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# Analysis on the Symbolic Effect of Calligraphy Landscape of Tourism Scenic Spots: The Case of China

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## **Analysis on the Symbolic Effect of Calligraphy Landscape of Tourism Scenic Spots: The Case of China**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Calligraphy landscape is a kind of special cultural landscape and symbols with Chinese characteristics, and has become an important type of tourism landscape in scenic spots. This paper takes calligraphy landscape of two famous tourism scenic spots in Guilin city of China as a study case, measures its symbolic effect with 5-point Likert scale. The result shows that calligraphy landscape receives high cognition and appreciation interest from tourists. Calligraphy landscape has certain symbolic effect on tourists in the dimensions of calligraphy appreciation, cultural symbol and landscape metaphor. Significant differences of symbolic effect of calligraphy landscape exist in the dimension of calligraphy appreciation, but not in the dimensions of cultural symbol and landscape metaphor. Symbolic effect research of calligraphy landscape provides theoretical guidance to revealing the relationship among people's sense of place, environmental behavior and calligraphy landscape. The study has practical reference significance for designing calligraphy landscape and creating cultural atmosphere in tourism scenic spots.*

**Keywords:** *calligraphy landscape, symbolic effect, sense of place, guilin city, China.*

## INTRODUCTION

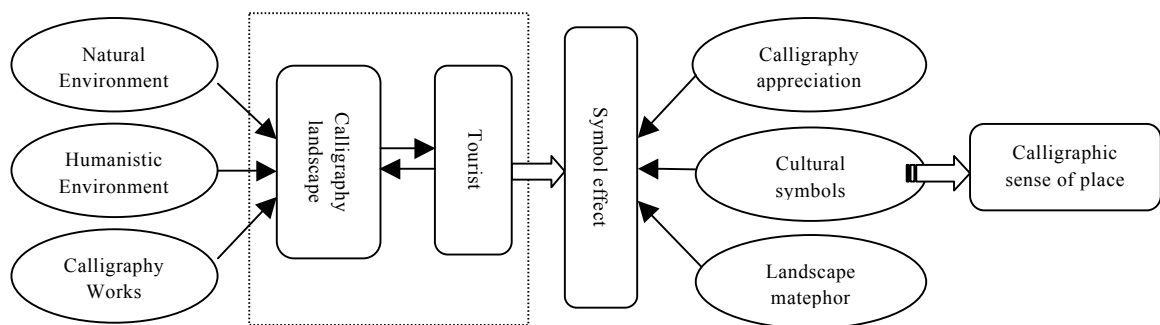
It is a new academic direction in social and cultural geography to analyze space's social and cultural meaning from the standpoint of symbolic landscape. Chinese researchers have also paid great attention to this field (Zhou Shangyi,2004; Tang Xiaofeng, et al.2008; Li Leilei,2004,2005), and have conducted diverse case studies such as place-name landscape(Zhu Hong, et al.2009), calligraphy landscape(Zhang Jie,2003; Zhang Jie, et al.2006), et al.

As a humanistic landscape component, Chinese calligraphy combines with other humanistic and physical components to form a special cultural landscape with Chinese characteristics. Calligraphy landscape is the concentrated exhibitions of certain amount of calligraphy works with visual effect in a specific geographical space, forms a place or space which has particular visual features and certain sense of place. Current studies mainly focus on macro-scale human-land relationship, such as the regional features of calligraphy style(Wu Huiping,2001; Feng Jian,et al.1999;), relations between natural landscape and calligraphy aesthetics(Zhang Jie, et al.2004,2006), geographical environment's influence on calligraphy style(Dong Minghui, et al.1997) et al. However the micro-scale landscape study of calligraphy is relatively scarce.

Taking calligraphy landscape in tourist attractions as an example, this paper explores the symbolic effect of calligraphy landscape. The aim of this paper is to provide a specific reference to calligraphy landscape designing in tourism spot.

### Conceptual model of symbol effect of calligraphy landscape in scenic spot

The symbolic effect of calligraphy landscape in tourist attractions operate in three dimensions on tourist: calligraphy appreciation, cultural symbol and landscape metaphor, thus building the conceptual model of calligraphy landscape's symbol effect showed in Fig.1.The symbol effect of calligraphy landscape plays as an intermediate stage in the formation of tourist sense of place in calligraphy landscape space.



**Fig 1 conceptual model of calligraphy landscape's symbol effect**

### Case area and study methods

The stone inscription of Han Dynasty in Shandong province, inscription of Tang Dynasty in Xi'an city and inscription of Song Dynasty in Guilin city is the most representative in China. As the DieCai mountain and Seven-star park are the most favorite places for tourists to Guilin city, so we take these two spots as the case study spots to carry on our investigate.

Questionnaire survey includes tourist's perception on couplet, plaque and stone inscription et al. We also inquire the cognitive ability, the preference of calligraphy and other demographic characteristics of tourists. We use 5-Points Likert Scale to measure tourists' perception of calligraphy landscape, among which 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 represents strongly agree. 1300 questionnaires were distributed at DieCai Mountain and Seven-star park in Guilin City by our Investigation team, among which 1180 effective samples were achieved (90.8%). We use statistical analysis software SPSS 16.0 for data analysis.

### **Conclusions and Discussion**

As an important kind of humanities landscape of tourism scenic spots, calligraphy landscape receives high cognition and appreciation interest from tourists.

Calligraphy landscape has certain symbolic effect on tourists, which is manifested in the dimensions of calligraphy appreciation, cultural symbol and landscape metaphor. Calligraphy landscape enhances the cultural atmosphere of tourism scenic spots and has an influence on tourists' aesthetic process.

Significant differences of symbolic effect of calligraphy landscape exists in the dimension of calligraphy appreciation, but not in the dimensions of cultural symbol and landscape metaphor. The symbolic effect of calligraphy landscape is related with the tourist's literacy and interest to calligraphy arts.

Symbolic effect research of calligraphy landscape provides theoretical guidance to revealing the relationship between people's sense of place, environmental behavior and calligraphy landscape. And the study also provides theoretical and practical reference for designing calligraphy landscape and creating cultural atmosphere in tourism scenic spots. This paper is a preliminary attempt of this field. There are many aspects which need to be further studied, such as how calligraphy landscape act as a guide to tourist's aesthetic process, what is the impact and mechanism of calligraphy landscape to tourist behavior and the formation of their sense of place, etc.

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