

## Exploring the Female Tourists' Identity in Contemporary Chinese Theme Parks Tourism

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### Abstract

With the impact of globalisation on China, many world-renowned branded theme parks have entered China and gained high popularity. Among these, female tourists have become the primary consumer group, initiating a new tourist experience consumption trend. The new characteristics of female identity developed in this process reflect an important development of contemporary China. Thus, this study takes Shanghai Disneyland, the most representative theme park, as an example to explore this phenomenon. This paper using content analysis, 170 short videos on Douyin which is the most popular social media in China are collected, Through coding the categories of female tourist experiences in video content and captions, the characteristics of female tourists' experiences at Shanghai Disneyland and the identity traits they wish to showcase are clearly demonstrated. Furthermore, through the tourist gaze to analysis how the construction of female identity with contemporary Chinese development. The study primary finds that in contemporary Chinese theme park, the tourist gaze constructs the identity characteristics of contemporary female tourists, utilizing thematic symbols to construct individual female identities, and this construction is passive. These related tourist experiences indicate that while female identity is rising in consumer culture, it remains in a state of being gazed at and constructed in the eyes of contemporary Chinese tourists. In the future, this research could be further extended, primarily to study consumer culture in theme parks, to help large multinational cultural companies understand how to enter the Chinese market and the impact of local female consumer habits on marketing strategies for foreign enterprises.

**Keywords:** Shanghai Disneyland, Female, Identity, Tourist Gaze.

### Introduction

Since its opening in 2016, Shanghai Disneyland has become one of the most popular domestic theme park destinations in China. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, tourists' enthusiasm for Shanghai Disneyland has remained undiminished, as evidenced by the presence of

Shanghai Disneyland tourism-related videos on social media. Through photography and capturing short videos, tourists seek to recreate their tourist gaze, just as Urry suggests that people often linger in such gazes. The visual captures through photographs, postcards, movies, and other forms allow these gazes to be reproduced, recaptured, and redistributed over time and space (Larsen, 2014). In this way, we can reproduce the photos, short videos, and other content captured by tourists because of their exploration of the tourist gaze at Shanghai Disneyland, revealing the characteristics of tourists' social culture. Among the 170 sample videos collected in this study, it was found that a significant portion of Shanghai Disneyland travel videos, which depicted the tourist identity, focused on female tourists, while male tourists were represented to a lesser extent. Through the reproduction of their tourist gaze, female tourists showcase the diverse identities of women in contemporary China and reflect the characteristics of contemporary modernity, marked by the rise of female subject consciousness. Therefore, this research primarily focuses on the female identity portrayed in the samples and examines the identities formed within Shanghai Disneyland tourism, which possess current social attributes and can reflect the subjectivity of female tourists.

In this research, content analysis was conducted on original 417 samples to examine the female tourists' identity. The data analysis primarily focused on the core visual content presented in the short videos and the captions appearing on the home page of the videos. This helped identify videos featuring gendered representations of tourists, as well as short videos that conveyed gender through textual captions. A total of 210 videos were categorized accordingly. However, videos where the identity of the tourists could not be determined due to audio-only presence or those targeting children were excluded. The remaining 170 samples were the main subject of study in this chapter, as shown in Figure 1. The remaining 247 samples, which lacked human presence in both visuals and audio and focused on tourists' gaze towards Shanghai Disneyland characters, will not be considered.

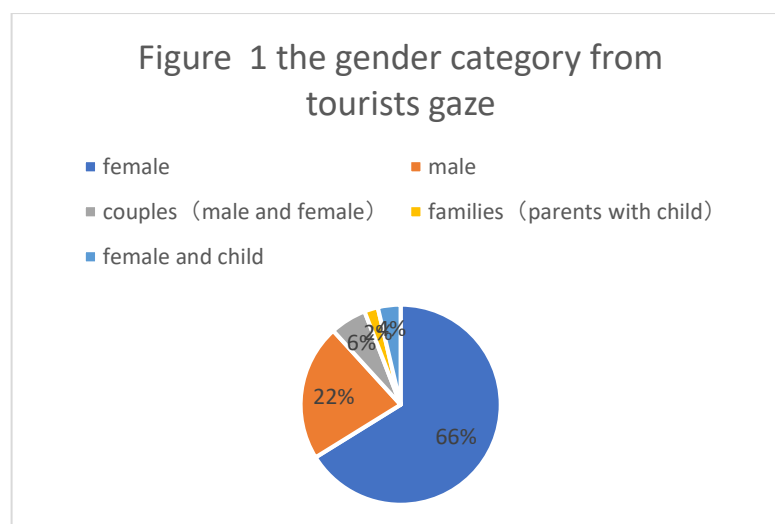


Figure 1 The Gender Category From Tourist Gaze

Subsequently, the short videos with identifiable female identities were further classified and encoded. This study distinguishes visual categories, such as the primary appearance of female tourists in theme park-related scenes within visual footage. Additionally, based on this visual classification, the study focuses on coding and analyzing the captions for content related to

female identity and tourist experiences. With prior familiarity with the data and the qualitative analysis results of the interconnections among different coding categories, combined with visual observations. Particularly, female identities were constructed through the interactions between female tourists, interactions between females and male tourists, interactions between females and children, and interactions between females and characters.

In summary, from a historical perspective, the transformation of female identity is closely related to the social transformation in China. Therefore, I believe that within Shanghai Disneyland, modern female identity represents a unique aspect of contemporary Chinese modernity. This modernity is characterized by the diverse manifestations of female identity in modern Chinese society, as well as the increased subjectivity of Chinese female tourists. For instance, they exhibit confidence in showcasing their bodies and appearance, including female figures with masculinity, the pursuit of a better life and self-determined choices for the future, and engagement in professional competition.

However, through my analysis, I argue that even today, despite the repeated emphasis on "gender equality" in Chinese policies, the expression of female subjectivity has improved compared to the past. However, female identity still struggles to break free from the constraints of the patriarchal social system that has been formed in China for thousands of years. The construction of female identity continues to be influenced by the male gaze in contemporary Chinese society. This reflects the complexities of modernity in contemporary China.

### **Literature Review**

In Urry's tourist gaze research, he defines the emergence of the Western tourist gaze in approximately 1840, attributing it to the growth of coastal tourism in England as a form of collective travel. He argues that the anticipation of travel and the integration of photography into tourism are key elements of Western modernity. Consequently, he posits that photography occupies a central position within the modern tourist's gaze (Larsen, 2014). In other words, in today's China, the development of social media technology and short videos, as a reproduction of the tourist gaze, is also the embodiment of modernity in modern society. Urry then re-emphasizes modernity as a state of change when introducing the concept of globalization, arguing that in the past few decades, due to the development of science and technology, there has been an obvious emergence "time-space compression" (Larsen, 2014). And this is Bauman described from a solid, fixed modernity to a more fluid and speeded-up a stable "liquid modernity" (Hormazábal, 2001). Urry believes that for the "travel gaze", many developments are bringing "travel" from the fringes of the global order, even the fringes of academia, to the centre of this emerging mobile world of "fluid modernity". For example, tourism facilities are built in places we want or expect, and places where all people live and live have the potential to become a strong part of global tourism in the context of globalization. Moreover, Urry regards the modern places encountered in tourism, such as airport departure halls and long-distance bus stations, as modern places of tourism (Larsen, 2014). Including the motel and the departure lounge, they represent neither arrival nor departure, it represents a "pause" before the tourist follows the extraordinary route of "fluid modernity" to the next stop (Larsen, 2014).

Keeping up with the times, as we entered 2010, Urry highlighted how the tourist gaze is increasingly being conveyed through the media. And he argues that in postmodernity, when tourists gaze at a place, they are constantly drawn into a world of texts and images—books, magazines, paintings, postcards, advertisements, soap operas, movies, video games, Music videos and more(Larsen, 2014). This is in the context of the globalization of tourist gazes widespread. Most tourism places are not fixed but are moving and changing and formed by the images spread on the media. Urry believes that in modern society, it is impossible for people to go to a place that is not "imaginatively" because we are constantly being promoted by the media about these places, which may be movies, TV drama plots, or news. However, in modern society, the imagination of the destination is not just a static or static imagination of the destination, but more often it is the imagination of the tourists themselves and the characters as the subject. Identity is also reflected in society.

Heidegger argue that modernity is "the age of the world picture"(Heidegger, 2006). The modern world as an exhibition/picture means not only that the world is exhibited, but that it is conceived and grasped as if it were a picture. The rapid and complex technicalization of vision makes the world possible, so seeing becomes the dominant sense(Larsen, 2014). Urry agrees that this so-called "real" world derived from the tourist gaze is considered a spectacular exhibition, part of a society's modernity(Larsen, 2014). Seeing men and women, or male and female identities as seen in the tourist gaze, is also part of the world picture, part of modernity.

Yet, in terms of tourist identity, Urry observes that tourists establish their identities by distinguishing themselves from others who are present alongside them(Larsen, 2014). When individuals as tourist, they tend to accentuate and highlight their own distinctions. For instance, tourists who appreciate cultural landscapes may mock those who solely take photos without immersing themselves in cultural experiences. However, they, in turn, may be perceived as outdated and lacking an understanding of alternative entertainment experiences within tourism. They may even ridicule each other for not having the "proper" tourist experience, or their own travel behaviors may be influenced by the actions of others. Additionally, Urry also discusses the female gaze within the tourist gaze, suggesting that the fluidity of the tourist's gaze may initially arise from the immobility of others. Here, he introduces the notion of using bodily immobility to present and showcase one's own body, often associated with women(Larsen, 2014). This is because in the practice of tourism, especially female tourists, as described by Jordan and Aitchison, female tourists who are alone are extremely susceptible to the sexualization and controlling gaze of local men(Jordan & Aitchison, 2008). In addition to gazing at landscapes in tourism, the body itself is also a subject that attracts significant attention, particularly in contexts involving overt racial and gender inequalities. This gaze of the body becomes especially pronounced. McClintock describes the remarkable entanglement of male power, colonial nature, and the female body in the historical narrative of journeys into and across the virgin territories of empires(Clintock, 1995). Female travel writers such as Veijola and Jokinen argue that there is a male base with stares and roams, marking male vision and voyeuristic female mastery(Veijola & Jokinen, 1994). Wearing claims that female tourists derive pleasure from social interaction and touch(Wearing & Wearing, 1996). In addition to the exceptional treatment that female tourists may encounter in tourism, Warhurst et al. proposed the concept of "aesthetic fatigue" is mentioned in the tourist gaze, which refers to the skills of observing, interacting,

and behaving appropriately at specific stages, such as the expectations tourists have towards service personnel during their travels (Warhurst et al., 2000). In other words, during the tourism process, male tourists often seek the services of women and believe that merely having a beautiful smile is not sufficient in terms of appearance. If a woman's body is perceived as too old, overweight, deformed, untidy, dull, or clumsy, it becomes a professional disadvantage. As Hochschild argues regarding age, "smile lines" are not seen as a reflection of an individual's character but rather as an unwelcome sign of aging, particularly in an unwelcome sign of age (Hochschild, 2019). It is evident that the construction of female identity through the body has played a highly significant role in tourism. Desmond outlines the historical aspects of race and gender surrounding female hula dancers, spanning from the beginning of the previous century to the present day. With six million tourists annually, the allure of a naturalistic paradise is embodied by the physical presentation of the "natural" female hula dancer—a universally recognized symbol of the destination that continues to be perpetuated and disseminated (Desmond, 1999).

It must be acknowledged that current research on female representation in the tourist gaze primarily focuses on the gaze of tourists towards female bodies and the pervasive male gaze. However, it is important to note that there are numerous other instances of female identity within tourism. Therefore, an integral aspect of studying the tourist gaze is to reassess these identities. Consequently, in this chapter, I primarily familiarize myself with the existing visual samples. It is observed that the portrayal of female tourists as objects of the tourist gaze holds significant prominence, with visual characteristics showcasing the modern female tourist's self-expression. While this section has already discussed the physical significance of female tourists and other women being gazed upon in tourism, these discussions are primarily rooted in the perspectives derived from Western societies' tourism practices. Therefore, this chapter primarily combines the historical context of Chinese development, particularly the evolution of female identity and modernity over the past century, to conduct a more comprehensive analysis of the tourist gaze.

### **Methodology**

This study primarily employs content analysis to conduct a qualitative analysis of the topic. Initially, Douyin, China's largest short video social media platform, was used as the data collection platform. According to tourist gaze theory and UGC technology, the travel short videos shared by tourists on Douyin can be regarded as products of the tourist gaze. By studying these visuals and texts, we can explore the contemporary social and cultural frameworks behind the tourists.

Firstly, the keyword "Shanghai Disneyland" was used to search for related topics, totalling 99 related topics. Due to the large volume of data, video likes were used as the sample selection criterion. According to Douyin's official introduction, videos with more than 100,000 likes can be considered significant and representative of social hot topics. Based on this standard, 417 related videos on the topic of Shanghai Disneyland were selected as the sample.

On this basis, the videos were coded visually, focusing on scenes with female tourists, male tourists, and tourists in general (Figure 1). It was found that there were 140 short videos expressing female tourists' experiences. Additionally, the captions of the 417 videos were coded and screened, revealing 30 videos with keywords related to female identity that did

not overlap with the previously mentioned videos. This resulted in a final research sample of 170 videos.

Due to the nature of Douyin short videos, which not only spread through video content but also through captions that reflect tourists' perceptions of their travel experiences under the tourist gaze, manual coding was conducted from two perspectives: one based on video content and the other on captions under different video categories. First, the video categories were coded, assessing tourists' ways of playing from the videos (Table 1). For different types of videos, the captions were manually screened and coded for meaningful units that best represented female identity in Disney theme park videos (Table 2). Finally, the characteristics of female identity constructed under the tourist gaze were analysed based on this coding.

Table 1

*Classification and Coding of Videos Representing Female Identity under the Tourist Gaze*

Number	Categories	Code
1	Interaction between female tourists and characters: 95	Characters : Nick Wilde, Baloo, members of the Duffy family, Mickey, Pooh, Daisy, Donald Duck, Elsa from Frozen, Princesses and Princes
2	Selfies of female tourists with static Disneyland landscapes: 30	Disney castle, Disney street, Disney food ,
3	Female tourists on attractions: 10	Merry-Go-Round
4	Interaction between female tourists and male tourists: 8	Couples
5	Other activities of female tourists: 10	Others
6	Fireworks : 17	Fireworks

Table 2  
*Coding of Captions Based on Video Types (Part)*

Videos	Number	Captions (parts)	Meaning unit/coding (example)
Female tourists with Disney characters	1	It was cold that day, but your hugs were really warm, and if I remember correctly, there was probably a little crying on that day	Be moved to cry
	2	You must tell me that what I said in your ear the other day was, "Thank you for the magic.	Hope for comfort
	3	Why did you just come back ,crying, cuddling	Miss crying
	4	I missed you so much. Come on. Wipe tears	Miss crying
	5	Super, super miss you are crying again	Miss crying
	6	I kept you waiting so long that you couldn't stop crying	Miss crying
	7	Put my heart in my pocket	Like and happy
	8	It was so nice to finally see Balu yesterday, crying in line	Be moved to cry
Fire works	1	You must take your beloved woman to see a firework to fulfill her teenage dream ~ 20 minutes of fireworks show is beautiful and crying	take Women
	2	You must take your beloved woman to see a firework to fulfill her teenage dream ~ 20 minutes of fireworks show is beautiful and crying	take Women
	3	Must take your beloved girl to Disney to see a firework to fulfill her teenage dream 20 minutes of fireworks is beautiful	take girl
	4	Be sure to take your beloved girl to Disney to see fireworks to meet his teenage heart beautiful cry	take gilr
	5	Be sure to take your crush to see the romantic Disney fireworks this summer! The whole world is growing up against you, only here.	take crush
	6	Instead of taking six girls to six Disney's, you take one girl to six Disney's	take gilr
Other activities	1	Some people like you because you bring them happiness, and some people like you because you are her happiness # Carousel	bring her
	2	in front of the person you like, you will never grow up, the hero who take care his wife	take care of wife

## Analysis Data

### *Female Tourists' Experiences Interacting with Disney Characters*

In the coding of Table 1, it is evident that female tourists predominantly interact with classic Disney characters, appearing in 56% of the short videos representing female tourists' experiences. This suggests that within the framework of contemporary Chinese Disneyland tourism gaze, the primary experience of female tourists at the destination is interacting with Disney characters. This interaction is not only the tourists' experience but also the expectation of other tourists observing female tourists' activities.

Furthermore, through in-depth research and analysis, examining both the videos and their captions, it becomes clear that although female tourists mainly interact with characters, different characters elicit different emotional expressions from female tourists. Interactions with Nick Wilde and Baloo highlight a deeper expression of attachment emotions among female tourists. This study focuses on the analysis of captions coded from these video collections to reveal the unique aspects of female identity.

In contrast to tourism videos featuring only female tourists, the interaction between female tourists and characters in the Shanghai Disneyland tourist gaze places a stronger emphasis on visual storytelling. It requires us not only to analyze the visuals but also to interpret the titles, captions, or background narrations in conjunction. The main shooting locations for the interaction between women and characters are the selfie spots within the Shanghai Disneyland, as well as fixed characters within the Shanghai Disneyland. The male Disney character, Nick Wilde, is the character most frequently filmed alongside female tourists. Although female tourists also interact with female characters, content analysis reveals that they do not form specific emotional dependencies or expectations with them. Instead, their interactions primarily express a fan culture. Therefore, in this context, we focus on discussing the emotional connections between female tourists and these male characters.

In a video represented by female tourist and Nick Wilde, a female tourist showcases encounters with "Nick Wilde" in five different scenes. Normally, short videos consist of brief recordings from a single scene. However, this video, through editing and montage, constructs a narrative with plot elements. It goes beyond a mere representation of intermittent tourist experiences and incorporates storytelling and plot development. Through the short video and the content of the subtitles on the screen, it is evident that the female tourist has a fondness for "Nick Wilde". In typical tourist gaze situations, female tourists simply share group photos with characters and their gaze results. However, in this case, the female tourist personalizes "Nick Wilde" as a "male" in the real world through her written descriptions and facial expressions. She develops her own expectations and displays them. For example, actions in the video, such as hugging and kissing, indicate her desire to awaken special memories in "Nick Wilde" through physical contact. This proves that she is different from other "female" tourists, and the relationship between her and "Nick Wilde" goes beyond the typical connection between female tourists and characters. She deepens her connection with Nick Wilde through multiple encounters, waiting, and reunions.



The publisher does not provide much explanation for the reasons behind the crying, but Table 2 reveals a high frequency of the word "cry." In the subtitles of one video, the word "cry" appears six times. At this point, the female identity portrayed is sensitive, vulnerable, emotionally fluctuating, and immature. In the midst of the lively and cheerful Shanghai Disneyland, such emotional expression seems out of place. However, with the support of media platforms, this emotional portrayal has garnered the highest number of likes in the current sample, reaching 2.445 million likes. In other words, more tourists appreciate this kind of female identity depicted in the video. At this moment, the female identity is expressed through crying, language, and actions, showcasing the emotional richness and the identification with a more vulnerable group.

Furthermore, these types of videos also express women's expectations of finding "true love" for themselves. The top comment with the highest likes, 308,000, on this video reads, "He is afraid to take off his headgear. What you like is the fox, but he really wants to take off his headgear and tell you he likes you." It is evident that, at this point, the female tourist's identity is no longer just a simple tourist experience. Through multiple interactions and encounters, she has built an emotional fantasy, imagining an emotional connection between herself and the characters. This fantasy evokes a sense of self-emotion and resonates with the female identity she represents.

Objectively speaking, Disney has strict training for its characters, and in the video, the actions and attitudes of "Nick Wilde" are mostly in line with the standards of Disney parks. The only difference is the number of meetings between the female tourist and "Nick Wilde." For regular tourists, meeting once or twice is considered normal, but having five or more meetings, specifically for the purpose of meeting "Nick Wilde," is unusual. Starting from the third encounter, she begins to cry. This is due to her own perseverance and the emotional impact of overcoming the obstacles she has designed. The core message constructed by the female tourist is that no matter how difficult the process may be, as long as she gets to see "Nick Wilde" and have a meeting with him, he will understand her, embrace her, and comfort her. "Nick Wilde" becomes the key element of self-redemption for the female tourist. In other words, the "male" represented by "Nick Wilde" is the pursuit and meaning of her female identity.

At this moment, the female identity is portrayed as brave and bold in the pursuit of love, openly expressing love and emotions. Under the interpretation of comments, no one focuses on crying as a display of female weakness or lack of strength. Instead, it is portrayed as a brave identity that persists even if love has no outcome. Similarly, there are many similar video contents, such as Figure 5, where the characters are replaced by Baloo. However, the outcome remains the same: most of the women, when faced with characters they like, uncontrollably burst into tears. They believe that when characters embrace them, their emotions are alleviated. They express their satisfaction with this tourist experience, particularly with characters who allow them to release their emotions and feelings, as seen in the eighth entry in Table 2.

In general, modern Chinese media, especially in female narratives, tend to romanticize women's fantasies of ideal love. Positive love experiences and aspirations for happiness are primarily transformed into expectations of men. Women are accustomed to creating

imaginings of the idealized man through self-emotion, completing the construction of their own identities. In heterosexual relationships, women often find themselves in a disadvantaged position and may face multiple pressures from work, life, and society. However, under the patriarchal pressures of traditional Chinese society, women's emotional expressions and the release of their pressures may not receive much attention or become a social focus. The soft emotional experiences of women are not enough to cause a significant stir in society.

However, among all the analyzed samples, the video expressing the emotions between the female tourist and Nick Wilde's videos received the highest number of likes. It is evident that women's emotional appeals have not been overlooked in today's social development. Women have exhibited subjectivity in expressing their emotions, which was not as prominent in the past. This also reflects that China's ongoing modernization still faces many issues, particularly in terms of gender inequality in relationships. For example, women face challenges in terms of job positions, family status, reproductive pressures, and employment pressures. The collision of these difficulties creates extreme concerns for women in modern society.

It is precisely this societal anxiety that has shaped the new direction of female tourist gaze. As Urry stated, people choose to gaze at a certain place because they anticipate a strong sense of pleasure, especially through daydreams and fantasies. The level or sensation of this pleasure differs from what is typically encountered (Larsen, 2014). Female tourists bring their expectations and appeals for emotional connections in modern society into the realm of Shanghai Disneyland tourist gaze. By utilizing the tourism space of Shanghai Disneyland, they create their own fantasies of emotions. They escape from daily life and perform their daydreams. They cast off the shackles of everyday life and boldly express their emotions and feelings, voicing their expectations. They shape an identity that encompasses both the vulnerable side of women and the relentless pursuit and courageous identification with emotions.

### **Female Identity in Dependency Relationships**

In addition to analyzing the video content, another set of analysis was conducted by encoding the captions on the video homepage. The encoding focused on identifying textual content that represents female identity, such as words like "Ta" (She), "Nvren" (woman), "Qizi" (wife), and "Nvxing" (female), as the smallest encoding units. This approach aimed to locate the presence of female identity within the videos. After a preliminary analysis of the samples, it was observed that the textual content associated with female identity primarily depicted women in passive roles. They were often linked to concepts like "being accompanied," "fulfilling," and "girlhood dreams," as reflected in the expressed statements in Table 2 captions. A significant portion of the corresponding video content corresponded to Disney fireworks, with only a small portion featuring female and male tourists.

Firstly, in this context, female identity is portrayed as a passive stance. Women expect support from men or their loved ones, hoping that they can be "accompanied" by men or those who love them to fulfill their dreams. Because the perception of beauty and dreams varies for each tourist, it cannot be replaced by concrete symbols but can only be represented through abstract visuals. In this case, fireworks represent beauty and hope. As the fireworks burst,

female tourists satisfy their expectations for the future and emotions through a romantic gaze. As Urry explained, the romantic gaze is a solitary, private, and personal, semi-spiritual relationship where the emphasis is placed on the object of the gaze. In this situation, tourists hope to privately view the scenery or, at the very least, enjoy it with "significant others." (Larsen, 2014) Moreover, the romantic gaze involves exploring objects of solitude, such as desolate beaches, empty mountaintops, uninhabited forests, and pristine rivers and mountains untouched by pollution. The visual landscape required for the romantic gaze is one of solitude, away from the hustle and bustle, allowing tourists to quiet their minds and reflect on their emotions. Such scenes are difficult to find in the Shanghai Disneyland tourist experience, as everywhere is crowded with people. Only in the fireworks videos, through the framing and cropping of the photographic frame, does the tourist gaze reemerge as a splendid display of fireworks without unnecessary individuals. At this moment, tourists project their emotions onto this scenery. Under the dazzling fireworks, tourists attribute romantic emotions to it, representing women's hopes of fulfilling their dreams of love. The protagonist of this anticipation is not the fireworks themselves, but the imagined male figure who can fulfill women's expectations. The Shanghai Disneyland fireworks, however, have been endowed with new meaning through the romantic gaze. They have become a place where women can witness the realization of their love.

Therefore, even though women appear in passive roles at this moment, they still actively express their emotional desires, embodying the subjectivity of contemporary women. In Galvez's analysis of Shanghai Disneyland advertising slogans, we found that Disney's promotional slogans often feature the word "dream." We can see phrases like "There's always a princess living in a little girl's heart" and "To the upcoming Shanghai Disneyland and Ignite the dream with us." (Galvez, 2018) and so on. All these slogans aim to promote Shanghai Disneyland as a place where dreams can come true. The recurring "princess dream" in the Shanghai Disneyland environment refers to the princess dream in the hearts of girls. This dream is different for each tourist, but in the broader Chinese society, I believe it is often associated with the imagination of adolescent and teenage girls. It represents women's often naive and idealistic attitude towards the world, filled with longing for beautiful things and the future. The princess dream does not have a very specific reference, but it frequently appears in the Shanghai Disneyland tourist gaze, indicating the pursuit of the princess dream. This reflects the dissatisfaction of contemporary women's identities with the social pressures they face, and it is an escape from the complex daily routines of adult women.

The social reality faced by modern Chinese women involves the contradiction between competitive careers and family roles. The declining birth rate in China contradicts the encouragement of female childbirth. After girls' adolescence, they have to face the dual contradiction of entering social roles and family roles. In the workplace, they face the same work pressures as men but may experience unfair treatment due to their physiological characteristics. If career women need to take maternity leave, the time spent away from work may affect their ability to return to work. However, in the family, they also face the dilemma that if they give birth after marriage, they may lack a source of income apart from their own work. If they prioritize work, they may be subject to the traditional expectations of female childbirth in Chinese society, which have persisted for thousands of years. It can be said that this contradiction arising from modern social development and traditional female childbirth has become increasingly prominent in contemporary China, leading women to escape their

daily lives and choose to enjoy their daydreams in tourism(Larsen, 2014). At this time, the daydream is their pursuit of teenage dreams, hoping that in the escalating conflict between work and family, they can have a lover, which can guide them not to become the victims of the escalating conflict between social development and traditional culture, and help them realize the yearning for a beautiful female identity in their teenage years.

The development of China's modernization has provided women with positions to participate in the construction of the country and society, allowing women to have more right to speak, but at the same time, most modern women are trapped in the contradiction between the pursuit of modern life and the restriction of traditional identity due to the constraints of Chinese society and Chinese traditional culture on female gender. Such as Eco argue that "Disneyland tells us that faked nature corresponds much more to our daydream demands ... Disneyland tells us that technology can give us more reality than nature can."(Eco, 1986) Therefore, tourists choose to pursue their daydreams in the themed environments created by Disney in order to escape the contradictions of everyday life. The results of the tourist gaze also confirm this point. Therefore, I believe that in the daydreams they shape for themselves, women emphasize the achievable paths to fulfill their own emotions. This is a manifestation of the modernity of Chinese women's identities. However, women's emotional demands still rely on men's initiative, which indicates the persistent patriarchal system in present-day China.

Ultimately, the intensified contradiction between modernization and traditional culture undoubtedly leads to the polarization of women's identities. On one hand, there is a tendency towards the traditional patriarchal society where women identify with their roles in the family, fulfilling China's new population policy demands, such as the opening of the "third-child policy "(China, 2021). On the other hand, this contradiction may lead women to reconsider leaving the workplace and returning to the family, or to completely abandon traditional notions of family and choose to become builders of modern society.

### **Conclusion**

The study of tourist gaze in short videos on social media about Shanghai Disneyland clearly demonstrates the characteristics of contemporary Chinese female identity. Firstly, this research highlights the visual relationship between female tourists and theme parks, indicating that the destination impression of Disneyland for Chinese female tourists is primarily constructed through their interactions with Disney characters. This interaction is an essential part of their entertainment experience upon entering the park. However, for female tourists, their identity construction mainly derives from the definitions of women found in captions.

From the interactions with characters, this study reveals that contemporary Chinese women exhibit characteristics of persistent emotional pursuit and courageous expression, defining the new era. These emotions are often displayed through negative expressions, such as grievance and crying. On the other hand, when female tourists are absent from the videos, their identity, constructed under the tourist gaze, consistently appears as the "other," a consequence of China's long-standing patriarchal society. "She" is portrayed as an accessory associated with "take," indicating a complex status where women are significant but not dominant. The entire study also reflects the complex and contradictory nature of female

identity in contemporary China, shaped by the intricate backdrop of China's modern development. This complexity arises from the growth in female consumption and the traditional cultural struggle surrounding women's identities.

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