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The development of urban night tourism based on the nightscape lighting projects--a Case Study of Guangzhou

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Abstract

With the rapid economic development, the nightscape lighting projects have been gradually improved. Owing to the nightscape lighting projects that extend the time of activities, night activities become more and more colorful. To respond the low-carbon energy economy, tourism can extend the time of activities with the help of nightscape lighting projects. This paper analyzes the factors of the night tourism development, and the night tourism landscape is divided into “three axes”(the Pearl River axis, the old axis and the new axis)、 “one core”(Haixinsha island)、 “Four centers”(Asian Games town, Higher Education Mega Center, Olympic Sports Center, Tianhe Sports Center) and “one region”(the area of Garden Hotel) based on the nightscape lighting projects in Guangzhou. We hope that can enhance the image of urban tourism and improve the competitiveness of urban tourism through the night tourism development.

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Keywords: urban night tourism; the nightscape; lighting projects; Guangzhou

1. Introduction

Guangzhou is not only the capital of Guangdong Province, but also adjacent to Hong Kong and Macao, and influences in South China. Guangzhou is one of the first 24 national historic cultural cities of China. She carries out tourist activities and develops tourism very early. Compared with Beijing, Shanghai and Hangzhou, Guangzhou does not have a strong competitive advantages and the pace of development is becoming slowly in recent years. Beijing's tourism revenues have been far higher than Guangzhou and

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Shanghai's tourism revenues have surpassed Guangzhou since in 2005. How can we improve the tourism competitiveness in Guangzhou?

All of them have its own characteristics in tourism attractions and tourism markets, but Guangzhou is known as the most abundant nightlife city. Guangzhou has beginning the construction of urban landscape lighting projects in the late of 1980s. The street lights as bright as daytime at the commercial districts, the buildings shading brilliance, the urban nightscapes attract many people so that the night tourism becomes one of the hot topic tourisms. To respond the low-carbon energy economy, the night tourism can extended the time of activities which with the help of nightscape lighting projects. It is not only can use the night lightings effectively and increase tourism revenues, but also improve the competitiveness of urban tourism.

The area of this study is the center of Guangzhou city, including 8 districts: Yuexiu, Liwan, Baiyun, Tianhe, Huangpu, Luogang, Haizhu and Panyu. The data comes from the author's field researches in accordance with the nightscape lighting projects, interviews with tourism enterprises and surveys with publics. Based on the nightscape lighting projects, the collected data are imported into the geographic information system software (Arcgis) to make the layer and then analysis.

2. The factors of the night tourism development in Guangzhou

2.1 The Climate suitable for carrying out night tourism

Affected by the subtropical marine monsoon climate, the average annual temperature is 22°C and suitable for carrying out night tourism. It is very hot and the temperatures as high as 30°C at the daytime in summer, which is not suitable for outdoor activities. When the night comes, it becomes cool and good for all kinds of leisure activities. The temperature is moderate in winter, not like the north where are cold at night, but can suitable for carrying out night activities.

2.2 The rich of night tourism attractions

There are numerous of night tourism attractions. We can go sightseeing the Pearl River, Baiyun Mountain and all free parks with the help of the nightscape lighting projects. Most shops, supermarkets and commercial buildings are opening until midnight, and some of them are operating 24 hours evenly. Different types of leisure and entertainments, such as bars, nightclubs, performance venues, KTV, etc, are gathered in different districts.

2.3 The rich nightlife cultural atmosphere

It is a long history of people's nightlife in Guangzhou, where is very hot and people are nervous during daytime. The night coming, becomes cool and suits for carrying out activities. There is not only morning tea and afternoon tea, but also evening tea that is very popular, in that supper is a part of culture. The locals prefer to entertain friends at nights, in other words, the nightlife cultural heritages are rich and tourists participate easily.

2.4 The huge tourist markets

Guangzhou is a typical consumption city and nightlife consumption is one part of locals' daily life. According to the author's survey, more than 80% of locals have habits of carrying out nightlife activities. Form 20 years old to 50 years old, who account for more than 75%. The frequency of nightlife is that

more than 4 times a week which is 7% , 3 to 4 times that is 20%, twice a week is 40% and one time a week is 30%. It concludes that the consumption level of locals is higher than other cities.

3. Analysis of night tourism attractions based on the nightscape lighting projects

3.1 Building the night tourism landscape based on the nightscape lighting projects

Guangzhou has beginning the construction of urban landscape lighting projects in 1980s, the night tourism landscape is divided into “three axes”(the Pearl River axis, the old axis and the new axis), “one core”(Haixinsha island), “Four centers”(Asian Games Town, the Higher Education Mega Center, Olympic Sports Center, Tianhe Sports Center) and “one region”(the area of Garden Hotel) based on the nightscape lighting projects. It is covered 21 kilometers around the Pearl River channel and one hundred high buildings on the new and old axes about 4.6 kilometers. The coverage is approximate 200 square kilometers, involving 670 buildings which are more than 20 layers.

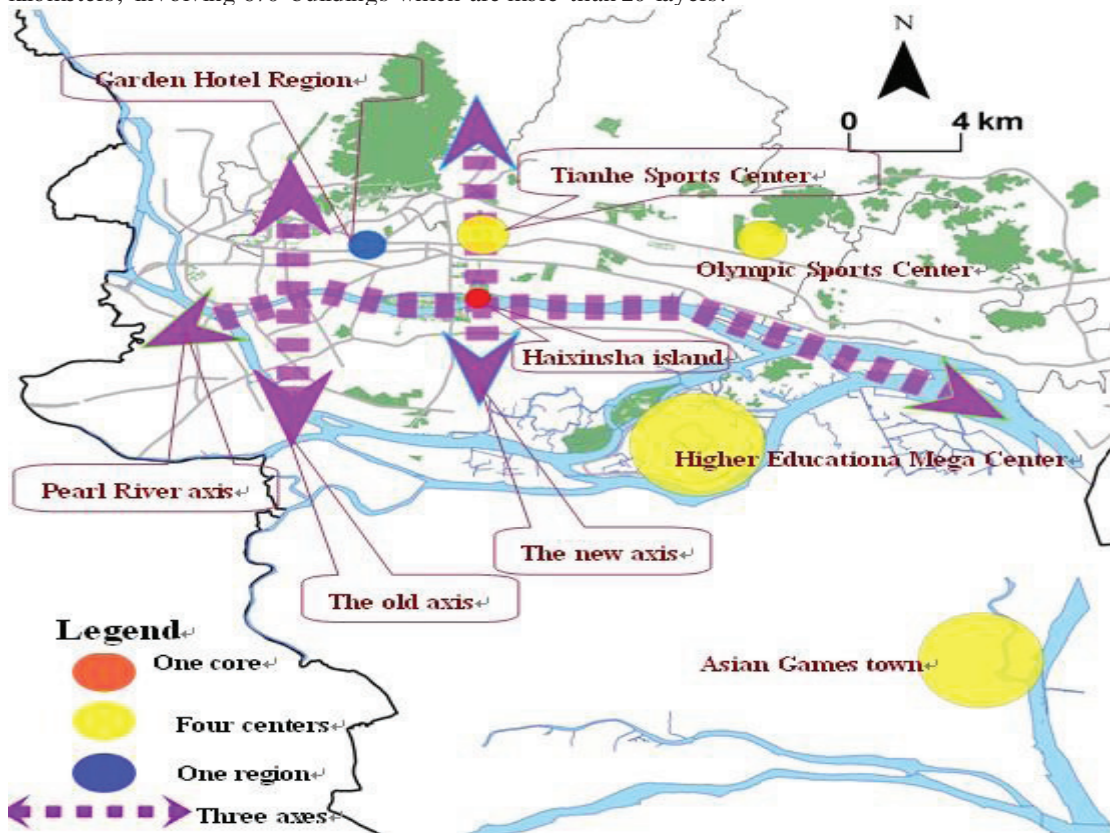


Fig: the night tourism landscape

3.2 Analysis of the night tourism landscape in Guangzhou

(1) “One core”—the core of Haixinsha island

Haixinsha Island is not only the endpoint of Zhujiang new town axis, known as the ecological and recreational island, but also is the intersection of Guangzhou. From east to west is the Pearl River axis which has two thousand years of history and from north to south is the new center area. The opening and closing ceremonies of the 2010 Asian games would be held here. If we make Haixinsha Island as the core center of the night tourism landscape, it connects the old and the new center. Haixinsha Island is a natural stage and the large-scale cabarets with local features which can be created the brand of the night tourism are performed here.

(2) “Three axes”—the Pearl River axis, the old axis and the new axis

The Pearl River axis is from Baietan to Pazhou Bridge. There are beautiful sceneries and numerous of historical sites and featured buildings on both sides, such as Chi gang tower, Pazhou tower, Haizhu bridge, Guangzhou hotel, etc. All kinds of bars are also located in both sides of the Pearl River.

The old axis is from Yuexiu Mountain to Haizhu square, including Sun Yat-sen memorial park, the uprising road and so on. It is the old economic, political and cultural centers, where is also local residents' nightlife centers. There is not only the paradise of shopping, Shangxiajiu Pedestrian Street, Beijing road Pedestrian Street and others shopping centers, in which many tourists are attracted, but also the paradise of sightseeing and dining, Yuexiu Mountain and Yat-sen memorial park that show different sceneries. Tourists can enjoy different kinds of delicious food and Cantonese operas.

From north to south, the new axis involves the eastern train station, Tianhe sports center and Zhujiang new town, where is the new economic and cultural centers and shows modern metropolis. The elegant Xinghai Concert Hall, the international business clubs in Zhujiang new town and the luxury shopping malls, all of them have international features.

(3) “Four centers”—the Asian Games Town and the Higher Education Mega Center, Olympic Sports Center and Tianhe Sports Center

Since China's successful bid to host the Olympic Games in 2001, we have emphasized on improving the quality of the national health and developed sports and leisure industries. Guangzhou undertakes various sports events actively and the sports and leisure industries develop rapidly. Apart from sightseeing, tourists can enjoy all kinds of sport games and entertainments about aboard and home, or participate in these sports games personally at night. The Olympic Sports Center, Tianhe Sports Center and the Asian Games Center are the good places for doing night activities. Ten famous universities and Guangdong Science Center are gathered in the higher education mega center with a strong academic and cultural atmosphere where tourists are attracted.

(4) one region—the area of Garden hotel

Garden Hotel, Baiyun Hotel, Friendship Store, and World Trade Center gathered here, the area of Garden hotel were the economic centers in 1980s-1990s, in which accommodation, catering, conference, tourism and other services are offered. Business travelers can enjoy a variety of night entertainments. In addition these, there are all kinds of distinguishing feature bars, concerts, fashion shows.

4. The night tourism activities based on the nightscape lighting projects

Based on the nightscape lighting projects, we can carry out the night tourism activities, such as night sightseeing, enjoying folklores, dining, entertaining and shopping. You can enjoy the night sceneries at

the sides of the Pearl River, Baiyun Mountain or parks and other places, experiencing the unique sceneries of this city at night. Cantonese culture, Chaoshan culture and Hakka culture are composed of Guangdong's culture. Guangzhou has a unique regional culture which retains Lingnan culture and absorbs western culture. Both the locals and tourists are attracted by Cantonese opera, lion dance and Unicom dance. Entitled the reputation "Southern red bean", Cantonese opera is the best representative of local operas. The Chinese saying goes "Hunger breeds discontent" and many tourists go to travel for delicious food, so that the night dining is the main partion of night activities. Guangzhou is the best place for tasting Cantonese food which is one of eight cuisines. It is said that eating in Guangzhou where covered all kinds of gourmets. Known as the rich nightlife city, various of night activities are chosen. If you prefer to go to bars, you can go to Baietan Bar Street, Long bench bar street and other bar streets. If you like fashion performances, Guangzhou Gymnasium, Baiyun Hotel, etc, are the best choice. Businessmen would like to go to clubs or listen to philharmonic. Shopping is an important part of tourists' activities. Sometimes shopping is not only an integral part of trips, but can be the very reason for going. Guangzhou is the paradise of shopping; you can buy inexpensive but elegant goods. All in all, you have different choices according to your needs, and you can experience the real nightlife in Guangzhou.

5. Discussion

To conclude, Guangzhou has advantages in developing the night tourism with a unique climate, rich of tourism attractions, huge tourist markets and the rich nightlife cultural atmosphere. The night tourism landscape is divided into "three axes"(the Pearl River axis, the old axis and the new axis)、 "one core"(Haixinsha island)、 "Four centers"(Asian Games Town, the Higher Education Mega Center, Olympic Sports Center, Tianhe Sports Center) and "one region "(the area of Garden Hotel) based on the nightscape lighting projects. However, the government does not recognize the importance of the night tourism that there are some obstacles. Limited opening hours of that is one of the obstacles, most tourist attractions are closed before 6 pm so that tourists have no chance to enjoy the beautiful sceneries. The development of the night tourism needs the whole society makes great efforts; we should further study how to coordinate relations among them.

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