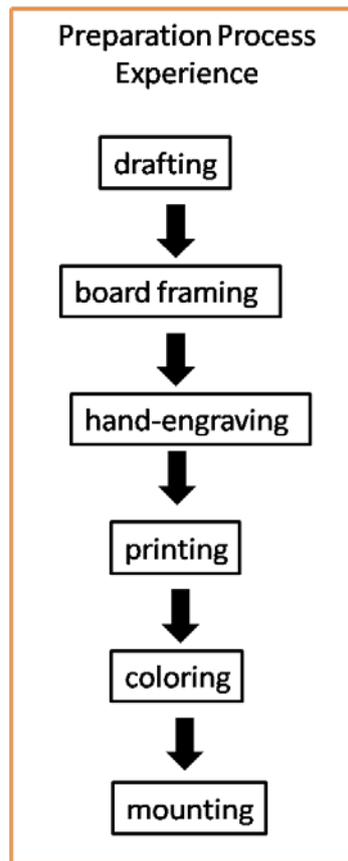


Fig. 2- Experiencing the whole preparation process of Yangliuqing new year painting

Yangliuqing new year painting, which is the biggest feature of Yangliuqing new year painting tourism.

An important feature of Yangliuqing new year painting lies in its ingenious combination of Chinese Classics and wood engravings. For the tourists who know Chinese culture, most of them know the Four Great Classical Novels of China. One of them is A Dream of Red Mansions written by Cao Xueqin. By displaying the typical scenes and portraying the figures with the outstanding art, Yangliuqing new year painting tells the story of this great novel and also the cultural connotation underlying it. Tourists not only have access to the ancient new year painting art, but also have opportunity to gain some insight into this great classical novel. In general, more knowledge can be obtained from experience tourism of the ancient painting art, as shown in Fig 3.

To experience a different culture is the main purpose for most tourists, as shown in fig.3. An exploration of the relationship and the interaction between different cultures can be brought about from the tourism activity. The essence of tourism is culture. The organic combination and integration of tourism and culture can promote the upgrading of the tourism product at the cultural level and the development of tourism economy. The charm of national cultural

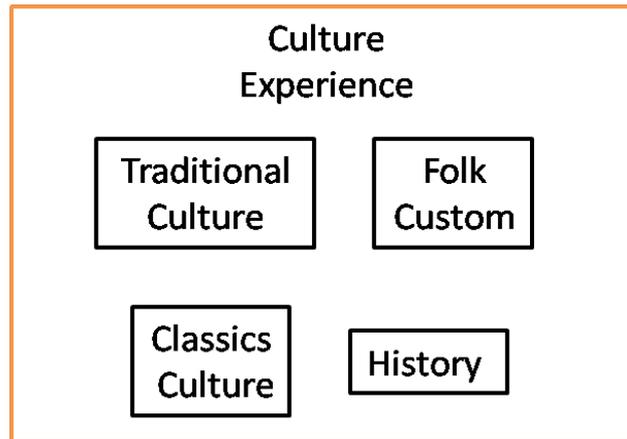


Fig. 3- Experiencing the culture of Yangliuqing new year painting

tourism lies in cultural experience, including customs, the living habits of the local people, etc. Yangliuqing new year painting, which has become a cultural identity card in Tianjin, can be seen in almost all streets and lanes of Tianjin. By experiencing the whole preparation process of Yangliuqing new year painting, foreign tourists can have a deep understanding of the cultural connotation of the folk art, which vividly reflects the economic and cultural conditions of that time.

4 Summary

In conclusion, the effect of two key factors on the folk custom tourism is analyzed during the process of tourism in detail. How to promote the development of experience tourism in Yangliuqing town is the “priority question”. Experience tourism should be the main developing mode for the tourism industry in Yangliuqing. The researching results show that the organic combination and integration of tourism and culture can promote the upgrading of the tourism product and boost tourism economy.

Acknowledgement

This research was financially supported by Tianjin Art and Science Project (2014-C14071).

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