Cultural Geography and Tourism Seen by Tourism Policy of Taiwan

Kyu-Won Kim

Abstract

Today, the concept of ‘Culture’ is everywhere. It is in field of economy, politics, industry and even in agriculture of which is originated in meaning. It became a kind of symbolic value to all field of profession as panacea of development. On the other side, the concept and practice of ‘Tourism’ is becoming one of the fastest growing industry and widely spread ‘way of life’ in the world. As for industry, the WTO esteem that the ‘Exports of tourism services generated $1,093 billion in 2010, or 30% of total world exports of services ($3,670 billion) (Vellas, 2011; 12)’. And together, ‘cultural tourism’ is perched as a new, fresh and powerful global trend, rather than Mass tourism which relied mostly on land planning and construction of infrastructure. The Cultural tourism is not only related to some cultural resources but also diverse environmental issues, ethnic policy, democracy and economic development. Otherwise, since the beginning of field of geography, each physical and humane geography has been deeply related each other especially in terms of ‘culture’ and ‘landscape’. In terms of Cultural Tourism, invention, management, and promotion of ‘culture’ and ‘landscape’ is a key factor of policy and marketing in these days. In that case, vice et versa, the ‘cultural tourism’ who deals physical, natural and cultural resources could be a new field where an academic ‘consilience’ along physical and human geography could be achieved, and also dimension of application of geography could be broaden. In this paper I would like to search new horizon of cultural tourism by observing Tourism Policy in Taiwan.

Keywords: tourism, culture, landscape, policy, Taiwan, cultural geography, cultural tourism, festivals

Introduction

Culture: the Complicated Concept and Cultural Geography

Raymond Williams already remarked about the ambiguity and complexity of ‘The’ concept that
'Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. (Williams, 1983: 15)' More confusion can be found where ‘it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought (Williams, 1983)', that it became more difficult to define and make clear understanding about Culture. For these reasons, vast research on culture by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952) draws definitions of culture by descriptive, historical, normative, psychological, structural, genetic and also incomplete definitions to fix up actual meaning and usage of word ‘Culture’. They concluded by synthesizing as ‘Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952)’ Here, ‘distinctive achievements of human groups’, ‘attached values’ and other elements confined by land and territory are also essential themes of geography. In other word, ‘Culture was the outcome of people eking out a “good life” from what was offered up by a particular slice of land. '(Oakes and Price, 2008; 91) Ande values, meanings and differences of culture among these lands have been always main issue of geography.

Cultural Geography, Landscape and Cultural Tourism

Cultural Geography; History and Identity

After the Age of Discovery from the perspective of Europe in 16th and 17th century, it is well known that ideas, knowledge and curiosity of geography was born with Great Discovery of making map (cartography), investigating its environment (botany, ornithology, Mineralogy etc. and later born botanical gardens\(^1\), zoos, and museums) and its people (anthropology). Then, follows 18th and the 19th centuries when geography became recognized as an academic discipline in Europe. Many geographic societies also occurred during the 19th century, with the foundations of the ‘Société de Géographie’ in 1821, the ‘Royal Geographical Society’ in 1830, ‘American Geographical Society’ in 1851, and the ‘National Geographic Society’ in 1888. The influence of Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), Carl Ritter (1779-1859), Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) and Paul Vidal de la Blache (1845-1918) can be seen as a major turning point in geography from cartography, philosophy to an academic subject.

Paul Claval describe as ‘the geography was born to describe the Earth and celebrate diversity. At the end of the 18th century and under the influence of a philosophy, Herder, those who practice seek to

\(^1\) Even Vidal de la Blache remarked about his famous concept of ‘milieu’ as ‘this concept of ‘milieu’, it is especially the botanical geography which has contributed to the light, that light is projected onto the entire geography of living beings.’; Vidal de la Blache, P. (1995 eds.; first 1921), Principes de Géographie humaine, p. 31
respond to a new question: to what extent the fate of peoples is it related to the country where they are
installed. Are there any influences of it on people, or subtle harmony between the natural and social
order? (Claval, 1995: 10)’ Thus geography as academy was born to describe relationship between
physical and human factors in environment or ‘milieu’, so that its fate is to be related and connected. To
accentuate these relationships, Claval stressed as ‘at the end of the last century and as a result of the
Darwinian revolution that completes the transformation and started three generations earlier, the idea of
giving special attention to the relationships between human groups and assured ‘milieu’. The
society/milieu relationships become central to the discipline. (Claval, 1995: 12)’ Early geographers
concentrated at this issue were German ‘Friedrich Ratzel’, and French ‘Paul Vidal de la Blache’ who are
not only regarded as forefathers of human geography and cultural geography, but also who never gave
up of linking ideas of physical environment into human settlement. If we look at some works of Vidal
de la Blache on geography of France, it is not hard to find early ideas of culture and human geography
linked with physical environments as ‘the keynote of France is variety. The causes of that variety are
complex. They are due in great measure to the soil; and so derive from the long series of geological
experiences that country has passed through (Vidal de la Blache, 1903)’ or as ‘an all-pervading
atmosphere, instilling ways of feeling, methods of expression, tricks of speech and a particular kind of
sociability, has enveloped the various populations whom fate has brought together on the soil of France.
Nothing has done more to draw the different elements into one. (Vidal de la Blache, 1903)’

Today, in general, it is hard to distinguish ‘cultural geography’ to other discipline of human
geography that sometimes it is expressed as ‘cultural approach (Crang, 1998: 2)’ as ‘The Cultural
Approach in Geography’ of IGU Commission. To define, it is also described as ‘cultural geography thus
looks both at the forms of difference, the material culture, of groups but also at the ideas that hold them
together, that make them coherent (Crang, 1998: 2)’ and so ‘cultural geography is about the diversity
and plurality of life in all its variegated richness; about how the world, spaces and places are interpreted
and used by people; and how those places then help to perpetuate that culture. (Crang, 1998: 3)’

**Cultural Geography: Landscape**

We can say that the among diverse and somewhat ambiguous discipline of Cultural geography, the
studies of landscape could be one of the distinctive areas of Cultural geography, that ‘in each,
geographers have studied the role of different groups in shaping their landscape into characteristic forms
or cultural regions, marked by landscapes typical of the group in question. This in turn will raise
questions about the relationship of ‘culture’ to people. (Crang, 1998: 14)’

Meinig define ‘landscape’ comparing with similar concepts as, ‘*It is an important term because it
does carry all these connotations and more, and is thereby involved in major matters of professional
interest and public concern. Landscape is a technical term used by artists and earth scientists, architects
and planners, geographers and historians. It is also an important dimension of many issues relating
to the development, alteration, and management of our cities and towns and countrysides.*
Landscape is related to, but not identical with nature. Nature is a part of every landscape, but is no more than a part of any landscape which has felt the impact of man. (Meinig, 1979: 2) Landscape is all around us. It is related to, but not identical with environment, as several of the authors make explicit. Landscape is less inclusive, more detached, not so directly part of our organic being. Landscape is defined by our vision and interpreted by our minds. (Meinig, 1979: 3)

Landscapes are related to yet not identical with places. Place commonly refers to a definite area, a fixed location. Still landscape tends to be something more external and objective than our personal sense of place; and something less individual, less discrete, than the usual named place; it is a continuous surface rather than a point, focus, locality, or defined area. (Meinig, 1979: 3)

Furthermore, for the cultural landscape, in the famous article of ‘The Morphology of Landscape’, Sauer argue that ‘the cultural landscape is fashioned out of a natural landscape by culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result. Under the influence of a given culture, itself changing through time, the landscape undergoes development, passing through phases, and probably reaching ultimately the end of its cycle of development. With the introduction of a different, that is, alien culture, a rejuvenation of the cultural landscape sets in, or a new landscape is superimposed on remnants of an older one.’ (Sauer, 1925: 309-310)

By the medium of ‘natural landscape’, cultural factor are represented by diverse forms of ‘cultural landscape’. One of the distinctive form of cultural landscape can be found easily in plantation areas with culture and nature interrelated and correlated in time. If we see same tea plantation in different high mountain region in Taiwan and coastal region in Korea, it is certain to pose question during sightseeing about surrounding landscape of vegetations, topography and climate. Then it leads to question on life, customs and culture of different region.
Fig. 2  Tea plantation in Yilan county Taiwan

Fig. 3  Tea plantation in Alishan Area Taiwan

Fig. 4  Tea plantation in Bosung costal village, Korea
For the tourism, it is the cultural landscape transformed from natural landscape manipulated to become a product. It is the landscape formed intentionally for needs of tourists or of market. Rather than analyzing landscape for research academic, it is the process of producing ‘landscape’ on purpose to fulfill tourists. ‘As a produced object, landscape is like a commodity in which evident, temporarily stable, form masks the facts of its production, and its status as social relation. As both form and symbol, landscape is expected by those who attempt to define its meanings to speak unambiguously for itself.’ (Mitchell, 1996: 30) Therefore, touristic landscape represents the value, symbol and social needs of specific situation of cultural tourism and tourism policy of nation, region or local. Frankly, when tourists began observing (manipulate) landscape by sightseeing, they are consuming the culture and nature invented by purpose and that purpose also reflect social and cultural situation of society.

**Cultural Tourism; Characters and Trends**

It is known that from travel and expeditions stretched out geography as academic field, and tourism as industry. Even from the beginning of academic era, ‘travel is a spatial practice that has been at the heart of geography. In its earliest origins geography was the stuff of travelers’ tales(Crang, 2005: 34).’ and ‘travel in the form of exploration became one of the dominant tropes of geography as a discipline that was centrally concerned with producing information on ‘other places. (Crang, 2005: 34)’

Before becoming professional specialization, tourism took places first as religious pilgrimage, wandering troubadour, the Grand Tour of 17 ~ 19th centuries. After legitimating of ‘Vacation with Pay’ (to tell the truth began at 1936), it is after year of 1960s that tourism became an industry. Began with sightseeing and mass tourism, it is evolved to various pattern. And now, one of today’s important patterns is so-called Cultural tourism.

![Fig. 5 Cultural experience Indigenous Peoples Culture Park in Sandimen (三地門)](image)

Here, cultural tourism is not just tourism consuming and exploit cultural resources, but also culturing consumer, developing and preserving cultural assets which makes differences with other type
of tourism, as ‘today, cultural tourism seems to be omnipresent, and in the eyes of many it also seems to have become omnipotent. It is the holy grail of quality tourism that cares for the culture it consumes while culturing the consumer. Cultural tourism has therefore been embraced globally by local, national, and transnational bodies. In many parts of the world it has become a vital means of economic support for traditional activities and local creativity. (Richards, 2007:1)’

So in the field of Cultural tourism it is essential to communicate, transmit and express cultural venues of places to the consumer while in cultural geography it is important to research cultural difference and similarity of places. But in field of geography education, it is also important to foster proper communication and expression about the human and physical geography, and culture of places. Besides, ‘the basic motivations for visiting cultural sites have changed little over the years. The most important motivation has tended to be “learning new things.”’ (Richards, 2007: 16)’ And curiosity and education are the main motivation of cultural tourists: they want to learn about other people and their culture, a term that must be interpreted here in a broad sense. (Lominé and Edmunds, 2007: 39)’

Cultural tourism is not just ‘high arts’ (as preserved and presented in museums, or as performed on stage) but it may also include popular folklore, traditional events, festivals, music, food, handicrafts, daily work, etc. (Lominé and Edmunds, 2007: 39-40), that during the experiences of Cultural tourism holistic education of specific territory can be proceeded and this kind of education cannot be held unless it is in field of geography linking physical and human discipline. For example, if we see Penghu (澎湖) archipelago and Jeju (濟州) island as famous vacation places, altogether are known for their unique volcanic basalt geological feature each different from main land (Taiwan Island and Korean Peninsular) And, they have marine and agricultural landscape distinctive and similar each other. Also plantation and fishing culture have made their exceptional unique landscape. For the tourists it is likely to draw question about similar and different ‘cultural landscape’ of both places. It is role of mediator of Cultural tourism and Geography education to explain and communicate about their geographical knowledge.

Fig. 6 Plantation wall in Magong (馬公本島)
As the notion of Culture varies widely, also is that of Cultural tourism, as it ‘may be broken down into subcategories in order to distinguish between different foci such as ethnic tourism, heritage tourism, industrial tourism or other niches of special interest tourism (such as garden tourism). (Lominé and Edmunds, 2007: 40)’

- **Ethnic tourism**

  For ethnic tourism, it ‘is a type of cultural tourism where the prime motivation is the desire to interact with people from a different ethnic group. (Lominé and Edmunds, 2007: 67)

  In New Zealand, the definition of “cultural tourism” by Creative New Zealand (the rebranded Arts Council) specifically identifies Maori culture as a strategic priority in cultural tourism; An important part of cultural tourism strategy is recognizing that Maori culture is indigenous and unique to Aotearoa/New Zealand. (Richards, 2007: 10)’

- **Pilgrimage, Spiritual tourism**

  Also, ‘Pilgrimage can be defined as any travel undertaken for religious, devotional or spiritual purposes. Pilgrimage is one of the oldest forms of tourism, as the Ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians travelled to visit holy sites and holy shrines. (Lominé and Edmunds, 2007: 141)”
- **Heritage tourism**

  Cultural heritage, whether in the form of buildings, sites, or locations, or in its more general manifestation as the cultural environment or atmosphere of historic cities and towns, is an important stimulus to tourist demand; tourism data collections in many countries regularly document the role of cultural features, including tangible and intangible heritage, as destinations. (Throsby, 2009: 13)

  The traditions, customs and ways of life of a particular place that have been inherited from the past and that give the place its distinctive cultural character are just as much an asset as is capital in tangible form. As we noted earlier, these intangible aspects of the cultural capital of tourist destinations may be just as important as drivers of tourism demand as are the more obvious heritage items such as monuments, buildings, and other sites. (Throsby, 2009: 16)

  ![Fig. 9 Longshan temple in Lukang (鹿港)](image)

  ‘In Asia, culture has long been at the forefront of the tourism product in many countries. In the face of globalization and modernization, however, many of the major cities in Asia are being rapidly transformed by economic development. Cities like Singapore have therefore belatedly begun to preserve (or even re-create) their historic centers as tourism attractions. In other countries, cultural attractions may be the primary generator of tourism. (Richards, 2007: 12)’ Also, in Taipei cultural institutions are renovated from un-used buildings to become creative quarters which are also tourism spots to brand its image as culture- tourism-creative city. Art shops, art studios, artist villages are renovated from derelict urban areas.
Eco tourism

‘Ecotourism is related to nature, culture, farm, wildlife, and adventure tourism, and can be described as a sub-category of nature and culture tourism, a tourism form that can be practiced on farms or in wildlife, and consists of an adventurous nature. (Björk, 2007: 34)’ ‘Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as ‘responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people. Other definitions share a similar ethos and concern for local communities and the destination’s natural environments, but they will stress particular aspects, such as the fact that ecotourism is a form of alternative tourism with a focus on ecology. (Lominé and Edmunds, 2007: 60-61)’

In these regards, to precede eco-tourism planning, it is necessary to understand physical and human geography, ecological and cultural resources and distinctiveness, and local politics and demands or problems of locality. It is field of applied geography with environmental studies and regional planning.

For the Rule 1: Get the Values Right, he argues that, the interpretation of heritage as cultural capital is based on the fact that such assets give rise to cultural value as a distinct form of value creation alongside whatever economic value they may generate. Economic value can be expressed in financial terms, whereas cultural value arises within a different discourse, one relating to aesthetics, spiritual qualities, historical significance, questions of cultural identity, and so on; there is no standard metric by which this multidimensional concept of value can be expressed. (Throsby, 2009: 20) For the Rule 2: Get the Sustainability Principles Right, he also draws six principles as; continuity, intergenerational equity, intra-generational equity, diversity, balance in natural and cultural ecosystem and interdependence. (Throsby, 2009: 21-22)

Throsby (Throsby, 2009: 22) argue here that ‘economic, ecological, social and cultural systems do not exist in isolation and hence that a holistic approach is necessary’ which is also necessary in geographical education and research.

Tourism Policy and Role of Government

‘Tourism provides not only material benefits for the poor but also cultural pride. It creates greater awareness of the natural environment and its economic value, a sense of ownership and reduced vulnerability through diversification of income sources.’ In this term, especially after World War II, for many new born or liberated nations and also in developing countries, tourism policy was not for just economic values but more for promotion of their national identity, image and cultural assets. Even now, national tourism policy is closely related to promotion of national brands of each nation. For example, in some countries of Asia promotes their touristic brands as follows;

Your Singapore (http://www.yoursingapore.com): Singapore
Truly Asia (http://www.tourism.gov.my): Malaysia
Heart of Asia (http://eng.taiwan.net.tw): Taiwan
Wonderful Indonesia (http://www.indonesia.travel): Indonesia
Be inspired (http://english.visitkorea.or.kr): Korea
Amazing Thailand (http://www.tourismthailand.org): Thailand
Endless Discovery (http://www.jnto.go.jp): Japan

As more specialized field of industry policy, ‘governments definitions of tourism are generally driven by the need to collect and analyze statistical data for a range of purposes, including quantifying industrial production and consumption, balance of payments, current accounts, multiplier effects, employment generation, and travel and immigration. The expressed needs of tourism operators, industry

---

2 Report of the World Tourism Organization to the United Nations Secretary-General in preparation for the High Level Meeting on the Mid-Term Comprehensive Global Review of the Program of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, p.2
organizations and governments for comparability of data throughout to local, regional and national jurisdictions have stimulated the development of internationally recognized statistical definitions and classifications of tourism, tourists and excursionists.’ (Game, 2007: 12)

In fact, ‘there are many definitions of policy, but perhaps a good working definition is “a policy is a reasoned consideration of alternatives”. Where there is resource scarcity one of the policy issues must be how best to allocate these scarce resources. For example, tourism development might require the use of land, whereas land might have alternative uses in terms of agriculture, building, forestry, etc.’(Lichorish, 1997: 171-172) In addition, as well as land use, tourism policy requires comprehensive master plan for making use of complex physical, human and for all cultural resources of area. Therefore, ‘the development of tourism is a long-term process which requires substantial and continuing investment in infrastructure and related facilities. For these and other reasons most governments are concerned with the economic benefits which tourism can generate.’ (Lichorish, 1997: 174)

- History

If we look briefly at the history of the development of tourism planning, it became ‘as a separate area of government concern emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, although there is evidence to suggest that governments and politicians were interested in the economic benefits of tourism well before this time.’(Game, 2007: 92) Then, ‘by the 1960s, attention by professionals applying a spatial approach for planning and managing tourism (e.g. geographers, landscape architects, planners, officers in parks and recreation agencies) stimulated the emergence of a range of spatial planning techniques, models and approaches for tourism. Spatial master planning was consistent with prevailing ideas about the bureaucratic role of government and models of government intervention. Governments had a tendency to be paternalistic and were characterized by centralized, technical plan-making.’ (Game, 2007: 94) The reasons to focus on these areas of spatial planning are that for the beginning era of tourism, it was necessary to provide primary infrastructure of tourism, and also to meet the demands of mass tourism of that period. Meanwhile, ‘throughout the 1970s tourism was increasingly being cast as a business with enormous economic potential. At the time, global economic restructuring was resulting in the closure of large manufacturing enterprises and industrial production was being downsized and rescales. Service industries such as tourism were championed as economic replacement activities in local communities that were subject to deindustrialization.’ (Game, 2007: 96-97) In similar case of ‘collapse of economic bubble in Japan’, in many industrialized localities in western countries, phase of heavy or manufacturing industries were declining that dark clouds in local economies prevailed. To develop local economy, it was necessary to replace exiting industry and to introduce new possibilities as tourism industry. There, ‘emerging from this changing focus, tourism planning and policy began to embrace a market-driven approach, which is characterized by stimulating and manipulating demand in a way that allows those sectors with potential for expansion to grow.’ (Game, 2007: 97) Also, ‘changing notions about the role of bureaucracy and governments that began to take hold during the 1970s and 1980s were consolidated in the 1990s. In tourism, where a large majority of businesses are small operations or
family-run, there can often be a lack of business expertise, knowledge and capacity to cope with business development and market change. As a result, governments’ role in tourism shifted from direct provider of destination planning services to one of facilitating and building industry capacity. (Game, 2007: 167) Today, tourism policy is not only industrial or national identity policy, but also it is linked and closely related with Environmental protection and Natural resource policy, policy on National Patrimony and Heritage, Arts and Cultural policies depending on changes of current demands and supply of tourism.

Tourism Administration and Policy of Taiwan

From the official website of Taiwan government, national and local related administration system can be explained as ‘local government in the ROC (Taiwan) is subdivided into several different levels. Beneath the central government are provinces and special municipalities. Beneath the provinces are counties and cities; counties are subdivided into rural townships, urban townships, and county-administered cities; special municipalities and cities are subdivided into districts. A special municipality, county, city, rural township, urban township, or county-administered city is an organ of local self-governance, but a province is not. Currently the ROC comprises two provinces (Taiwan and Fujian) and five special municipalities (Taipei, New Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, and Kaohsiung). At the provincial level, under Taiwan Province are 12 counties and three cities, and under these counties and cities are 213 rural townships, urban townships, county-administered cities, and city districts; and under Fujian Province are two counties governing 10 rural and urban townships. This system of Central government with decentralized local elected government with their autonomy to some extend can be general form in advanced democratic countries. Differences can be found at the level of Provinces (省) as historically Taiwan Province covers the entire island of Taiwan and all its associated islands. All the special municipalities were split off from the province between 1967 and 2010. Since 1997 most of the Taiwan provincial government's functions have been transferred to the central government of the Republic of China following a constitutional amendment. The Taiwan provincial government has effectively become a nominal institution under the Executive Yuan's administration. For Tourism policy, especially islands in Fujian Province, becomes more and more important by its distinctive history and culture. Important military base and front line is now exclusive tourism spot. ‘military administration of Kinmen(金門) was lifted in 1992, marking the start of the island's emergence as a tourism destination. In January 2001, direct cross-strait links were opened between Kinmen and Xiamen in mainland China, putting the island in a key position for cross-strait interactions. During the period of military administration, the soldiers and civilian residents of Kinmen lived in stoic conditions and worked together to develop the island infrastructure. The military installations developed at that time

4 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan_Province
have today become an invaluable tourism resource for the islands. Major reforestation efforts by the military since 1950 have further endowed Kinmen with lush greenery and roadside flowers, giving the islands a reputation as a "park in the sea."5

In Fujian Province islands, role of government could be important in land use, administration and in various fields of permission and acknowledgement.

And generally even in local decentralized system, role of national policy and action still remains important in everyday life of people where there are always needs for national level planning in industrial, Economic, building infrastructure, environmental policy, etc.

**Administration System of Tourism in Taiwan**

At the central government level, the tourism administration system consists of a Tourism Section and Tourism Bureau that operate under the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. Each of Taiwan's five special municipalities, county governments, and city governments has its own unit responsible for local tourism construction, marketing, and promotion. 6 In case, policy planning in national level and providing infrastructure especially transportation could be government role in tourism policy. And, marketing, promotion plan & action local development and identity could be important role of local government.

On Nov. 21, 1996 the Executive Yuan (Cabinet) set up a Tourism Development and Promotion Committee with the aim of effectively integrating tourism development and promotion. A minister

---

5 Tourism Bureau, Republic of China , http://eng.taiwan.net.tw/m1.aspx?sNo=0002126  
without portfolio serves as governor and the director-general of the Tourism Bureau as executive
director of the Committee, which has a membership made up of deputy ministers of ministries and
commissions, tourism operators, and scholars. The Tourism Bureau is responsible for related staff
operations. It is advanced form of tourism administration who regards tourism as comprehensive
industry based on physical and human resources and culture.

Fig. 13 Organization of tourism administration

In addition to the scenic areas and private amusement parks under the administration or
supervision of the Tourism Bureau, Taiwan's domestic tourism and recreational resources consist of
national parks under the administration of the Ministry of the Interior's Construction and Planning
Agency; leisure farms and forest recreation areas under the administration of the Council of Agriculture;
national farms and forests under the administration of the Veterans Affairs Commission; university
experimental forests under the management of the Ministry of Education; and reservoirs, tourism sites,
and recreation areas under the supervision of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. All of these areas are
important destinations for travel and tourism activities for the people of Taiwan.

These diverse forms of tourism administration reflect complexity of contemporary tourism industry.
Also, it reflect the importance that great deal of Taiwan's tourism hot spots lies within these National
Scenic Area (國家風景區) and National Park (臺灣國家公園) as Alishan, Sun Moon lake, Penghu
island, East rift valley and Northeast and Yilan coast (National Scenic Area) or Taroko Valley, Kinmen,
Kenting, Yushan and Yangmingshan (National Park) who are most important tourism spot in region of
Taiwan.

---

These situations are also reflected in ‘Project Vanguard for Excellence in Tourism, Ministry of Transportation and Communications, April 9, 2009’ with theme of ‘Beautiful Taiwan’, ‘Specialty Taiwan’, ‘Friendly Taiwan’, ‘Quality Taiwan, Marketing Taiwan’ with ‘Development Strategy: minimum construction, ecological preservation, environmental priority, convenience for tourists.’ For the methods it is planned as ‘Key Promotion Methods’ follows:

1. Reorganization of 13 key travel routes around the island
2. Traditional scenic spots, new impressions – restoration of important local scenic spots

Actually, Taiwan national Tourism Policies of 2013 can be summarized as:

- Continued implementation of “Project Vanguard for Excellence in Tourism” and the “Tourism Optimization through Quality/Quantity Upgrading” portion of the Executive Yuan’s “Economic Power-Up Plan” with the aim of building a tourism environment focusing on quality as well as quantity.

For year of 2013, there are 4 Key Points of Tourism Policy Implementation in 2013 as follows:

9 Key Points of Tourism Policy Implementation in 2013

- Implementation of “Project Vanguard for Excellence in Tourism (2009-2014)” and carrying out of the “Project Summit,” “Project Keystone,” and “Project Propeller” action plans so as to enhance the image of Taiwan tourism.

- Implementation of the “Medium-term Plan for Construction of Major Tourist Sites (2012-2015)” to firmly establish the directions of development for national scenic areas and focus on the unique features of different localities, carry out the graded reconstruction of recreational and service facilities at major tourist sites, and re-create the glory of tourist spots.

- These are typical role of government upon tourism policy.

- Implementation of the “Time for Taiwan” marketing campaign under the principles of sustainability, quality, amity, life, and diversity. Internally, this involves advancement of the balanced development of regional economies and tourism industries, along with optimization of the lives of local residents and the quality of travel; externally, it calls for the international reinforcement of Taiwan’s tourism brand image, the deepening of the emotional experience of international travelers, and the building of an environment with tourist attractions in all corners of the island.

- It is the role of culture and sustainable development linked with government and local policy.

- Integration of central, county, and city government tourism activities with unique characteristics in the creation of a “Time for Celebration” to present events with international allure and special characteristics in domestic and overseas brand market. Planning of “Celebrate the Summer Solstice at the Tropic of Cancer” activities to attract participation by domestic and international tourists and thereby expand the economic effect of tourism and related industries.

- Government plays role of intermediator in National level comprehensive development.

- Building of a barrier-free travel environment in which disadvantaged groups can travel

---

conveniently, strengthening of Taiwan Tourist Shuttle and Taiwan Tour Bus services, and reinforcement of the use of tourism databanks and technologies in order to provide travelers with a seamless and friendly service environment before, during, and after their travels.

Fig. 14  Positioning of Taiwan’s Regional Development (Project Vanguard for Excellence in Tourism)

In this plan, it could be seen that at ‘Northern Taiwan: Living Taiwan’ it is concentrated resources as Chinese culture and arts, at ‘Central Taiwan: Enterprising Taiwan’, agriculture plantations, forestry and leisure, at ‘Southern Taiwan: Historical Taiwan’, tradition and History, at ‘Eastern Taiwan: Leisurely Living Taiwan’, ecology and leisure activity, at ‘Island: Unique Islands Taiwan’, history, folk, landscape are concentrated for tourism resource plan.

Example of Tourism Program and Policy: Festivals in Taiwan

Generally, festivals are one of the major contents in cultural tourism with its character whether they have characters of Mega-expo (as World exhibitions, etc), Art festivals, Folk festivals, Traditional ceremonies, Natural festivals as flowers or mountains, Sports events or Industrial fairs. In present, for the sake of tourism policy, in Taiwan, local festivals for the sake of tourism is subsided mainly by Tourism Bureau, M.O.T.C (中華民國交通部觀光局) from government and by diverse division in local governments that signifies the importance of festivals in tourism industry.

A simple look at the national support for local festival can be shown by amount of subsidies.

In list of national subsidies, items of festivals can be found at ‘subsidy lists on the inbound
national tourism' (國民旅遊組各項補助金額目錄) as follows:
- In 2008 (Jan.-Dec.) there are 35 lists of festivals subsided among 190 lists in total
- In 2009 (Jan.-Dec.) there are 39 lists of festivals subsided among 236 lists in total
- From Jan. 2010 to June 2012 there are 145 lists of festivals subsided among 676 lists
- In 2012 (Jan.-Dec.) there are 16 lists of festivals subsided among 42 lists in total

One special features of policy on festivals of tourism in Taiwan lies in ‘designation’ of national level festivals all around year (臺灣地區十二項大型地方節慶活動). First at year 2003, for designation of the Taiwan representative large local festival, MOTC employ the Steering Committee on the size of the existing local festivals, activities connotation, held copies of the schedule and consider factors such as geographical balance. It has planned and achieved traditional culture and festivals in authentic ways in frame of traditional concept of time and place as 12 節慶. By the concept of 12 festivals in 12 months, tourist can experience local culture and traditional festivals in all around year in each region.

- **Cases: Matsu Pilgrimage**

Tourism related to religious sites and festivals, pilgrimage, or spirituality is a long-established and extremely important sector of the tourism market. For specific sites, such as the major pilgrimage sites of the major world religions, religious tourism may be the primary activity of a city or region. (Fernades and Richards, 2007: 215) Yet today, as ‘Santiago de compostela’, ‘Pilgrimage to Mecca or Jerusalem’, or Japan’s Shikoku Pilgrimage (四国遍路) makes important cultural tourism spots. But Taiwanese Matsu Pilgrimage is distinctive by its history, devotion and as an event held certain period of year.

However, it is not easy to ignore that there is a current trend toward spiritual tourism, focusing on the quest for the enhancement of self through physical, mental, and creative activities. We can see many tourists rejecting the relatively hedonistic travel styles of the past and traveling in order to find meaning in other cultures, religions, and philosophies. (Fernades and Richards, 2007: 219)

During my research period, searching for typical Taiwanese cultural festival, I chose Matsu pilgrimage for research and experience of Taiwanese culture. It is both famous tourism contents as ‘Matsu Cultural Festival'(大甲媽祖文化節)’ and also important cultural traditional activity in Taiwan. For the experience, I participated pilgrimage of first day of 6th April 2013, from Dadu(大肚區) of Taichung city to Changhua(彰化) city.

- **Matsu (媽祖) Pilgrimage (進香)**

The worship of Matsu started in Meizhouyu in Putian, Fujian Province, and was first considered as a kind of legend probably because of the stories about the life of Matsu. According to historical documents, Matsu was a female surnamed Lin from Putian.¹¹

Matsu was originally Goddess of the Sea. Matsu belief was brought over when ancestors of Taiwan

---

crossed the sea to Taiwan, to protect them, and when they moved inwards, cultivating the land of Taiwan, they frequently appealed to her for blessings and protection, and thus Matsu became “Taiwanized,” and having started out as Goddess of the Sea became Goddess of Rain. The Taiwanese saying, “Lord Tatao controls the wind, and the lady Matsu brings the rain” further encouraged the belief that the ritual of “welcoming Matsu” often brought rain.

Fig. 15 Beginning of Matsu Pilgrimage at Dadu

Taichung County Dajia(大甲) Zhenlan Temple(鎮瀾宮) created so far there are two hundred years history, immigrants worship every year crossing points to the Spirit of Matsu, as gratitude for the original Matsu home Temple, therefore periodically return to the original jinxiang (carrying the incense; 香) pilgrimage. Qing Dynasties carrying incense pilgrimage came back about once every twenty, and during the Japanese colonial period Taiwan Strait crossing was strictly prohibited then, pilgrimage had stalled for years later. (黃丁盛, 2003),

Matsu's birthday is celebrated with special events in all the Matsu temples. Easily among the most famous of these ceremonies was the tradition of the escorting the Matsu icon from the Zhenlan Temple
in Dajia in Taichung County to "visit her ancestors" in what was regarded as the "mother temple" in Beigang (北港) in Yunlin County and to "obtain the flame" from the incense burner there. That journey, a distance of some 300 kilometers, is known as jinxiang (carrying the incense) and has been carried out since the time of the Japanese occupation (1895-1945). But in 1987, a dispute broke out between the two temples over the ranking of their respective deities, and the destination was changed from at 1988, Chaotien Temple (朝天宮), Beigang (北港) to another temple nearby, the Fengtien Temple in Singang (新港奉天宮).

In fact, before 1988 the Chaotien temple was the main reason for Da Jia Matsu pilgrimage. Da jia Matsu pilgrimage was original mean "visit forefathers", because in the Chaotien temple has worship Matsu’s parents and every year Matsu has to visit her parents. Nevertheless, in 1988 Da Jia Zhen Lan temple has decided not to visit Chaotien temple anymore because Dajia Zhen Lan temple do not want rank lower than Chaotien in an academy way’s understanding. What makes Dajia Zhen Lan temple feels it is superior to other Matsu temples in Taiwan? Dajia Zhen Lan temple brought their Matsu to China in 1987 because the belief in Matsu is originally from China. Thereafter, they think they are more orthodox than others.¹²

Since every move attracts devotees wrap activities throughout hundreds of thousands of participants from more local Dajia, Daan, Waipu, Houli four Xiang Zhen, extended to the whole of Taiwan, therefore, Taichung County opened in 1999 'Matsu Cultural Festival' (大甲媽祖文化節), in the original traditional programs, the increase domestic and foreign performing groups, and to promote art, pilgrimage environmental protection, international, local celebrations awarded by making the focus of international tourism. (石二月 等, 2006)

Also government (MOTC: 中華民國 交通部觀光局) support Matsu Festival as important tourism contents by subsides¹³ (國民旅遊組各項補助金額目錄) as follows; year of 2011 - 2011 大甲媽祖國際觀光文化節 (財團法人大甲媽祖社會福利基金會), 5,000,000NTD, year of 2010 - 2010 大甲媽祖國際觀光文化節 (財團法人大甲媽祖社會福利基金會), 5,000,000 NTD, and 慶祝媽祖信俗成功申報聯合國非物質文化遺產 廣宜媒體計畫 2010 (社團法人台灣媽祖文化學會), 3,000,000NTD.

With more than 5 million participants spread over a massive nine-day, multi-city pilgrimage, few religious festivals can match the enormity of the Matsu International Festival in central Taiwan's Taichung City. No surprise then that the local nickname for the festival is “Matsu March Mania.” for Matsu (“mother ancestor”), the Goddess of the Sea and Taiwan’s most popular deity. Taichung City is the best place to experience the event. The city is the start and end point of the festival's highlight -- the Dajia Mazu Pilgrimage, which begins from Zhen Lan Temple (鎮瀾宮). The annual pilgrimage has been running for centuries. Some 200,000 pilgrims or xiangke (香客 "incense guests") walk up to 12 hours per day for nine days, carrying a statue of Matsu in a sedan chair.'

¹³ Mazu mania: Free food, great parties. Wait, this is a religious festival?, http://travel.cnn.com/taiwan-mazu-religious-festival-pilgrimage-226351
‘The journey covers 300 kilometers, much of it through mountainous and rugged terrain. More than 100 temples and the coastal counties of Changhua, Yunlin and Chiayi are visited on the route before it returns to Zhen Lan Temple. Also known as “Matsu patrolling,” the pilgrimage is recognized by UNESCO as a world intangible or living heritage\(^{14}\), and is considered to be one of the greatest religious festivals in the world. Matsu is said to rest in a different temple during the eight nights of her hike. Pilgrims stay in temples or look for alternative accommodation. There are fireworks, parades and performances. The Matsu Goddess gets to meet other Matsu statues that reside in different temples. It’s believed these exchanges empower temples and bring luck to local communities.\(^{15}\)

To me, Matsu pilgrimage has yet more characters of genuine, religious (cultural) activity than popular touristic product. And I could argue that this is one of the important features of regional tourism products (spots) of Taiwan. Authenticity, locality, naturalness, in all they reveal what I could attest as realism of tourism. It could be said that these characters are not very well suited for needs of some standards of average foreign tourists such as modern decoration of tourism spot and amenity facilities and convenient language and other services. But these characters reflects new trend of ‘real things’ in tourism as for MacCannell (MacCannell, 1976) argued that the notion of the traveler escaping the beaten path is a quest for the authentic the ‘real thing’. And For tourists, the ‘real thing’ is distinctive ‘milieu’ represented by landscape written by real live culture which are well preserved and expressed in Matsu pilgrimage.

In Matsu pilgrimage, it was possible to get through to ‘milieu’ with corporal sensation (watch, hear,

\(^{14}\) In 2009, UNESCO added the Matsu worship procession to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists
\(^{15}\) Hiufu Wong, Mazu mania: Free food, great parties. Wait, this is a religious festival?, CNN UIL, 2013. 4.12 (http://travel.cnn.com/taiwan-mazu-religious-festival-pilgrimage-226351)
smell, taste and touch) by tourists and devotes. It was also possible to experience the authentic piety and spiritual culture dissolved in everyday life of Taiwanese. Also hospitalities shown at pilgrimage path, as food, drinks, open their household for amenity of tourists, expresses identity and culture of people. Finally Matsu pilgrimage could be a cultural tourism program that tourists could contemplate and ‘regard’ to different and distinctive urban and rural landscapes of Taichung(台中), Changhua(彰化), Yuanlin(員林) localities of western central Taiwan.

Here as these landscapes reflect culture, tourists could discovers its culture and value on land, as Carl Sauer suggested that ‘Geography was thus based around the diversity of landscapes as naively given selection of reality.’ (Sauer, 1962: 317) The participation of Matsu pilgrimage itself is a geography research of diverse culture and landscape.

The features of Matsu Pilgrimage as cultural tourism could be summarized as follows;

- Contact with local people, culture and food
- Experience different landscape
- Immerse oneself to traditional and lively culture
- Indulge in spiritual tourism
- And, feel profane and secularity of places by pilgrimage route

And these features of experiencing and learning cultural tourism could be bases of cultural geography based of ‘traditional culture’, ‘vernacular landscape’, ‘everyday life’, ‘local economy and agriculture’ and ‘natural and human landscape’.
Fig. 18  Benediction of each temples on route

Also, traditional festivals as Matsu Pilgrimage represent ephemeral landscape in urban and rural regions of Taiwan. Also, these ‘landscapes of change’ present distinct ‘mobile’ landscapes who changes the air around the pilgrimage by time and space. It could be a wonderful presentation of different, diverse and harmonious landscape reflecting its cultural identity and tradition.

Conclusion

First of all, from the time of origin, ‘Tourism’ has been an act which consumes different and exotic landscape. In principle, ‘Tourism’ has been a kind of activity through which makes customers appreciate attractive landscape of nature, urban and rural areas and then, in addition it comes to makes consume diverse activities of tourism as leisure activities. Therefore it is important in national or regional Tourism Policy to propose to latent clients of tourism, various opportunities of consuming attractive landscape. Especially, the status of attractive landscape became more and more important in nowadays owing to development of technology of digital (digital cameras, smart phones etc) and trends of SNS that calls for interesting landscapes taken by individuals (tourists). These SNS and multi-medias are became most important platform of marketing and branding of Tourism by self-taken landscape images. So, for cultural tourism of today, it is essential to satisfy consumer’s needs by transforming, managing and producing diverse landscape.

As Cultural tourism evolves to become more and more active in cultural activities by experiencing, learning and enjoying authentic culture, there are more and more of request on various kind of landscape as product to consume. One of the best examples is the cases of local and traditional festivals in Cultural Tourism. In festivals, we can experience not only fixed traditional landscape but also ephemeral, mobile, changing landscape of time, space and culture. That is reason that in local festivals, it is possible to experience the landscape in five senses (see, hear, smell, taste, touch) in unique environment of festival. It is kind of giant supermarket of proposition of landscape in display stand of
cultural tourism.

As Cultural Geography has evolved from analysis of morphology of landscape, traditional and local festivals could be new horizon to argue and research complex types of landscapes shown in cultural tourism. In that case, it is important to approach to not only to the analysis of time-space changing landscape but also it could be important to research the phenomena of consumed, produced and managed artificial landscape shown by festivals and authorities, groups who makes festivals. In Taiwan, major contents of Tourism moves from natural, traditional, urban resources to that of leisure activity (bike, mountain hiking, water sports, etc) or cultural experience (cuisine, traditional craft, indigenous cultural experience, etc.). And from few years ago, local cultural festivals became more important in promoting local identity and tourism. Nation policy in Tourism also reflects that importance of festival in local tourism development.

Cultural tourism features of Taiwan in folk festivals as Matsu pilgrimage, show great possibilities of development and application of ‘authenticity’ in cultural tourism programs which is new trend in actual tourism field.

And it is from these trends, it must be researched and developed that it is the ‘cultural landscape’ that makes cultural tourism and cultural festival richer and more authentic as tourism product. Also, it is the landscape of local festival that reflects cultural identity of people which can be important object of cultural geographical researches.

References

Game, C. (ed.) (2007), Tourism planning and policy, Australia, John Wiley & Sons
Hiufu Wong, Mazu mania: Free food, great parties. Wait, this is a religious festival?, CNN 報導, 2013. 4.12 (http://travel.cnn.com/taiwan-mazu-religious-festival-pilgrimage-226351)
Lichorish, Leonard J. (1997), An introduction to tourism, MA, Elsevier Science


石二月 等, (2006), *台灣節慶 嘉年華*, 秋雨文化

投稿日期：102 年  8 月 5 日
修正日期：102 年 10 月 1 日
接受日期：102 年 10 月 17 日