

Heritage Tourism and the Changing Rural Landscape: Case Study of Cultural Landscape of Honghe Hani Rice Terraces

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Abstract : The World Heritage Site of Honghe Hani rice terrace, also a marginal rural region in Southern China, is undergoing rapid change because of urbanization and heritage tourism. Influenced by out-migration and changing ways of living in the urbanization process, the place sees a tendency of losing its rice terrace landscape, traditional housings and other forms of cultural traditions. However, heritage tourism tends to keep the past, valorize them for tourism purposes and diversifies rural livelihood strategies. The place stands at this development trajectories, where the same resources are subjected to different uses by different actors. The research seeks to answer the questions of how the site is transformed and co-constructed by different institutions, practices and actors, and the how heritage tourism affects local livelihood. The research aims to describe the transformation of villages, rice terraces, and cultural traditions, analyze the place-making process, and assess the role of heritage tourism in local livelihood transition. The research uses a mixed of methods including direct observation, participant observation, interviews; collects various data of images, words, narratives, and statistics, and analyze them qualitatively and qualitatively. Theoretically, it is hoped that the research would reexamine the concept of heritage, the world heritage practice from UNESCO, reveal the conflicts it entails in development and brings more thoughts from a functional perspective on heritage in relation to rural development. Practically, it is also anticipated that the research could access the linkage between heritage tourism and local livelihood, and generate concrete suggestions on how tourism could engage locals and improve their livelihood.

Keywords : cultural landscape, Hani rice terraces, heritage tourism, livelihood strategy, place making, rural development, transformation

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