

Research Progress, Theories Review and Trend Forecast on Placeness of Tourism Destination

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Abstract—This paper systematically summarizes the related research achievements about concept connotation, theoretical framework, research progress and research contents of Tourism Destination. Based on characteristic analysis of these published articles, it gives prediction and suggestion on the future research trends in this area. It shows that placeness is the uniqueness of the specific place. Such uniqueness includes not only the characteristics of the place, but also the affections and meanings that people give to the place. As for the interaction between place and tourism, the research focus should gradually shift from the analysis on the importance of placeness to tourism to the impact of tourism activity to placeness. It has become a necessary stage that goes through placeness, then mobility, at last placelessness. Collision between tourism destinations and external factors is also constantly generating new localities, but this process is relatively slow. In the future research on reconstructing placeness of tourism destination, more case studies on specific types of tourism destinations is expected. Moreover, it will be new perspective that exploring connotation, influence, trend and reconstruction of placeness of tourism destination based on human-earth interaction, host-guest interaction.

Keywords—Placeness; Mobility; Placelessness; Theories Review; Trend Forecast

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourists are more and more inclined to pursue the heterogeneous tourism experience, so the placeness of tourism destination has gradually become an important guarantee to improve the competitiveness of destination tourism. But tourism is also a process of consuming the placeness of tourism destination. Under the background of modernization and globalization, the accelerated flow of funds, people, information and culture brought about by tourism makes the development of tourism destination tend to be homogeneous. However, the placeness of tourism destination is not stable, but a dynamic characteristic^[1].

In this context, many scholars pay attention to the research field of tourism destination placeness. Through searching and consulting the relevant research literature of tourism destination placeness, the author believes that the domestic research on tourism destination placeness began in the mid-1990s, and the related research has an upward trend in recent years. The research contents include the connotation, influence, trend and reconstruction of tourism destination placeness. The trend from dynamic to placelessness and the placeness

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reconstruction are the current research hotspots.

II. THE CONNOTATION OF PLACENESS

After the 1970s, humanistic geographers such as Relph and Duan Yifu re-introduced "place" into the study of human geography. Relph put forward that place, especially placeness, was one of the main concepts that distinguished humanistic geography from positivist geography at that time.

Every place had three attributes of objective matter, function and meaning, and placeness was embodied in these three attributes^[2]. Duan Yifu put forward the sense of place, which includes two meanings: the inherent characteristics of the place itself and the sense of people's attachment to the place^[3]. Duan Yifu put forward that "place" not only gives people living space, but also is a place where people's experience and values converge. Therefore, it also has characteristics or "identity characteristics of place"^[4]. Compared with space, place has more significance and value. Cultural geography combines human initiative with placeness organically. It holds that the long-term accumulation of cultural characteristics and people's perception and recognition of a region make its placeness^[5].

Research on tourism destination placeness in China began in the mid-1990s. In the early stage, more scholars focused on defining the concept of placeness from the perspective of constituent elements. Chen Chuankang first put forward the concept of context, and the connotation of context and placeness is essentially the same. It is also pointed out that "local context" includes the natural geographical characteristics, historical and cultural characteristics of a place and the characteristics of modern national folk culture^[6]. Li Leilei also quoted this concept and pointed out that "image content comes from context"^[7]. She also pointed out that placeness includes not only visual and concrete elements of landscape entity, but also abstract elements of tourism image, which belong to social and human perception system^[8]. Wu Bihu, who first put forward the concept of "placeness" in China, pointed out in his monograph "Principles of Regional Planning", that placeness refers to the uniqueness of the place itself, and that the determination of placeness includes natural geographical features, historical and cultural characteristics and modern national folk culture^[9]. He subdivided the element of culture into placeness components, and defined the concept and composition of placeness more concretely and clearly.

Most of the above studies are based on the understanding of natural geography and history and culture. On this basis, some scholars put forward that economy is also one of the local elements. Wu Shuhua pointed out that placeness includes the natural axis of climate, the historical axis of development process, the economic axis of industrial form and the cultural axis of customs and habits^[10]. Tang Shunying divided the elements of placeness into four aspects: immovable natural conditions, historical accumulation of substantive elements, rooted in the social, cultural and economic uniqueness^[11]. In recent years, many scholars have paid more attention to the definition of placeness based on emotional understanding. They regarded placeness as a characteristic of temperature and consider emotion as one of the elements of placeness. Liu Bo and others hold that placeness has two meanings: one is the deep cultural tradition characterized by distinct rationality, originality and practicality gradually formed in the process of local cultural accumulation and interaction with other place; the other is that the local residents identify with these long-term accumulated cultures^[12]. He Hanlin pointed out that the meaning of place is not only the function of physics, but also the subjective and emotional attachment of human beings to place^[13]. Sun Jiuxia believed that placeness should be defined from two aspects: subjective emotion and distinctive difference. A place has either subjective emotional identity and connection or functional material difference^[14].

Many scholars also pay more attention to the distinction between destination and other places when defining the concept of placeness, that is, the uniqueness of destination, which is also one of the main competitiveness of destination. Tang Wenyue believed that placeness refers to the characteristics of a place, which is unique from other places^[15]. Wu Wenjia believed that the core competitiveness of tourism destinations stems from differences^[16].

We can summarize the connotation of the placeness of tourism destination from the concept, composition and characteristics. As for the concept of placeness, this paper, like other scholars, follows Wu Bihu's view that placeness refers to the uniqueness of the place itself. This uniqueness includes not only the characteristics of the place itself, but also the emotions and meanings that people give to the place in the process of human-earth interaction. Many studies have proposed that the elements of placeness include the characteristics of the destination itself, such as physical geography, folk culture, history and culture, and social economy. However, the understanding of the placeness should be considered from both human and local levels. In the existing research, there are few studies on the analysis of its elements from the perspective of human and emotional. This paper holds that the emotions of the residents of the destination and the expectation image of the tourists for the destination are also unique characteristics of the destination, and they are the elements of placeness. In addition to its own uniqueness, placeness is also dynamic. It's not unchanged, especially in the context of globalization and increasing mobility. Placeness is also constantly weakening and restructuring.

III. THE INTERACTION BETWEEN PLACENESS AND TOURISM

Many scholars have analyzed the positive impact of placeness on tourism destination, and applied it to tourism image, tourism planning and urban development and construction. They believed that placeness is an important prerequisite for image construction of tourism destination and the basis of tourism development. Li Leilei regarded the placeness of tourism destination as one of the elements of the image of tourism destination, and endows it with more profound significance^[8]. Tang Wenyue more specifically analyzed the positive role of placeness in tourism development. He pointed out that placeness is the basis of tourism development, and to a certain extent determines the tourism attraction of a place; placeness also determines the direction of tourism development and the nature of tourism destination to a certain extent; and the richness of the influence of placeness^[15]. After that, many scholars take a specific city or scenic spot as an example to analyze the development of tourism based on characteristics of placeness, such as Wu Wei's concerned about the construction of Dalian's city image, and the tourists' understanding of its characteristics of urban cultural landscape^[17]. The positive influence of placeness on tourism destination is not only reflected in the link of tourism development, but also runs through the whole process of tourism development, which is an important basis for maintaining sustainable tourism development. Sun Jiuxia pointed out that tourism as a kind of consumption activity in an unusual environment, tourists pursue the heterogeneous experience, so the relative "real" placeness is the premise of sustainable development of tourism destination^[18]. Wu Wenjia pointed out that the core competitiveness of tourism destinations often stems from their differences. Their connotations and meanings are different from those of other places^[16].

Based on the above research results, the placeness of tourism destination is an important prerequisite for the tourism development of destination to create tourism attraction and maintain the heterogeneity of tourism destination. In recent years, with the vigorous development of tourism and the gradual expansion of the impact of tourism activities on destinations, scholars have paid attention to the impact of tourism activities on the placeness of tourism destinations. Tang Wenyue analyzed the role of tourism in local areas from two aspects. He pointed out that tourism development can not only highlight the placeness, but also enrich it. At the same time, tourism development often promotes local changes or rebuilding, and even leads to placelessness^[15]. Jiang Liao through studying the local changes of Zhouzhuang ancient town, found that the impact of tourism on the placeness of the ancient town is complex and diverse. The forces of modernization and globalization have not reduced the tourism destination to inanimate space. On the contrary, the game of power has been launched among various interest groups. At the same time, under the comprehensive influence of capital power, cultural knowledge, folk life and other factors, multiple forms of social relations and interaction have been created to promote the diversification of local construction of Zhouzhuang Ancient Town^[19]. Sun Jiuxia believed that tourism has two-sided influence on placeness, one is to dilute the original culture, the other is to create a multi-cultural side. The influence of power,

capital, culture and folklore on tourism destination is complex and diverse. These elements are reflected differently in different tourism projects, and their roles in transformation of placeness are quite different^[14].

IV. DEVELOPMENT TREND OF PLACENESS

Since the 21st century, social science research has witnessed a wave of "mobility turn", and a new mobility paradigm has emerged as the times require^[20]. In Local Perception and Global Perception, the concept of "detrterritorization" was quoted as pointing out that "the social and cultural practices that originally connected with the local areas have been separated from the local areas", and the local areas will become more mobile. Yang Qihao has sorted out and analyzed the main research contents on liquidity in the West since the beginning of the 21st century, and summarized the main topics in western human geography as follows: liquidity practice and shaping of spatial significance, the construction of social relations and cultural significance in the process of liquidity^[21]. Sun Jiuxia conducted an interdisciplinary dialogue on the topic of liquidity, which promoted the domestic academic circles to pay more attention to the phenomenon of liquidity and to interpret the liquidity theory itself^[22]. Under the new mobility paradigm, mobility has become the core of tourism. Many scholars pay attention to the process of tourism mobility, the impact of destination mobility on destination and the significance of social construction. We should focus on how to weaken the negative impact of tourism mobility on local areas. It includes promoting the flow of ideology and culture, dispelling the antagonism between different local senses, establishing a mechanism to coordinate the interests and contradictions among stakeholders, and strengthening the communication and mutual understanding between residents and tourists.

Placelessness is another concept closely related to tourism destination research. Placelessness, first proposed by Relph, means a place where identity gradually weakens and loses meaning relative to the people in the place. He thought that the commercialized tourism destination is a typical example of placelessness and "non-real" local significance^[2]. Marc Auge pointed out that "if a place is defined as a correlation with history and identity, then there is placeless where such a correlation does not exist". In his view, the post-modern conditions created a space without place and meaning, and gradually moved away from the original anthropological sense of place^[23]. Relph and Aguee have pointed out that some artificially constructed spaces are placeless because they lack historical thickness and unique place significance, such as railway stations, airports, and post-modern space such as Disneyland^[24]. Oakes called the phenomenon of modernization affecting local loss "the paradox of modernization"^[25]. Ritzer pointed out that globalization is a complex relationship between "nothingness" and "reality". Although globalization means high efficiency and low cost, it also brings the expansion of "nothingness", which makes the local "real things" lose their survival soil. Oakes's "paradox of modernization" and Ritzer's "expansion of nothingness" all refer to the process of turning placeness into placelessness. Many scholars have explored the causes of the placelessness in tourism destinations. Among them, the loss of local culture and

significance is the main reason for the placelessness of tourism destinations, and its fundamental reason lies in the unreasonable balance between local subjects and foreign capital, culture and other factors in the tide of globalization and modernization.

V. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PLACENESS

Users of "non-local" space can completely realize the construction and production of placeness through complex space practice. How to reconstruct the placeness of tourism destination has become a research hotspot in recent years. The loss of local culture and significance caused by the unreasonable transformation of the local subject in the process of tourism development is the main reason for the placelessness of tourism destination. From this point of view, giving full play to the main role of local government and residents, producing new local culture have become the main way to reconstruct the placeness of tourism destinations.

Some scholars put forward ways to reconstruct the placeness of tourism destination from the perspective of residents' emotions. Wu Wenjia pointed out that we should make full use of the subjectivity of residents, change the simple conflicting sentiment into a positive discourse fight, break the cold capital logic, reshape the placeness^[16]; Gao Quan pointed out that in the period of "Houcheng Village" in which the relationship between human and land was broken, villagers's construction of local significance was mainly based on the emotional appeal of nostalgia^[26]. Liang Zengxian discussed the influence of cultural transformation on the change of the significance of placeness. The study pointed out that local governments and developers, with the help of spatial imagination, endowed the local with new cultural meaning through the cultural production of symbols and relationships such as architectural names, forms, structures, landscapes, lifestyles and social networks, as well as the construction of spatial materiality^[27].

VI. CONCLUSION

Placeness refers to the uniqueness of the place itself. This uniqueness includes not only the characteristics of the place itself, but also the emotions and meanings that people give to the place in the process of human-land interaction. Future studies on the connotation of placeness in tourism destinations should focus on the human aspects of its constituent elements, including residents' identity and emotions, tourists' expectations of destination direction, and more attention should be paid to human-land interaction, guest-host interaction and social construction in addition to the placeness formed by historical accumulation.

The research focus on the interaction between placeness and tourism should gradually shift from the analysis of the significance of placeness to the study of the impact of tourism activities on placeness. The unique characteristics of placeness are the basis of tourism development, which is not only the premise of tourism development planning, but also the guarantee of providing heterogeneous experience and sustainable tourism development for tourists. Developers, local residents, tourists and other stakeholders in the whole process of tourism activities in the form of capital, culture, emotions

and other elements are constantly reconstructing the placeness of the tourism destination. In view of the future research on the placeness of tourism destination, it is possible to study the impact of tourism on the placeness more specifically on the basis of the existing research. The focus of the research will also be based on emotional factors, such as how the interactive behavior of tourism destination affects the placeness.

The placeness of tourism destination is always in a dynamic change. Especially in the context of globalization and modernization, the flow of human, information, capital, culture and other factors is becoming more frequent and faster. The trend from placeness to mobility and then to placelessness has gradually become a new research hotspot. Under the background of globalization and modernization, from placeness to mobility and then to placelessness to become the necessary stage of tourism development. However, the placelessness is not the final stage of tourism development. The collision between tourism destination and external factors is also producing new placeness, but this process may be relatively slower. The coexistence mode of placeness, mobility and placelessness of tourism destination is shown in Fig.1.

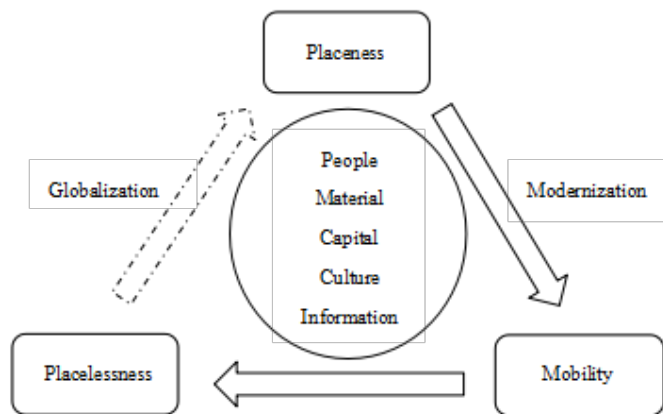


Fig. 1. The coexistence of placeness, mobility and placelessness

In the future study of reconstructing the placeness of tourism destination, there should be more case studies for specific types of tourism destination. Among them, it is an important research direction to study the reconstruction of placeness of tourism destination from the perspectives of identity and emotion of residents, operators and tourists as well as relevant government systems.

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