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PEST Analysis on Dark Tourism Development in China

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Abstract In domestic and foreign literature about the dark tourism, there are few papers about the dark tourism in China. At present, the study on the dark tourism in China remains at the starting stage. Most studies analyzed development of the dark tourism by SWOT method. No scholar has made analysis on the dark tourism development by PEST (political, economic, social and technological factor) analysis method. China is a large country rich in dark tourism resources. However, the theoretical researches of dark tourism lag behind the practical development. Therefore, it is necessary and urgent to study the development of dark tourism in China. Besides, the dark tourism is a special tourism resource and product, and its researches will further promote prosperity of tourism, push forward social development. Using PEST method, this paper analyzed development of the dark tourism from political, economic, social and technological factors, and it came up with pertinent recommendations.

Key words China, Dark tourism, PEST analysis method, Development strategies

1 Introduction

In the 1990s, the dark tourism captured attention of foreign scholars, especially in American – European countries. The dark tourism is a new hot spot in the circle of tourism science, but it is also a disputable field^[1]. However, with the development of economy and improvement of living conditions, with tourism becoming a part of people’s daily life, the demands for tourism are also higher and higher, and people like to try new and exciting things. Diversification, individualization, experience and stimulation become considerations in tourism. As a special tourism, dark tourism enters people’s field of vision and becomes a new highlight of tourism industry^[2].

2 Definition of the dark tourism

Both at home and abroad, the dark tourism has a long history de-

spite with gradual and slow development. In foreign countries, it can be traced back to the Middle Ages, many European pilgrims traveled to sacred place of Jesus death^[3], but the concept of dark tourism was formally put forward by Foley and Lennon in 1996. They defined the dark tourism as the phenomenon which encompasses the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites^[4]. In *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* published in 2000, Lennon and Foley redefined the dark tourism as basic spatial movement of tourists resulted from tourist products consisted of death, disasters and savage acts^[3]. This term has high popularity and acceptance degree, but due to complexity and sensitivity of such tourism phenomenon, there is still no consensus of opinions^[5]. In academic circle, there are also other terms similar to the dark tourism. The differences in scope and emotion are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 Terms similar to the dark tourism

| Scholar | Time | Name of term | Connotation |
|-----------|------|---------------------------------|---|
| Rojek | 1993 | Black spots | Commercial [touristic] developments of grave sites and sites in which celebrities or large numbers of people have met with sudden and violent death |
| Seaton | 1996 | Travel dimension of thanatopsis | Travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death, particularly, but not exclusively, violent death |
| Tunbridge | 1996 | Dissonant heritage | Dark scenic spots related to death, disasters and wars are historical and cultural heritage characterized by dissonance. |
| Blom | 2000 | Morbid tourism | Tourism that focuses on sudden death and which quickly attracts large numbers of people and an attraction-focused artificial morbidity-related tourism |

Domestic scholars do not have unified opinions about the dark tourism, as shown in Table 2.

3 PEST analysis on the dark tourism in China

3.1 PEST analysis method PEST analysis method was sum-

marized by Baskin Robbins 1998. PEST refers to such external environment as political, economic, social and technological factors. PEST analysis method is to analyze these four factors of research object, and adjust at strategic level, to ensure implementation effect of analysis object reaches the expected goals^[9].

3.2 PEST analysis on the dark tourism in China Dark tourism, as a special way of travel, has common features of tourism. For example, it has comprehensive, open, foreign-related, and vulnerable features. Therefore, PEST analysis on the dark

tourism in China should not be limited to confined environment, but should be open to international factors, so as to make accurate

and objective analysis.

Table 2 Concept of the dark tourism defined by some domestic scholars

| Scholar | Time | Concept of the dark tourism |
|-------------------------------|------|--|
| Li Jinglong and Zheng Shujing | 2006 | The phenomenon of traveling to places of deaths, disasters, sufferings, terrorist events or tragedies ^[6] |
| Xu Lianxu | 2007 | Terrorism tourism |
| Hong Wenwen | 2009 | Dark tourism is spatial movement of tourists through designing tourist products with wars, deaths, and disasters, and tragedy events and places to stimulate tourists to explore special travel experience, and bring tourists with alarming significance and spiritual awareness ^[7] . |
| Du Wenxia | 2009 | Dark tourism is tourist activity using disruptive impact of natural disasters, artificial disasters (dark events) on society, economy, culture, living and environment as tourist attraction ^[8] . |

3.2.1 Analysis of political environment. (i) International and domestic political environment. Stable and safe international political situation is a precondition for the development of dark tourism and even the entire tourism industry. Break of war, vicious epidemic diseases, terrorist attack, and any other factor leading to social turbulence will hinder the development of the dark tourism or even the entire tourism industry to a certain extent. At present, although there is small area of local hot war which may lead to local turbulence, on the whole, political environment is stable. This creates relatively stable international political environment for the development of the dark tourism to a certain extent. Domestic political environment is better than current international political environment. Since the founding of new China, no war occurs in China, and the social order is stable and the country is prosperous and the people live in peace. Especially since the reform and opening up, China has opened the gate to the outside, and implemented the strategy of "going global" and "bringing in", which promotes the development of entire tourism industry. In sum, in both domestic and international fields, the political environment for the development of dark tourism is favorable.

(ii) Chinese government encourages the tourism development and has promulgated the fundamental law *Tourism Law of the People's Republic of China* on April 25, 2013 to guarantee and regulate the tourism development at the level of laws. In the Report on Making Effort to Create New Situation of Tourism Development in the 13th Five-Year Plan Period from Scenic Spot Travel to Whole City Travel, Li Jinzao, director of China National Tourism Administration stated that it is necessary to better deal with the relation between practical and theoretical innovation of tourism, speed up implementing 515 strategy, launch researches of tourism theories, and create new field of modern tourism science. Obviously, Chinese government approves the tourism development, and the legal system for ensuring standardized development of tourism is gradually improved.

3.2.2 Analysis of economic environment. Analysis of economic environment for the dark tourism is carried out from national economic system, economic structure, economic development level, and future economic development trend.

Since the reform and opening up, China has been implemen-

ting the socialist market economic system with public ownership as the core and joint development of many types of ownership economy. Such economy system with Chinese characteristics has unique advantages. It not only has flexibility of capitalist market economic system, but also has powerful macro-regulation ability, which can make up for shortages of capitalist market economy. Within the framework of socialist market economy, China's dark tourism can develop flexibly in normal track. With more than 30 years of reform and opening-up, China's economic level has realized considerable increase. Now, China's economic aggregate ranks the second place in the world, and the annual economic growth rate keeps at double digit level for many years. With economic development, China's economic structure has also received considerable changes. In the past, the secondary industry took up a larger portion. Now, the tertiary industry takes up a larger portion. Economic structure is constantly improving, and the tertiary industry develops rapidly. As an essential part of tertiary industry, tourism will have a bright prospect. As to China's economic development trend, the industrial structure is constantly improving, and the percentage of tertiary industry will continue to increase, while the percentage of primary and secondary industries will continue to decline. Although annual growth rate of China slightly declines, it still remains at about 7%. Compared with negative growth of western countries, China's economic environment is favorable and it plays a role of global economic engine to some extent. Compared with international economic environment, China's economic environment is excellent and favorable for the development of dark tourism.

3.2.3 Analysis of social environment. Social environment for the dark tourism is mainly analyzed from population environment, cultural environment, and value concept. Since the founding of new China, the population environment of China has been promoting the development of dark tourism. The tourist market of dark tourism is constantly expanding due to constant growth of population size, increase in the percentage of young and middle aged people, constant acceleration of urbanization, continuous increase in national income, as well as constant improvement of related infrastructure. The population data in 2000 – 2010 issued by the National Bureau of Statistics reveal that the population environment

in these 10 years is consistent with the big population environment. In 1949, the total population of mainland was 541.693 million; by the 6th population census in 2010, the total population of mainland reached 1339.72 million, 73.899 million more than the 5th population census, with the annual growth rate up to 0.57%. In the sex composition, male accounts for 51.29%, and female accounts for 48.78%; in age structure, 16.60% are 0–14 years old, 70.14% are 15–59 years old, and 13.26% are older than 60; in the structure of urban and rural population, urban population takes up 49.68%, and rural population accounts for 50.32%; in nationality structure, Han people account for 91.51%, and minority people account for 8.49%. China's cultural background and value concept are formed in the long term of accumulation, it can be reputed as extensive and profound. As the Chinese saying goes: "it is better to travel ten thousand miles than to read ten thousand books". It encourages people to travel and experience new things. Among tourists, Xu Xike is a typical representative. From the perspective of cultural tradition and value concept, the social environment for dark tourism in western countries is better than in China, mainly because western people are dare to take adventures, ready to challenge, try new things, make exploration. The special features of dark tourist products just cater to their cultural tradition and value concept.

3.2.4 Analysis of technological environment. At the same time of promoting development of social productivity, science and technology also bring about tremendous changes to human's production and living. The whole world remains in the third science and technology tides. Application of new atomic energy technology, computer technology, and space technology marks the advent of the third revolution of science and technology. The period of transformation of science and technology to productivity is greatly shortened. At the same time of becoming more professional, disciplinary researches are developing to comprehensive direction, taking on the trend of multi-disciplinary complementation and integrated development. In the technological environment of the third revolution of science and technology, apart from keeping some reasonable and useful traditional tourism development modes, the development of dark tourism in China should take full advantage of welfare brought about by the third revolution of science and technology, such as repairing and even restoring dark tourism products using molecular technology, and displaying dark tourism products using

3D method.

4 Strategies for development of the dark tourism in China

4.1 Government leading and market assisting As a type of special travel form, the dark tourism is characterized by high sensitivity and risk. Sometimes, the market fails to coordinate benefits of all interested parties in the development of dark tourism, leading to unnecessary conflict. It needs competent authorities, such as local tourism bureau and bureau of land and natural resources to solve the problems. Therefore, it is necessary to establish the subject coordination mechanism with government participation and build the government leading dark tourism development mechanism^[10].

This not only solves various problems in the development process of dark tourism, but also conforms to requirement of market regulation. Government provides suitable development policies and market environment, and strengthen traffic and electric power infrastructure construction for dark tourism. Besides, in the development, government should avoid excessive commercialization, coordinate with local residents and properly treat the relationship between developers and local residents. Under the leadership of government authorities, developers conduct reasonable and moderate development, to make tourists receive education and experience the true meaning of freedom and life.

4.2 Extending the industrial chain and attaching importance to combination of tourist resources With the development of tourism industry, simple tourist products and low end tourism industrial chain become not suitable for demands of tourism development. For the development of dark tourism products, we should extend the industrial chain, attach importance to combination of tourist resources, and combine different specifications and types of tourist products in a reasonable and scientific way, so as to meet demands of tourists for diversification and generate higher economic benefits^[11]. For example, it is feasible to present dark tourism resources in the form of movies or literature works, which not only extends the industrial chain, but also plays the role of dissemination. In the combination of dark tourism resources, most domestic scholars adopt "color combination strategy", as shown in Fig. 1.

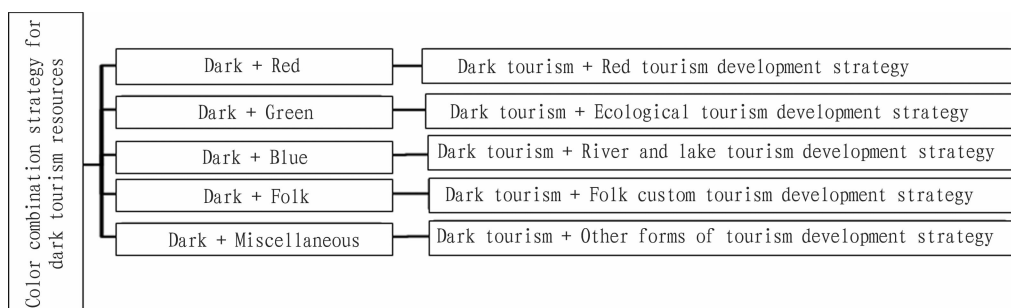


Fig. 1 Color combination strategy for dark tourism resources

4.3 Attaching importance to caring and improving the quality

Improper development of dark tourism resources may put local residents under some kind of psychological pressure and emotional injury. Both the government and tourist developers should consider psychological perception of local residents, patiently communicate with local residents, help local residents to mentally accept dark tourism and understand benefits of dark tourism, such as driving local economic development and promote employment. Dark tourism activities are subjected to impact of aesthetic seriousness and emotion^[12]. Traditional famous mountains and rivers, and beautiful pavilions and pagodas have their aesthetic aspects. To a certain extent, even though the service quality is not high, their tourists may be still numerous. By contrast, due to uniqueness of dark tourism resources and products, there should be high quality product design and service, and workers of dark tourism should have higher professional quality and flexible thought, so as to make tourists enjoy the dark tourism.

4.4 Attaching importance to participation and experience with the aid of high science and technology

In the development of dark tourism, it is recommended to take full advantage of advanced science and technology, build disaster simulation laboratory, and offer tourists with visual and audio impact with the aid of modern media technology such as 3D movie, stereo system, and digital media technology, *etc.*, to make tourists feel the formation process of dark tourism products, to produce the effect of getting the spot in person, attract more tourists to participate and obtain personal experience, and explore value of dark tourism products, and produce alarming and education effect on tourists, and make tourists realize preciousness of life and freedom.

5 Conclusions

At home and abroad, the researches about dark tourism are still at

(From page 30)

tween waterfowl enterprise and the third party logistics is a long-term cooperative partnership, win-win and reciprocal relationship.

The third party logistics mode has following advantages: waterfowl enterprise can simplify departments, concentrate its attention on core businesses, reduce investment in fixed assets, reduce operating costs and inventory costs, even realize zero inventory, and accelerate capital turnover; waterfowl enterprise can flexibly apply new technologies, reduce special purpose of assets, increase flexibility of waterfowl enterprise, improve waterfowl industry chain, provide flexible and diversified customer services, and raise the competitive power.

For waterfowl enterprises with limited logistics management ability and resources, to reduce investment in fixed assets, accelerate capital turnover, improve enterprise image, promote logistics service level and efficiency, and lift the competitive power, they can adopt the third party logistics mode, to obtain more

the exploring stage, and theoretical system is still to be improved. However, dark tourism resources are abundant and numerous, so the researches about dark tourism are not consistent with current situations. On the basis of PEST analysis method, we came up with some recommendations for the dark tourism, in the hope of promoting development of dark tourism in China.

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utility value. The famous leading enterprise Shandong Liuhe Group Co., Ltd is implementing asset-light mode and select the third party logistics mode.

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