

A Study of Literary Tourism Performance Behaviors in the “Kingdom of Scott”

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Abstract: Literary tourists’ performances in tourist destinations are conducive to strengthening the image of tourist destinations and promoting the development of local tourism industries. Based on a study of literary tourists’ performance behaviours in the ‘Kingdom of Scott’, this paper constructs a model of tourism performance hierarchy according to the degree of tourists’ participation in the performance, and creatively proposes three different levels of participation: perceptual, immersive and creative. The study concludes that the ‘other-alienated’ kingdom constructed by Scott provides spiritual and psychic comfort to the masses fleeing alienation, highlights Scotland’s unique nationality and promotes the awakening of national consciousness. In addition, the literary tourists’ performances in the Scottish kingdom help to bridge the psychic distance between authors and tourists, reorganize the experience space of literary footsteps. Besides, this also reinforces the tourism image of the Scottish Highlands, contributing to the development of Scottish tourism and, to a certain extent, to the construction of human communities.

1. Introduction

In *The Reception of Sir Walter Scott in Europe*, Professor Murray Pittock of the University of Glasgow states, “Along with Byron and James Macpherson, Sir Walter Scott is one of the three Scottish Romantic writers who have directly and powerfully influenced European literature”^[1]. As the “father of the European historical novel”, Scott fully exploited the natural and human landscapes of Scotland, and created a series of famous narrative poems and novels using the techniques of fiction and imagination, his works vividly reproduced the natural scenery of the Scottish Highlands, which had not yet been completely caught up in the wave of the Industrial Revolution at that time, and through this, turned Scotland into a Mecca-like tourist attraction.

From the end of the 18th century to the 19th century, European society experienced the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars and the Industrial Revolution, which was described by Roland N. Stromberg as “a tumultuous and exhilarating period”^[2]. At this time of social unrest, the past and the modern produced a huge break, interpersonal relationships become more and more indifferent and the contradiction between man and nature was intensified, so people desperately want to escape from the modern urban life, reaching a landscape of alienation to seek spiritual and psychic comfort. Coinciding with the emergence of the picture tour and picturesque aesthetics, since the landscape painter William Gilpin published *An Essay on Prints*, the English began to appreciate the wilderness

as a visual art, so much so that in the 1890s there was a boom for “Picturesque Tour”, which means “like a picture”, to describe those picturesque wildernesses. The picturesque was defined as an aesthetic quality marked by pleasing variety, irregularity, asymmetry, and interesting textures. By this measure, the mountains of Scotland are a sea of natural pictures, full of the most astonishing, beautiful and solemn natural scenery. At this time, Scott grasped the trend of the times and catered to the aesthetic needs of tourists, using romanticism in his works to show the Scottish highland customs, traditional culture and picturesque landscapes, and constructed a fascinating kingdom of his alienation, which drove countless literature lovers to embark on a trip to Scotland. As a result, more and more tourists were following in the footsteps of Scott’s protagonists, James Fitz-James, Roderick Dhu and Edward Waverley, in search of the exotic, picturesque and romantic places depicted by Scott, and experiencing the natural and human beauty lost in real life. In addition, Scott fully explored Scotland’s traditional history and culture, turning to the past with his powerful novels, endowing new meanings to historical buildings, lochs, valleys and mountains, where Scotland’s national identity is embodied and interpreted. Its national identity is visualized and concretized in Scott’s novels as a desolate and tragic landscape imagery, which clearly embodies its own cultural identity: “a savage world in its own right” in contrast to the rich and modern England^[3]. As a result, there was a wave of Scottish tourism in the nineteenth century.

2. Performance Theory

In the 1950s, sociologist Erving Goffman put forward the dramaturgical theory in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. He illustrated that society is regarded as a big stage, and people in the society are regarded as the actors performing on the stage, who make use of all kinds of props and symbols, and pre-design or show their own image. The purpose of the performance is to carry out impression management, that is, through certain performance strategies to shape their own desired image in the minds of others. To do this, we need to present the image acceptable to others in the foreground and hide the image unacceptable to others or the society in the background, which contributing to analyzing the interpersonal interaction in the society^[4]. In the 1970s, Dean MacCannell borrowed Goffman’s dramaturgical theory to the field of tourism research, and used the performance as an analytical framework to study tourism issues, thus forming the theory of tourism performativity, in which the connotation of “performance” has been continuously explored and expanded, from the initial association with theatrical performances to the later emphasis on embodied practices^[5]. There is a growing realization that tourists are not passive and visually centered, but rather consume places in a multisensory, physical, and proactive way^[6]. This perspective critiques the theory of the tourist gaze proposed by John Urry, which emphasizes only visual perception, and further develops the connotations of performance.

The “gaze” cannot cover the entirety of the tourist experience, while the tourist’s performance includes active bodily participation, cognitive activity, and the gaze^[6]. Therefore, tourism performance and embodied experience have conceptual interoperability, emphasizing the unity of cognition and the body. David Crouch proposed that embodiment is not only related to physicality, but also to imagination, fantasy, contextualization, and making sense of the giving^[7]. Therefore, the author ventures to speculate that in the act of tourism, the literary tourist’s imagining of the plot of a text in his or her mind also belongs to a kind of performance. The tourist performs with the help of senses, imagination and spirit in the tourist place, which is a kind of all-round performance behavior in which the body and the mind work together. Literary tourists anticipate the places described in the literary works they read, and hope to trace the author and reappear the storyline in the consumption of the destination by experiencing the characters, the environment, and the scenes of the story. Simon Coleman and Mike Crang suggest that places are not seen as “fixed entities, but as

“fluid and created through performance^[8]. In other words, a tourist destination should not be purely seen as a fixed place coordinated by planning and mapping, but as a stage for tourist to perform, in which the tourist destination is constructed and reshaped. Based on this point, tourist attraction can be imagined as a grand stage where literary tourists engage in different performance behaviors through embodied imagination, imitation, and creation, which has a corresponding impact on literary tourism destinations.

3. Types of Performances by Literary Tourists

Tourists reorganize their experiences and journeys by depicting the space and playing the scripts, giving them new meanings^[9]. Thus tourism activities can be seen as a kind of cultural performance of tourists, and this cultural expression makes the psychological and spiritual world of tourists more abundant. In a sense, the performance is the free release of the tourists’ deep inner feelings and potentials to the outside, where the tourists’ psychological world and the external world complete a sacred and pleasurable handover. When traveling, tourists will bring their previous understanding, expectations, imagination, and myths about the destination that are spread in their hometown culture, and these factors can have a significant impact on tourist performances^[10]. More specifically, performance behaviors are varied due to differences in tourists’ background knowledge and their understanding of literary works. Therefore, based on the degree of tourists’ performance participation, the author classifies three types of literary tourists’ performances: (1) When tourists visit places described in Scott’s works, they shift their gaze to the characters in the works and imagine that they are the protagonists of Scott’s works. The fictional characters in the works appear in the tourists’ imagination with their different postures and behaviors, and in the process the tourists actually have a spiritual dialogue with them, which belongs to a kind of perceptual performance; (2) some tourists choose to imitate and reproduce the behaviors of the characters in the place where the story takes place after reading the works, which belongs to a kind of immersive performance; (3) some tourists may produce impromptu performances due to their natural emotions, diverting the space in the story scene to make it shift and demonstrating the classic scenes of poetry, which belongs to a kind of creative performance. In the tourism process of literary tourists, they not only construct places but also construct self-identity through performances^[11]. It can be seen that the performances of literary tourists in the places described by Scott not only give new connotations and meanings to the space, but also play an active role in shaping and enhancing its authenticity^[12]. This not only stimulates the audience’s interest in Scott’s work and conveys the message of the significance of the literary place, but also to some extent enhances the attractiveness of the tourist place .

3.1 Perceptual performance

Perception, i.e. a series of processes of awareness, feeling, attention and perception of internal and external information by consciousness, can be divided into sensory process and perceptual process. Perception has selectivity and wholeness, that is, people in the face of their own meaningful things, their perception will appear particularly clear, at the same time, people tend to take the objective object as a unified whole to perceive. With the help of the universal definition of “perception”, the author borrows the term to the field of literary tourism and proposes perceptual performance: instead of relying on embodied actions and behaviors to show themselves, literary tourists perform in their brains by means of their imagination. In this process, a wonderful and rich silent performance is taking place in the tourist’s brain, while at the same time the literary tourist’s experience gets the primary reinforcement. When tourists arrive at places in Scott’s works or places related to Scott’s personal life, they engage in a spiritual dialogue with the author and the characters

in the works by the aids of strong perception and rich imagination, which makes tourists better understand the works and the author.

For some tourists, their imagination was set in motion when their boats or steamers sailed on Loch Katrine. T. H. Holding was on a canoe cruise in Scotland in the 1870s, and when he arrived at Loch Katrine with the other tourists, he immediately marveled at its romantic and poetic natural beauty, but the story of *The Lady of the Loch* impressed him even more. While enjoying the beauty of the lake, he began to visualize Allen sliding down the canyon, Roderick Dhu climbing the rocks, and King James bravely riding his horse. With his imagination, Loch Katrine is depicted as a scene where an action movie takes place. All three main characters in the poem seem to be playing in front of him, which evokes unique memories of Loch Katrine. Through his perceptual performance, Loch Katrine is no longer a static entity, but an area of fluid significance. In addition to visiting Loch Katrine, some tourists also visit Abbotsford, Scott's place of residence. During the Victorian period, Abbotsford became part of the Scottish heritage industry and was a port of call for literary tourists. Most visitors come to Abbotsford with a sense of reverence, where they feel Scott's breath and hope to draw inspiration from it. Paul Westover asserts that "when visitors bring the dead back to life through their imaginations, they can engage in emotional and spiritual communication with their friends and benefactors in their eyes, namely the author^[13]. Oliver G. Steele brought Scott back to life by accessing Abbotsford's materials and incorporating imagination. He and Scott seem to be engaged in a silent communication, with the help of perceptual performance, Scott's image reappears and brings him a shocking inspiration and experience.

3.2 Immersive Performance

"Immersive" refers to the process of immersing the subject into the current scene, situation, and character through the stimulation of senses, feelings, and sensations. Due to the influence of two-dimensional culture, people have begun to desire a wide range of multi-sensory and internal stimuli, and they physically come to the actual place in search of a more intimate and personal experience. In the context of literary tourism, literary tourists engage in total replicas and imitations of places, characters, and events in a work, and explore their inner selves by perceiving the presence of the characters, which is known as immersive performance. In the stage, tourists further intensify their degree of participation in performance, jumping from 'thinking' to 'doing', where the embodied actions and behaviors of the characters in the work are performed, and the significance of tourism for the tourists is enhanced.

Francis, an English angler who loved to climb mountains and had a strong spirit of conquest, once said, "I can never get close to a mountain, but I must get to its top." In the 1850s, he visited Loch Katrine for the first time and decided to climb the mountain Ben A'an at the eastern end of the loch. While climbing the mountain, he imagined himself as determined and adventure-loving Malcolm Graeme, quoted lines from characters in the poem, immersively performed the segments from *The Lady of the Lake* through embodied practice, and ultimately finished his performance by reaching the summit. In the process of pursuing his goals, Francis incarnated Malcolm Graeme and used him as his spiritual role model, completing his sacred and solemn performance. John Macculloch documents a Londoner practicing the French horn in Trossachs. Nicola Watson interprets the echoes made by the cockney as an imitation of "Fitz-James's horn call"^[14]. In this sense, when the Londoner echoes with his horn, he is in fact playing James V, blowing his horn in the "chase" scene of the poem. Through the embodiment practice of literary tourists, they engage in intangible contact with fictional characters in real regions, imitate the heroes in Scott's works, explore their own identities from travel, outline their inner world of thoughts and emotions, and achieve an understanding of the influence and environment that shape the heroes in Scott's works.

3.3 Creative performance

Creativity refers to one's ability to generate new ideas, perspectives and approaches, and has two main aspects: originality and novelty. At the practical level, creativity refers to connecting one's subjective consciousness with the objective world, and discovering one's subjective consciousness in the objective world. Similarly, literary tourists use their own creativity to perform creatively in tourist places. "Tourism is embodied, multisensory, encounters other people and objects and is in a constant state of generative change"^[15]. Therefore, the performance behavior of literary tourists is affected by multiple factors and is in a dynamic process of change. When tourists come to the place where the story depicted in the author's works takes place, they may improvise in response to their feelings. At this point, they place themselves in a broader and more flexible context, unleashing their creativity and imagination, boldly attempting to change the original location in literary works, thereby creating a new tourist stage for performance, which is called creative performance.

Elihu Burritt traveled to Scotland in 1863, and after visiting Abbotsford, he found a small boat to help him cross Tweed River. Burritt expected the boatman to be a man, but he did not realize that the one who sent him across the river was a beautiful girl, and when the beautiful girl rowed her oar in the river, Burritt's mind immediately conjured up the scene of Ellen rowing James V across the lake^[16]. Obviously, Burritt utilized his creative imagination to perform creatively, appropriating Tweed River as Loch Katrine, presenting himself as James V, and the beautiful maiden in the rowing boat as Ellen, demonstrating the classic scenes of poetry. He displaced the original poetic space through creative embodied practice, using Tweed River as a stage for performance and playing the role of Fitz-James in a new environment, which can be seen as a creative improvisation. Similarly, Jules Gabriel Verne travels to Scotland with his friend Aristide Hignard, and like the protagonist in *Waverley*, Verne became engrossed in the Scottish landscape, curious about Highland customs and tartan costumes. They visited the home of a distant relative of Hignard, where Verne received a hearty welcome and was immediately drawn to the host's daughter, Miss Amelia, who worked tirelessly to help plan their trip. In fact, Verne's trip to Scotland is a creative imitation of *Waverley's* Scottish travel experiences. When *Waverley* arrived at the house of Fergus, the head of the clan, he was greeted by the family's hospitality and was captivated by the elegance and courtesy of the chief's sister, Flora. At the same time, *Waverley* was quite interested in the Highland feast's ways and its traditional customs. It could be argued that Verne uses *Waverley's* travel experiences to construct his own, playing scripts through knowledgeable travelers, initiating his creative performance, which represents another form of performative appropriation of literary works. At this stage, literary tourists fully utilize their subjective initiative to achieve a state of extraordinary performance, and at the same time, the significance of tourism for literary tourists and the threshold experience beyond time and space are ultimately reinforced.

4. Conclusion

Previous studies have mainly focused on the hierarchical division of tourism experience, while this paper focuses on the hierarchical division of tourism performance. Taking the kingdom of 'other alienation' constructed by Scott as an example, it can be seen that the performances of literary tourists are mainly divided into three types: perceptual performances based on imagination; immersive performances with embodied actions and behavioral displays; and creative performances that give play to subjective initiative. The three types of performances are closely linked and progressive layer by layer.

In the process of modernization, tourism has become a synonym for escaping from the existing order of life, as well as a lubricant for the operation of the machine of the daily world^[17]. People urgently use tourism as a means to combat the alienation caused by modernity, the deterioration of

the ecological environment, and the programmed lifestyle. The accelerated development of the Industrial Revolution promoted the modernization process in Europe, but at the same time, the negative impacts it brought caused people to be in a world of meaninglessness and spiritual loss, while the kingdom of ‘other alienation’ constructed by Scott provided a spiritual and psychic habitat for people who wanted to escape from the indifferent society at that time, and fulfilled people’s desire to seek natural and human beauty, revealing the knowledge of the exotic world or the criticism of the present society, so as to enable people to retrieve their spiritual sustenance and return to their spiritual homeland. At the same time, Scott transformed the romantic beauty of the Scottish landscape into an expression of cultural nationalism, highlighting Scotland’s unique national identity and the uniqueness of the Highland landscape. Driven by the trend of pan-European nationalism, literary tourists, after reading Scott’s novels and poems, went to Scotland in admiration, comparing their own countries with the ‘other’ image of Scotland constructed by Scott, pondering how to endow their own scenery with cultural connotations like Scott, revitalizing their traditional historical and cultural heritage. And from Scott’s exploration and revitalization of Scotland’s traditional history and culture, they felt a common national sediment, thus promoting the awakening of national consciousness. A series of performances by literary tourists in the Kingdom of Scotland helps to bridge the spiritual distance between the author and the tourists, providing them with powerful inspirations and experiences, deepening the tourists’ understanding of the author’s works and reshaping the experience space of the literary footsteps. Besides, the performances of literary tourists help to strengthen Scotland’s tourism image, create a propaganda effect, attract more potential readers and tourists and thus promote the development of tourism in Scotland. In addition, literary tourism brings together people with similar interests from all over the world. Although the tourists come from all over the world and have different nationalities, identities and backgrounds, they are all fans and lovers of Scott’s works. Literary tourists seek similarities in differences and eliminate cultural differences, which in a way is conducive to building a human community.

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