Renaissance of small ancient cities: practical experience of local comprehensive tourism planning in China

Abstract:
The decline and revival of the ancient city is a constant topic. In recent decades, Chinese urban planning scholars pay more and more attention to the protection, activation and utilization of historical sites, emphasizing the authenticity development of ancient cities. These ideas are fully reflected in the practice of restoration and development of Lijiang, Pingyao and other large ancient cities. However, China also has a large number of small ancient cities, which are scattered in different parts of the country. Due to the closer connection with the life of local residents and improper development management, there are a lot of problems in the environmental quality, cultural style, management and maintenance and vitality experience of these ancient cities. Promoting the revival of small ancient cities can not only activate the local economy and vitality, but also better meet the growing demand for short-distance tourism in China, and it is also conducive to the display and publicity of characteristic culture. Therefore, comprehensive tourism planning needs to be applied to guide the development and revitalization of such ancient cities.

This paper puts forward an innovative idea of tourism planning to meet the complex development needs of small ancient cities. The planning framework includes the analysis of tourism market and competitive products from the external perspective, as well as the macro, meso and micro tourism resources and support system analysis and planning decision-making from the internal perspective. The analysis from the external perspective can provide important market information for tourism planning and decision-making, and support the scale allocation of tourism development elements. The internal elements are the use of descriptive statistics, spatial pattern, prediction of evolution and other analysis methods, through the systematic analysis of transportation, cultural tourism resources, climate and meteorology, ecological landscape, to clarify the current situation and possible future problems. Finally, the two parts are integrated, focusing on the protection and vitality stimulation of the original atmosphere in the revitalization of the ancient city, organically constructing and positioning the industrial elements of tourism development, and providing planning guidance for tourism environment and activities.

Chongwu ancient city, a small coastal sample of Fujian Province in Ming Dynasty, is benefiting from such local practice. The author carried out comprehensive tourism promotion planning for Chongwu ancient city scenic area and gudu wharf area. Although the spatial scope of the planning does not cover the entire administrative area of Chongwu town, the planning still expands the spatial scale to a larger scope, which is conducive to the formulation of more reasonable planning measures. Based on the systematic, multi-scale and multi-element analysis and simulation prediction, the planning puts forward the strategies of tourism linkage inside and outside the ancient city, regional tourism and local traffic organization, function refinement and optimization, as well as the organic integration of cultural elements and activities. At present, the construction of the ancient city has achieved positive results, the number of tourists and the satisfaction of local residents have been improved to a certain extent. This is a positive experience of China’s local comprehensive tourism planning, which effectively balances the protection and
development of small ancient cities, and is worth sharing and reference.

**Main content:** This paper proposes a comprehensive tourism planning framework to meet the complex development and protection needs of small ancient cities in China, covering both external and internal perspectives. This paper discusses the practical experience of tourism planning of a local ancient city in China by using the method of multivariate analysis, hoping to contribute to China’s planning wisdom.