

# The Construction of the Derivative Value of Heritage Tourism on the Basis of Symbolic Consumption

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**Abstract.** As a part of creative cultural industry, heritage tourism combines cultural, historical, artistic and scientific values. It includes both spiritual consumption and material consumption. It is not only a social and cultural phenomenon, but also an economic phenomenon, upgrading from sightseeing to purchasing goods and then to cultural experience. The process of heritage tourism experience is actually a process of encoding symbols. The attraction of heritage tourism derives from the symbolic significance of tourism itself. In essence, tourism consumption is a kind of symbolic consumption, which forms tourism motivation based on the attraction of indicative symbols, and then evolves emotional satisfaction in a symbolic environment. When tourists obtain emotional satisfaction through symbolic consumption, the premium ability of tourism commodities will be enhanced and the derivative value of tourism will thus be formed. Therefore, excavation and utilization of symbol consumption is the core factor of sustainable tourism construction.

## 1 Introduction

Heritage tourism is a path to realize the sustainable development of tourism. With the in-depth excavation and multi-dimensional extension of culture in various countries, heritage tourism is increasingly colliding with cultural consumption, forming new hot spots and breakthroughs of tourism.

Heritage tourism refers to a specific form of tourism activities that take heritage resources as tourist attractions, appreciate the heritage landscape and experience the cultural atmosphere, so that tourists obtain a cultural experience. Heritage tourism is mainly based on heritage tourism and sightseeing, including natural heritage, social and cultural heritage and natural and cultural complex heritage.

Heritage tourism include : natural heritage nature reserves, science heritage , agricultural heritage farms, handicrafts and their production processes, industrial heritages, transportation Heritage, social and cultural heritage, historical spots, arts theatres, arts centres, pleasure garden theme park, art gallery, festivals and celebrations, field sports, ancestors' former residence palaces [1].

Heritage tourism is a high-level pattern of tourism activities, mainly to obtain a cultural aesthetic experience and landscape appreciation. For the suppliers of heritage tourism products (tourism enterprises, local communities, heritage management departments, etc.), it is a deeper concept of tourism development, operation and management, and a sustainable utilization model of heritage resources. For the local administration, it is a way to protect the original ecological culture, to keep balance

of the ecological system and to cultivate the cultural resources of heritage tourism [2].

Heritage tourism is a part of the creative and cultural industry. As a complex social and economic activity, it includes both spiritual consumption and material consumption. It is not only a social and cultural phenomenon, but also an economic phenomenon, upgrading from sightseeing to purchasing goods and then to cultural experience. Heritage tourism combines historical, artistic, scientific and consumption values. It not only has the function of inheriting social culture, but also has special commercial value. Especially when heritage tourism is co-media with culture, it forms cultural consumption dominated from temporary material consumption to deep spiritual value, because it touches the inner demands of consumers and arouse the resonance of values, thus contributing to the generation of derivative value, which is crucial to promote the sustainable development of regional consumption industry.

## 2 The Characteristics of Symbolic Consumption of Heritage Tourism

Tourism activity is fundamentally tourist experience, which is the core of tourism. In terms of the content and means of tourism experience, the whole process is actually interpreting symbols. When we take tourism as an interactive process in which individuals communicate with nature and society, this kind of experience will have distinctive cultural characteristics and symbolic significance. The interpretation of this cultural and even symbolic system also means the reconstruction of the system. Therefore, the concern on this system is of great

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significance for social construction [3].

Dean MacCannell once proposed the symbolic significance of tourism in his book "The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class" (1976) : Tourists all over the world are reading city and landscape culture and regard them as a symbol system [4]. John Urry once mentioned in "The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies"(1990): What tourists see is made up of symbols, which signify something else. Under the gaze of tourists, all landscapes are endowed with symbolic meanings and become cultural landscapes [5]. Yanjun Xie also emphasized that tourism experience, in its essence, can be regarded as a symbolic interaction phenomenon. In various situations of travel experience, meanings are conveyed through various symbols. The process of interaction between people is like that, and so is the process of interpreting the symbolic meaning of objects. From the perspective of the content and means, the whole process of tourism experience is actually a process of interpretation of symbols, and tourism is full of various symbols [6].

As to the information function of heritage resources, it can be classified as follows [7]:

First, leisure, recreation: entertainment space, aesthetic appreciation, deep experience and recuperation;

Second, education, scientific field: field observation, providing first-hand information for scientific research, providing places and materials for educational purposes and environmental awareness cultivation;

Third, historical and cultural: historical symbols of individuals and collectives, cultural identity of heritage values and (local customs, traditional practices, cultural landscapes, etc.)

Lastly, religion and art: source of artistic inspiration and religious meaning (music, painting, poetry, etc.)

Through the above combing, it can be found that heritage resources contain a large number of symbols. The attraction and appeal of tourism comes from the symbolic significance of tourism itself. Tourist symbols touch and satisfy people's emotional and spiritual needs, which are intangible and everlasting. Therefore, tourism consumption is essentially a kind of symbolic consumption, which forms tourism motivation based on the attraction of indicative symbols, and then generates emotional satisfaction. The durability of tourism experience is determined by the correspondence of symbolic value and the profound emotional effect on tourists. Thus, excavation and utilization of symbol consumption is the core link of sustainable tourism construction.

Culture is a set of concepts passed down from generation to generation expressed by various symbols, with which people can communicate, transmit and develop their knowledge about life and attitudes towards life [8]. Heritage tourism landscape can be compared to "living" cultural symbol of human survival and development, which is the token of local culture and contains ancient memory of nation and the pool of the cultural gene [9]. Culture is an important carrier of national spirit, national emotion, individual characteristics, cohesion and affinity, and has national characteristics. The culture of each nation has its unique creativity and value

which is different from that of the others. It is an independent system which cannot be repeated and replaced. The characteristics of cultural symbols carried by heritage tourism make it possible to enhance the depth and width of tourism.

### **3 Analysis of the Derivative Value of Heritage Tourism**

#### **3.1 Functional Value and Emotional Value of Heritage Tourism**

In general, heritage tourism value can be divided into functional value and emotional value.

From the perspective of functional value, heritage tourism mainly satisfies the basic demands such as sightseeing, sports, food enjoying and health preservation, etc.. Tourists get the enjoyment of beauty In the landscape. No matter what the motivation is, and where the destination is, sightseeing is indispensable content. Only with the above functional values can tourism resources attract tourists. The greater the functional value, the more attractive it is to the tourists. All the matters such as solemn ancient palaces, small bridges and flowing streams, the magnificent Great Wall, simple and elegant cultural relics and historic sites, unique ethnic customs, and even special food, have functional value. Tourism resources must have the function of attracting tourists, thus generate social significance and economic value.

From the perspective of emotional value, heritage tourism mainly embodies the experiential value of education, aesthetic appreciation, roots seeking, nostalgia and curiosity. The value of emotional satisfaction is the most direct embodiment of the value of symbols, which can greatly promote the tourists' sense of belonging to the tourist sites. By touching the emotional appeal of tourists, it helps them form symbolic images and cultural induction. In the process of value transmission and formation, the importance of emotional appeal is self-evident. Information that is not emotional, no matter how high its information value, is difficult to settle down in the brain, but passes through layers of brain filtering, and becomes junk information. The commercial value of fashion communication lies in the fact that it arouses the audience's emotional appeal through symbol communication, and enhances the tourist' preference and emotional affiliation to the tourist sites. When tourists identify with the cultural phenomenon and cultural connotation of the tourist sites, they will invest more emotion in it, which is followed with enhancement of the commercial value of the cultural derivatives and the possibility of repeated consumption.

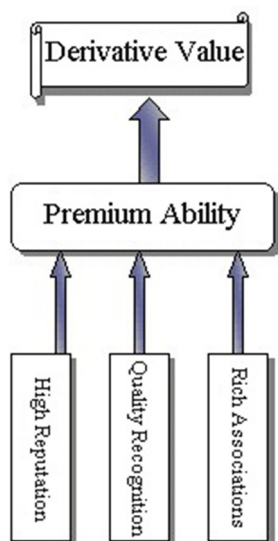
#### **3.2 The Formation of the Derived Value of Heritage Tourism Value**

If the functional value and emotional value of heritage tourism are subdivided, the progressive relationship can be found. From the perspective of demand chain, heritage tourism presents the phase relations of ornamental value,

commodity value and cultural value. From the perspective of commodity entities, heritage tourism presents an inside-out trinity relationship of use value, commodity value and spiritual value [10].

In the above progressive relationship, the ornamental value and use value are more inclined to the functional value; commodity value, cultural value and spiritual value are more inclined to emotional value, and have higher correlation with tourists' emotional experience. The emotional value is the key factor to generate the derivative value of heritage tourism and the core path to promote the commercial transformation of tourism and the formation of sustainable consumption of tourism commodities.

The derivative value of heritage tourism refers to the cultural value and spiritual value that can meet the spiritual needs of tourists besides the ornamental value and use value such as the landscape provided by scenic spots, and the commodity value formed by the consumption of tourist souvenirs. The level of the derivative value directly drives the strength of the premium power. Premium is the added value generated by derivative consumption and continuous consumption of goods such as tourist souvenirs, with the price of goods above the average level. Premium power is a powerful approach to obtaining higher prices, higher margins and better profits. The visibility, cultural association, emotional experience and other indicators of tourism assets ultimately strengthen consumer loyalty and improve the premium ability of tourism sites, thus enabling them to get stronger profitability (see Fig.1) [11]. The premium capacity mainly depends on the tourists' emotional factors. Tourists are willing to pay more than the standard price for travel goods because of their emotional value. Tourist souvenirs create many invisible symbolic associations and images higher than other products, which strengthen tourists' memory of their long history, rich cultural connotation, unique memory or aesthetic experience, and the emotional factors of consumers promote the purchase behavior. Therefore, in the process of heritage tourism, creating symbolic association and arousing tourists' emotional attention have become the focus of the formation of its derivative value.



**Fig. 1.** Diagram of the Brand Premium

The use of the specific historical background, cultural symbols, stories or local characteristics to create more brands and multi-level tourism souvenirs bring about complementary effect to the scenic spots. On the one hand, it creates the atmosphere of the scenic area, expands the publicity of the scenic area, and enhances the image and popularity of the scenic area. On the other hand, with its unique resources, the scenic spot provides historical and cultural reference and image creation elements for the design and development of tourist souvenirs. The proper combination of tourist symbols and tourist souvenirs bring about possibility of repeated consumption and the breakthrough of sustainable development of heritage tourism.

#### 4 The Contribution of Derivative Value of Heritage Tourism on the Basis of Symbolic Consumption

The Derivative Value of Heritage Tourism is essentially the premium value of commodities, which is higher than the value of commodities in the general sense. Generally, tourist commodities have local features, which take the theme image and the typical information of scenic spot as the carrier, thus generate artistic value, collection value, practical value and present value, among which the added value of art promotes the price of tourist commodities. Tourist souvenirs have property of the use value like the ordinary commodities, while as the same time it is different from the ordinary commodities in two aspects: First, the object of purchase is different. Tourists are consumers, and the items they buy have the attributes of tourist souvenirs. The items purchased by ordinary consumers are general commodities, which do not carry the significance of commemoration. Second, the value embodied is different. Ordinary commodities mainly reflect the use value, tourist souvenirs mainly reflect the memorial, collection value and artistic value.

Tourists' exploration and pursuit of the symbolic meaning of tourism products formalize the realization of this derived value. Taking Beijing "The Cultural and Creative Products of the Palace Museum" (abbr. CCPPM) as an example, its annual revenue has increased from RMB 600 million in 2013 to RMB 1.5 billion in 2018, exceeding the annual revenue level of 1,500 listed companies [12]. The inspiration of CCPPM comes from the cultural deposits of ancient Chinese royal culture, and its expression ranges from the architecture and images of the Palace Museum to the cultural relics and ornaments. A common ceramic cup with the average price of dozens of yuan may be promoted to hundreds of yuan, once the cup is crowned with "Palace Museum" or matched with royal patterns, the price was , reach the price of several hundred yuan (see Fig. 2). The premium capacity of tourism commodities has been fully reflected.



**Fig. 2.** The Sales Page of the Cat Cup of The Palace Museum

The commercial origin of CCPPM comes from the tourists' visit, while what is carried back by the tourists is the aesthetic memory, the highest artistic taste. Therefore, the labeling and symbolization of the "Palace Museum" into its tourism products brings possibility of continuous and repetitive consumption, which completes the transformation from pure tourism to cultural symbol consumption.

Nowadays, people are increasingly inclined to the symbolic consumption. The purpose of people's consumption is no longer to meet the needs of survival, but to achieve higher spiritual purposes. Symbolic value expresses style, prestige, power, etc., which has become an important part of commodities. Objects are no longer purchased for their intrinsic value (including use value and exchange value), but for the symbolic value they represent [13]. If the tourism developers take "symbol" as the core, regard the whole process of tourism as a system of symbolic operation process, base on the cultural connotation, explore the symbol meaning, choose the appropriate carrier (such as commodity categories, styles, color, pattern, material, etc.), display the symbol meaning, reasonable guide and inspire the tourists to participate in the symbol consumption, they will objectively and vividly represent and demonstrate cultural essence, effectively promote cultural symbol of inheritance and innovation and lead the sustainable development of heritage tourism.

## 5 Conclusion

Heritage tourism is the combination of material consumption of spiritual consumption, with both

functional value and emotional value. In the process of advancing from ornamental value to commodity value, cultural value and spiritual value, symbol consumption plays an important role. It forms tourist motivation based on the attraction of indicative symbols, and then enables consumers to obtain emotional satisfaction in symbolic environment. In this process, the complexity and sustainability of tourism are explored, the commodity premium capacity is upgraded, and the derivative value of tourism is generated.

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