

The Integrative Development of Cultural Tourism Industry in the Areas along Sichuan-Tibet Railway from the Perspective of Field: Based on the Cultural Reproduction Theory

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Abstract: Sichuan-Tibet Railway, the second railway into Tibet built by China after the Qinghai-Tibet Railway, is an important bond of the “eight vertical and eight horizontal” high-speed railway network in China, which is of great significance to the economic development along the line. This paper based on the field perspective of reproduction theory as well as the actual development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, this paper will provide practical theoretical recommendations for the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway.

1. Introduction

In the 14th Five-Year Development Plan for Modern Comprehensive Transportation System in 2022, China government demonstrably proposed to build an international integrated transportation hub cluster represented by the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei economic zone, Yangtze River Delta economic circle, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and Chengdu-Chongqing economic circle, with a view to improving the level of global connectivity and radiation level. Railway, as one of the cores of the comprehensive transportation system, has been highly valued by the state. Moreover, the construction of a railway network will help to effectively promote the circulation of production factors, and promote inter-regional cooperation, thereby promoting regional economic growth.

Reproduction theory is a modern social theory that arose in the field of western social science in the middle and late 20th century. Social reproduction is a theory concerning the social reproduction process and its laws of all social forms. Likewise, culture is consistently in a process of continuous production and reproduction. “Field” is one of the key elements in reproduction theory. As a carrier of objective relationship, it is in a position to provide corresponding theoretical guidance for the development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. Based on the field perspective of reproduction theory, this paper will provide ideas for the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, thus contributing to the effective construction and development of the cultural tourism industry along the line with the advantages

provided by Sichuan-Tibet Railway.

Overall, the research significance of this paper is mainly reflected in the following two aspects. More precisely, first and foremost, this paper is helpful to enrich the research related to the development of tourism along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. As early as 1951, China Railway Eryuan Engineering Group Co., Ltd. started the planning, scientific investigation, and specific scheme research of Sichuan-Tibet Railway according to the deployment of the CPC Central Committee. It was not until October 2018 that the third meeting of the Financial and Economic Commission of the CPC Central Committee officially decided to start the construction of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway in an all-round way, which is undoubtedly a brand-new field for theorists concerned. As of January 6, 2023, a total of 492 journal articles were retrieved from CNKI with the keyword “Sichuan-Tibet Railway”, of which 439 were published after 2018, accounting for 89%. The research related to tourism along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway simply appeared after 2019, and only 7 articles have been retrieved so far, with most of the relevant research results emphasizing the field of engineering technology. In this connection, from the perspective of the integrative development of cultural tourism along the railway, this project is conducive to enriching the research content system related to the Sichuan-Tibet Railway and exerting the comprehensive effects of railway construction and operation. Simply put, this research is of paramount theoretical significance.

Secondly, this paper is helpful to provide valuable reference and inspiration for the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. The construction and operation of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway can promote the circulation of factors between regions, strengthen the economic and cultural cooperation and exchanges between regions, and effectively promote the construction of a unified domestic market. Additionally, Sichuan and Tibet possess world-class cultural tourism resources. However, influenced by restrictive factors such as remoteness and backward development, this area generally exposes a series of defects, including imperfect resource development, unsound product system, and weak service supply level. In the face of these challenges, taking Sichuan-Tibet Railway as an opportunity to change the unbalanced and insufficient development of cultural tourism along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway is the key point to be urgently implemented. To this end, from the perspective of the field and combining with the characteristics of cultural tourism resources along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, this paper proposes targeted development ideas, which is conducive to the advanced layout of the strategic planning of cultural tourism integrative development along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway.

2. Literature Review

At present, the research on Sichuan-Tibet Railway mainly focuses on the following two aspects. To put it concretely, the first is the analysis of the tourism resources, tourist sources, and tourism flows along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. With abundant natural tourism resources and humanistic tourism resources, the areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway present a host of remarkable characteristics, such as rich types, diverse forms, long history, and concentrated high-grade resources. Hence, railway construction is conducive to creating a golden tourist corridor in the Sichuan-Tibet region (Tang, 2021)^[1]. Meanwhile, the tourism flow along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway as a whole shows the characteristics of “dense in the east and sparse in the west”, strong mobility, and obvious polarization, with a closed spatiotemporal diffusion mode as the main one (Yang, 2020)^[2]. The second is the research on the impact of the development of the tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. Not only is the Sichuan-Tibet Railway conducive to transforming related resource advantages into economic advantages, breaking the original isolated scenic spots, and then jointly building a cultural tourism economic belt and a world tourism destination, but it

can also protect diversified resources represented by plateau ecological environment and unique folk culture (Gan, 2017)^[3].

The most representative reproduction theory is the cultural reproduction theory put forward by Bourdieu, who defines a series of core concepts including capital, habitus, field, etc. based on associating education with social culture and power capital, thus explaining the social reproduction function of culture and education(Zhao,2019)^[4]. Conceptually, “field” is defined by Bourdieu as a network or a configuration with objective relations among various positions. The interaction between fields is inherently manifested as the collision and infiltration between different value criteria. Through the research on the inheritance of national traditional sports culture, relevant scholars have found that the value criteria of multiple social fields have been integrated into modern fields, which has caused confusion in value selection for relevant groups in modern fields, such as government administrators, local businessmen, tourists, etc., lacking reasonable integration and infiltration of value criteria during field interaction (Wang, 2019)^[5]. In the end, this in turn leads to the cultural connotation of intangible cultural heritage being diluted during the process of inheritance, so that the main purpose of understanding intangible cultural heritage has evolved into mandatory missions, as well as browsing the fragmented information of consumption and entertainment as so on.

3. Resource Situation and Existing Problems in the Areas Along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway

First of all, the Sichuan-Tibet Railway presents a dumbbell-shaped pattern in terms of cultural and tourism resources as well as development status. The overall resources and development of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway are in a dumbbell-shaped pattern. In particular, Chengdu, as the station of departure, and Lhasa, as the terminal station, enjoy rich and well-developed tourism resources, while the high-quality resources in the middle region have not been fully developed. Secondly, as the railway lines gradually penetrate Tibet, the proportion of cultural tourism resources has shown an increasing trend. As the railway line goes west into Tibet, the regions along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway are showing increasingly obvious characteristics of national cultural tourism resources, with numerous world-class and national intangible cultural heritages distributed here.

Currently, the areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway mainly reveal the following shortcomings:

Specifically, the first is that the relevant infrastructure is not perfect and the service supply capacity still needs to be improved. Limited by topography and natural environment, most areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway expose obvious shortcomings in infrastructure construction in many fields, including medical care, education, safety, and culture.

The second is that the synergy of factors is weak and the level of industry governance needs to be strengthened. Due to the slow economic development and other reasons, the Sichuan-Tibet region presents a weak synergy of factors, which in turn leads to the loss of resources, talents, and technology, and consequently, the resources of cultural and tourist groups cannot be further developed.

The third is that the format of cultural tourism is relatively single, and the integrative development of various industries still needs to be strengthened. In the current Sichuan-Tibet region, only a small number of regions have developed a “tourism plus” oriented development model, while most of the remaining regions are inevitably facing the dilemma of a single format of the cultural tourism industry.

The fourth is that the marketing communication path is narrow, and the brand of the cultural tourism industry still needs to be promoted. The areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway are facing the problem of marketing homogenization. Especially, most regions are still in the initial stage of new media marketing, leading to the inevitable reality of a late start and slow development.

4. Measures to Promote the Integrative Development of the Cultural Tourism Industry in Areas Along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway

In essence, the field contains relatively independent operational logic. Once social actors enter a certain field, they need to act according to the rules of the game in that field^[6]. Cultural reproduction needs to constantly break the boundaries between fields to form the transformation of different fields. In addition, the field is not only the activity space of actors and capital but also the production background of habitus. Without exception, each field reflects relative autonomy, which means that the independence of the field is relative and its interaction is absolute. The interaction between fields is the driving force to promote the development and progress of fields.^{[7]-[8]}

With rich tourism resources and unique national cultural background, the areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway are regarded as a fertile ground for the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry. At present, there are many problems in the development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, such as the mismatch between the resource level and the actual regional development level driven by cultural tourism, and the homogenization of products, services, and marketing. Consequently, the construction of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway will effectively change such existing problems and effectively promote the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. Meanwhile, the areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway should seize the opportunity given by the construction of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, constantly explore new fields and strengthen the interaction between fields, with a view to building a new scene of cultural tourism as a carrier.

All-for-one tourism is a field construction based on material space. Likewise, the all-for-one tourist routes concretely connect different cultural tourism scenes, thus strengthening the interaction between different fields. Conceptually, all-for-one tourism refers to a new concept and model of regional coordinated development, which not only devotes itself to creating spatial panoramic system tourism but also realizes the organic integration of regional resources and the integrative development of industries by comprehensively and systematically upgrading regional economic and social resources, especially tourism resources and public services, thereby promoting the coordinated development of economy and society with tourism^[9]. In the long run, the development of all-for-one tourism will effectively promote the transformation and upgrading of the tourism industry, the reform of the tourism industry system, and meet the needs of the mass tourism era. On the whole, the key tasks of all-for-one tourism development in areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway cover the following two aspects:

The first is to improve the public service capacity and build all-for-one tourism routes by improving the full-field infrastructure. The perfection of infrastructure is not only the basic condition to promote the full-field supporting infrastructure of tourism services but also the prerequisite to enriching relevant fields. Whilst connecting cities and counties organically and improving traffic facilities along the route, the construction of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway helps to promote the circulation of factors, and improve regional facilities such as medical care and entertainment, thus providing strong support for the full-field supporting infrastructure of tourism services.

The second is to strengthen the planning work to achieve scientific development, thus cultivating characteristic tourism brands. The cultivation of brands not only marks the symbol construction of the cultural tourism industry but also is an important source to promote the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry. The distribution of tourism resources in most areas along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway is relatively loose, with the accessibility of scenic spots being relatively weak. Therefore, strengthening the connectivity between tourism routes can form a system of regional tourism resources, which is beneficial to the cultivation of characteristic tourism brands.

5. Conclusion and Research Limitations

To sum up, from the perspective of the field, this paper proposes a series of specific recommendations for the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, which is beneficial to enrich the research concerning the development of tourism along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway and provide valuable reference and inspiration for the integrative development of the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. Nevertheless, at present, the report of this research lacks data from field research. Therefore, the specific analysis for specific regions is the research direction in the subsequent stage. After the completion of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, in-depth field research will be carried out to explore the problems existing in various regions and further improve the research related to the cultural tourism industry along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway. Secondly, the theoretical application of this paper based on reproduction theory lacks empirical research. In this regard, this defect will be continuously improved in the follow-up research.

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