

Tourism Research on the Cultural Heritage of the Imperial City of Hue, Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

Tourism plays a significant role in a country's economy, especially in Vietnam, a country renowned worldwide for its natural tourism advantages and the value of numerous historical sites and cultural heritages. Cultural heritage is regarded as a valuable resource for creating unique tourist attractions in each country. It is not a simple matter to be able to utilize the value of cultural heritage and protect, integrate and develop it sustainably. In Vietnam, Hue is a popular tourist destination for many visitors and the only ancient capital in the country that has completely preserved its royal art architecture. The main issue of this research is to maintain and rationally utilize the cultural heritage of the imperial City of Hue and deeply integrate it with international tourism. The thesis is divided into four parts. The first part of the introduction provides an overview of the history and cultural heritage resources of the capital city of Hue. Its value includes three major contents: material cultural resources represented by the existing palaces and material systems; Rich resources of intangible cultural heritage; The cultural heritage value of the Hue City Scenic Area. The second part is about the development process and reality of tourism in Hue City, and at the same time analyzes the achievements and existence of Hue City in the protection and development of tourism. The third part focuses on measures to attract tourists to visit the capital city of Hue and stimulate tourism demand, while also presenting relevant countermeasures for the sustainable development of Hue City. Finally, the content and viewpoints of this article were summarized.

KEYWORDS

Cultural heritage; Tourism development; Sustainable development

1 An overview of the capital city of Hue and its cultural heritage resources

The capital city of Hue was the palace of the Nguyen Dynasty in Vietnam, which lasted for 143 years from 1802 to 1945. It was surveyed by King Gia Long in 1803, construction began in 1805, and was completed during the reign of King Minh Minh in 1832. The capital city of Hue was built on the basis of combining the architectural principles of the East with the military defense techniques of the French Vauban Fortress style, and was ingeniously applied to the terrain conditions, making it a unique military art architectural work and also a cultural wonder of the Vietnamese nation. Although it has long been affected by war, the environment and climate and was once severely damaged, it still stands here now. This ancient capital city was recognized as a national Historical relic by the state on May 12, 1998, and later listed as a Monument of Architectural Art and a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

1.1 The material cultural tourism resources of the Hue City Scenic Area

The capital city of Hue is the largest and most complete ancient architectural complex in Vietnam, featuring a large number of magnificent and extremely luxurious palaces, mausoleums, fortresses, city walls, temples and other important ancient buildings. These outstanding buildings, which represent the highest achievements of ancient Vietnamese architectural art, have stood tall and proud despite the vicissitudes of time. They carry the historical and cultural memories of the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945) and showcase Vietnam's precious traditional cultural wealth to tourists from all over the world who have come from afar. The Nguyen Dynasty had a complete administrative document system, which was collected and managed by the Nguyen Cabinet, forming a court document collectively known as the "Nguyen Zhu Ben". The poems and inscriptions on the imperial palace buildings in the capital city of Hue are composed of the entire Chinese character system in the form of poems, mainly engraved on the bricks or walls of the architectural monuments in Hue. These verses were mainly written by King Nguyen and were selected to be engraved on decorative works and other pieces. This form of decoration adheres to the principle of "one poem, one picture" and "one character, one picture". The attached painting is engraved with traditional Vietnamese themes such as flowers, fruits, dragons and leaves.

1.2 Rich resources of intangible cultural heritage

Ya Le, known as "elegant music", is a kind of music and dance performed by the Vietnamese court during various celebration ceremonies, such as religious festivals, funerals or reception ceremonies. Elegant music was introduced to Vietnam in the 15th century. The Vietnamese royal family attaches great importance to and develops elegant music, which has become a symbol of the royal family's enduring prosperity. The performance of court music requires a large

number of musicians, and sometimes accompaniment for dancing and singing is needed. The costumes of the singing and dancing actors are elegant and luxurious, and the fabrics are of excellent quality. The Grand Orchestra is an important orchestral group in the Hue Court music system, performing during significant ceremonies. It is a large orchestra with mainly drums and trumpets, accompanied by other percussion and wind instruments. Court music is not only used for holding ceremonies, but also to express respect for deities and Kings, as well as to convey the philosophical thoughts of the Vietnamese people and their understanding of the universe. The court cuisine of Hue was a dietary culture that gradually developed over more than a century since the Nguyễn Dynasty established its capital in Hue, specifically serving the court. There were many rules and rituals in aspects such as food supply, processing, serving, and table types. In fact, most royal dishes do not differ much from rural dishes in terms of ingredients. The biggest difference lies in the processing techniques and exquisite plating methods, just like a carefully nurtured work of art. The royal cuisine of Hue is not only renowned for its meticulous preparation and attractive appearance, but also for its health benefits and healthy combinations. The court banquets of Hue were classified into different levels and forms, such as major festival banquets, banquets to welcome relevant officials or envoys, and banquets to celebrate the achievements of newly crowned top scorers.

1.3 The cultural heritage value of the Hue City Scenic Area

Professor Hoang Dao King, a Vietnamese scholar, said, "Relics are witnesses to history and genuine historical materials." The historical value is first and foremost the value of each relic. Among the legacies left over from the feudal period, the capital city of Hue, as a typical architectural work, showcases the wisdom and vitality of a nation and possesses high artistic value. In architectural construction, the site selection theory of the East is followed, and in terms of decoration, beauty and artistry are reflected. In addition, there are also many aesthetically pleasing and artistic decorations on the buildings of the Hue Imperial Court, representing the appearance of traditional Vietnamese art. The capital city of Hue, with its rich and unique tangible and intangible resources, shapes the essence of this city. The entire capital city of Hue can serve as material for many scientific research projects, such as the architecture of the Huế Wo Bang Court, glazes, the decorative art of Huế court pottery, and the study of Huế court music, etc. The rich research content reflects the significant scientific research value of Hue City. As a World Cultural Heritage Site, the capital city of Hue enjoys the advantage of cultural heritage resources, which provides important conditions for the development of regional tourism and also serves as a driving force for the social and economic development of Hue.

2 The process and current situation of tourism development in the capital city scenic area of hue

In Vietnam, the impact of the palace heritage is an important reason for the rapid increase in the number of international and domestic tourists. The Hue Heritage Complex centered around Hue City was recognized as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1993, which has led to a sharp increase in the number of tourists visiting Hue, especially those visiting Hue City. It is precisely this that has made the Vietnamese government and local authorities recognize the importance of the tourism economy. The government incorporates cultural heritage protection projects into local and national economic development strategies. In 2018, the Hue Heritage Conservation Centre received over 3.5 million visitors, generating ticket revenue of 381.7 billion Vietnamese dong. The total number of tourists visiting Hue City in 2019 is estimated to be 4.81 million, an increase of 11.1% compared with 2018. Among them, the number of international tourists was 2,189,040, increasing by 12.06% year-on-year. Tourism revenue is estimated at 4,945 billion Vietnamese dong, an increase of 10.54%. It is undeniable that the development of cultural heritage tourism in Hue City has brought about significant impacts in terms of the environment, economy, society and culture. The development of cultural heritage tourism in Hue City should be fast but sustainable, ensuring quality and competitiveness, which is closely related to the protection and enhancement of the value of cultural heritage. A development model that protects the environment and creates new and different breakthroughs with an overall perspective in regional, national and international connections.

In recent years, the departments of culture, sports and tourism of Vietnam have attached great importance to the protection of the capital city of Hue. However, there are also many deficiencies, such as: the restoration work lacks scientificity and fails to ensure consistency. One very serious problem during the restoration of the capital city of Hue was that significant changes occurred in materials, colors and architectural styles. The construction unit demolished the original stone embankment built during the Ming Ming reign nearly 200 years ago and constructed the embankment by mixing new materials with some of the stones from the old embankment. However, the recovery speed was very slow. Or there are wooden palaces, decorated with traditional red lacquer and gilding techniques, which have become a major feature of the royal architecture in Hue. After the marks of historical events and time, many palaces have vanished, and the rest have been severely damaged and need to be restored. At present, many areas of the Imperial City of Hue have been restored using the "red lacquer and gold plating" technique. However, the "gold plating" here is no longer the kind of precious metal as before. Instead, it has been painted yellow due to limited budget. For historical relics and other works that are very old and have gone through a lot of history, great care must be taken when restoring them. It is necessary to ensure both scientific and aesthetic aspects while also making careful preparations for communication. The public and the people need to have a clear and transparent understanding of the monument and the restoration plan.

3 Research on tourism countermeasures for cultural heritage in the Capital City Scenic Area of Hu ế

3.1 Attach importance to the restoration and protection of cultural heritage

The protection and restoration of Hue's historical sites should be identified as the main task of the Hue Heritage Conservation Center. In the early days, the restoration of the Hu ế Ruins Complex was merely aimed at gradually restoring the original appearance of the ancient capital Hu ế. However, it has now brought new value, that is, it brings a sense of novelty and appeal to every tourist who visits Hu ế, making those who have been to Hu ế feel surprised and excited when they have the opportunity to return. This is also the foundation for the continuous development of tourism in Hue. In addition to restoring cultural relics, efforts should also be made to actively create new tourism products with unique charm. Not only should efforts be made in researching and protecting the tea and wine house, creating meaningful souvenirs for tourists, and restoring royal cuisine and ancient royal games, but also many attractive incentive activities should be held regularly during major holidays, special exhibitions should be held, or other services such as tram Tours of historical sites and experiences should be launched.

3.2 Countermeasures and suggestions for development

Human resources are one of the important factors driving the success of the tourism industry. Tourism service personnel in the capital city of Hue not only need to possess professional skills, but also have relevant knowledge of history, culture, heritage, etc. They also need to be able to communicate with tourists in popular language and have emergency response capabilities to handle unexpected situations. Therefore, tourism practitioners must undergo systematic and professional training in order to build a high-quality team. The capital city of Hue is part of the Hue Ancient Capital Ruins Complex, which was recognized as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1993. Therefore, the integration of the capital City of Hue with other tombs, palaces and temples within the complex is also of great significance. If one only visits cultural heritage sites, it might be very boring for some tourists. Therefore, travel companies need to plan the travel routes well, for example, combining heritage tourism with visits to traditional craft villages. Hu ế has many traditional craft villages. If tourists visit the ruins and experience painting, making pottery and weaving hats like real artisans in these craft villages, it is also a way to deeply experience tourism and develop the economy. Finally, focus on investing in the construction of tourism technology infrastructure. Give priority to investing in infrastructure to ensure convenient transportation from Hue City to key national tourist areas and historical sites. Accelerate the implementation of the provincial tourism strategic project and form distinctive tourism products and services that lead the province. Continue to attract large-scale investors in the service, hotel and entertainment sectors, open up new domestic and international shipping routes, and build Tran My Port into an international tourist seaport and a specialized tourist port.

4 Summary

Since the time of the hero Nguyen Hue, Hue has been chosen by ancient Kings as the capital. Despite numerous wars, the capital city of Hue has remained intact and has become a treasure of Vietnamese architectural art. The Imperial City of Hue boasts numerous ancient architectural complexes as well as cultural heritages such as woodblock prints, WOODBLOCK engravings and literary poetry. In recent years, various forms of royal songs and dances and ethnic music have been popularized and tourism resources have been developed. With the determination to preserve and promote the values of traditional culture and the aspiration to integrate into the trend of human culture, Hu ế Province has implemented many plans and policies. In order to implement tourism development in Hue Capital, the management committee and researchers have been constantly enhancing their cultural capabilities and professional knowledge, and have received further attention from scientific researchers. It is believed that with the economic development of Vietnam, the cultural heritage of the Imperial City of Hue will be better developed and protected.

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