

An In-depth Analysis of *Lady from the Sea* from the Perspective of Tourist Experience

Junke Zhang, Huixia Ning

School of Henan University of Technology, Zhengzhou 450000, China

Abstract

This paper analyzes the interplay between natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and character psychology in Ibsen's play *Lady from the Sea* from the perspective of tourism destinations and character psychology. It explores the literary significance of tourism destinations and how *Lady from the Sea* shapes the cultural image of a small Norwegian town through its depiction of natural beauty and cultural atmosphere. The paper also examines the identity transformation and psychological changes of the protagonist Ellida, and how the "tourist gaze" helps understand the characters' inner worlds and social contexts. By analyzing Ellida's pursuit of freedom, the paper reveals the struggle of women between tradition and modernity in the late 19th century and the impact of the tourist experience on character reconstruction. Finally, it highlights the significance of the play for contemporary tourism culture, including the shaping of cultural images of tourist destinations, emotional resonance for tourists, and the spiritual dimension of travel activities.

Keywords

Tourism Destination; Character Psychology; *Lady from the Sea*; Henrik Ibsen; Female Roles; Tourist Gaze; Cultural Image.

1. Introduction

Henrik Ibsen's *Lady from the Sea* (1888) stands as a pivotal work in the playwright's transition from social satire to psychological analysis, offering a profound exploration of female identity, freedom, and self-determination against the backdrop of late 19th-century Norway. Set in a small coastal town in northern Norway, the play weaves together the natural grandeur of the sea and fjords with the intimate struggles of its protagonist, Ellida Wangel, creating a narrative that resonates far beyond its historical moment. This essay examines *Lady from the Sea* through the dual lenses of tourism destination theory and tourist experience, arguing that Ellida's journey can be productively understood as a complex interplay between the "tourist gaze" and the "host gaze," between belonging and alienation, and between the constraining structures of patriarchal society and the liberating promise of the unknown. By analyzing the play's narrative perspectives, its symbolic use of landscape, and the transformative appearances of the Stranger, this study reveals how Ibsen's drama anticipates contemporary concerns about identity, gender equality, and the human quest for authentic self-hood. The tourist framework not only illuminates Ellida's psychological trajectory—from outsider to self-aware agent—but also demonstrates how literary works can enhance the cultural depth of real-world destinations, creating meaningful connections between text, place, and the modern visitor's search for meaning.

2. Tourism Destination and Character Psychology

From a literary perspective, a "tourism destination" can be seen as a place where the interplay of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and human experiences weaves a rich narrative tapestry.

[1] It is a locale that beckons with the promise of adventure, discovery, and the fulfillment of wanderlust. In terms of natural beauty, it is akin to a grand stage set by nature itself. Think of the way a novelist might describe a breathtaking landscape—rolling hills bathed in golden sunlight, pristine lakes that mirror the azure sky, or towering mountains whose snow-capped peaks pierce the clouds. These natural elements are the backdrop against which the story of the destination unfolds. They evoke emotions and stir the imagination, just as vivid descriptions in literature transport readers to new worlds.

The cultural heritage aspect is like the intricate plot of a timeless saga. Each destination has its own unique history, traditions, and customs that have been passed down through generations. These cultural threads are the characters and subplots that add depth and complexity to the narrative. For example, the ancient ruins of a civilization are like the remnants of a bygone era, whispering tales of past glories and mysteries. Traditional festivals are vibrant scenes that bring the destination's story to life, with colorful costumes, lively music, and communal celebrations that reflect the soul of the place. And then there are the human experiences, which are the heart and soul of the destination's literary definition. The interactions between travelers and locals, the personal journeys of self-discovery, and the shared moments of awe and wonder all contribute to the emotional resonance of the place [2]. Just as characters in a novel grow and change through their experiences, so too do visitors to a tourism destination. Their stories become intertwined with the destination's own narrative, creating a living, breathing tale that is constantly evolving. So, a tourism destination is not just a geographical point on a map; it is a living story, a symphony of sights, sounds, and sensations that invites each traveler to become a part of its ever-unfolding epic.

Lady from the Sea is set in a small town in northern Norway, and its exquisite description of natural landscapes such as the sea and fjords and local customs adds a strong cultural atmosphere to the region [3]. When tourists travel to the local area, they can not only enjoy the natural beauty, but also deeply feel the cultural implication in Ibsen's works, which greatly enhances the cultural connotation of the tourist destination. Shaping the cultural image of the tourist destination: The drama closely combines the geographical landscape of the small town in northern Norway with the fate of the characters, making the cultural image of the small town more vivid.

Shen Dan [4], a Chinese scholar, claimed: "The perspective of characters can reflect the mood, values and specific ways of understanding things, but generally it will not change what is seen and produce new facts." That is to say, the narrative perspective is ideological, and the creator's own ideological position chooses the narrative perspective of the work. In a literary work, there is often a dominant creative perspective, which plays a leading and guiding role in other perspectives in the work. Ibsen's *Lady from the Sea* was created in 1888, which is the fifth drama he created, marking that his creative focus has shifted from social satire to psychoanalysis. Due to the shackles of women's narrow family roles and traditional concepts at that time in the 19th century, women began to be no longer confined to the traditional housewife role, and advocated eliminating gender differences.

In the late 19th century, the first wave of feminism emerged in Norway, and women began to actively strive for the right to vote. In 1898, Norwegian women were granted the right to vote in local elections. Eventually, after continuous efforts, in 1913, Norway became one of the earliest countries in the world to grant women the right to vote in national elections, realizing real equality, starting to pursue personal career and self-worth, and emphasizing women's independence, autonomy and rationality. Ibsen's *Lady from the Sea* was influenced by the social environment at that time, which implied his interpretation of women's roles in that era and his thinking about women's plight.

Ellida, the heroine, as an orphan girl who doesn't have any social status, after marrying Wangel, she has a new identity -- Wangel's wife, and comes to a total strange Norwegian town. While

she is looking at this town, she is also being looked at by this town. Li Jianjun [5], a scholar in China, pointed out in *A Study of Rhetoric of Fiction* that both perspective and focus are issues that indicate “who is watching”. There is a complicated relationship between narrative perspective and ideology. Different audiences often use intuition to analyze and judge their literary works, and sometimes they are not in the same perspective as the narrator. This is the difference between the narrative perspectives of “who is watching” and “who is watched”. This narrative technique makes the plot of the story and the protagonist’s psychological activities difficult to understand and speculate in a variety of perspective changes, thus concretizing the multiple images of the heroine Ellida from different perspectives. This narrative technique not only increases the complexity of the works, but also reflects Ibsen’s multi-dimensional understanding of women’s roles and identities [6].

For the town here, she is an out-comer, just like a visitor. On the other hand, for the heroine, in a place where she feels no sense of belonging, she does develop a tourist mentality. In the short term, she keeps curious about the new home, but her longing for her hometown is growing stronger day by day in the long run because of the isolation she is given. In this way her identity has changed into a foreign tourist. So in the first time, her tourism destination is the new home in Norway. At the same time, the creator tries to embody the information of personal value system and subjective consciousness through his works, and this narrative can be a bridge between the author and the reader to convey value judgment, emotional system and cognitive feelings [7]. So we readers can share the same feelings and analysis the heroine’s psychology here.

All she can do every day is to go swimming in the sea. People called her the “Lady from the Sea”. In the sea, her identity has been transformed again, no longer an outsider, she is the daughter of the sea. Ellida believes that people evolves from fish and were born with the ability to live in the ocean, but unfortunately, people finally chose to degenerate this function and live on land. If they can live in the sea, they will be happier. The most fundamental reason for people’s sadness is that they live on land and become creatures on land. “If a person is used to living on land, she can’t go back to the sea, can’t live in the ocean anymore. The difference is that mermaids die when they leave the sea, but people can adapt to their new environment”. As a foreigner, Ellida wants to settle down and adapt to the town. But how does this town treat such a beautiful and helpless female tourist?

Ellida and Wangel’s marriage begins with an unequal union, and this unequal status gap leads to the fact that after years of marriage, Ellida and Wangel still get different causes by examining this marriage separately. Moreover, as an orphan girl who doesn’t have any social status, after marrying Wangel, she loses her own identity, turned into Wangel’s wife, and came to a strange Norwegian town. All she can do every day is to go swimming in the sea. Only in this way can she find her original self. As the daughter of the tower keeper, Ellida’s past life was inseparable from the ocean. Now in marriage, the ocean gives Ellida a moment of respite and freedom, and the ocean is the existence of Ellida’s true self. But for the fascination with the sea, neither the people in the village nor Wangel can understand her, “The People in the Village Don’t Understand Her at All”, and Hilda, the stepdaughter of her, doesn’t like her coming either. Even privately rejecting and hating her joining the family “May One Day She’ll Drown”, “Goodness knows what father dragged her home for. She will never be one of us.” “Even Wangel will wonder whether Ellida inherited her mother and has mental problems. Then he tells me to take my pills”, those are all testimonies said by different people, which have aggravated the isolation of Ellida from the people around her and her self-isolation. These words come from all those who were observing Ellida, including the villagers, the family members, and her husband. The stares from different perspectives also further illustrate the cause of Ellida’s incompatibility with this place. In sharp contrast to the sea, the small coastal town where Ellida lives represents tradition, responsibility and bondage. Ellida’s life in a small town is depressing, and there is a gap between

her husband, Wangel, and his daughters. This family environment is in strong opposition to the freedom represented by the sea, which highlights the inner conflict of Ellida. Every time from land to sea, and from sea to land, they are all transformations of Ellida's identity. Each transformation deepens her aspiration for freedom and her escape from her identity as a land tourist. After all, as a tourist, she is excluded by the whole village.

3. Tourist Gaze and Characters' Deconstruction

Tourist gaze is a perspective of observing and interpreting cultural and social phenomena from the perspective of outsiders and bystanders. When analyzing this play, this perspective can help us understand the plot from a relatively objective perspective that is different from the subjective feelings of the characters in the play [8]. It is like a "tourist" who has never delved deeply into the inner world of the characters in the play, but only interprets it through stage presentation and limited dialogue, able to discover some details and cultural connotations hidden by the emotional entanglements of the characters in the play. In addition, the external space shaping often has a rich correspondence with the inner feelings and physical changes of the characters in the works. This exploration has made her gradually realize her desire for freedom and seek her subjectivity of identity, escaping from the objectivity of the tourist identity [9]. And in this process, she has experienced a psychological change for the same place. Ibsen adopted a multi-angle narrative mode in *Lady from the Sea*, and many plots in the text were elaborated from different perspectives.

For example, how the marriage between Ellida and Wangel was achieved, in the first act, the marriage was viewed from Wangel's perspective in the form of a monologue. Under the gaze of men, when women were in an inferior position, even though they knew that Ellida had no choice, "I knew she didn't have much choice. But I wanted her". Men's nature is fully revealed by male writers. "You know how young girls are, full of expectation and dreams", "I was not her dream", "She would stand at the shore and let her dreams glide over the waves". Wangel knew that marrying a girl who was more than ten years younger than himself meant that a young girl would be confined to his family all her life and could no longer pursue her dreams.

Under the gaze of male writers, men's hearts are dissected like chests under scalpels, and their internal organs are clearly visible. Ibsen presented this point to the audience in the form of monologue, which more clearly showed the general attitude of men in the face of women: the inertial treatment of treating women as objects, especially women in a disadvantaged position, which is a manifestation of taking women as objects in a patriarchal society. However, in the process of fierce debate with Wangel in the sixteenth act, we can see that from her own perspective, Ellida, "I married you without loving you" and "You offered me a shelter. Security." When the reviewer of this marriage becomes a woman, this marriage fades from the false shell of love. Exposed essence-each takes what he needs, but hidden under the transaction is the reality that women can't live independently from their fathers or husbands at that time.

In this way, the primary conditions for women and men to survive in society are different. There is no choice for Ellida but to get married after her father's death because female can not work and would not get equal treatment as male in society. This transaction is unfair in nature. Wangel pinched the pain point that marriage is the only way out for women. Marriage is a necessity for Ellida, but Wangel, as a widower and esteemed doctor, does not have to marry again. By presenting the beginning of marriage from different perspectives, readers can understand why they are not harmonious after marriage and why the heroine gets a "strange disease" from another perspective. Behind "She Didn't Have Much Choice" is the unequal status and financial condition of Ellida and Wangel, which reflects the unequal status of men and women in a patriarchal society. So as a result the heroine can not fit into this new place, even wonders whether she is ill. The heroine is in the stage of self-doubt at that phase, looking back

at herself and deconstructing herself. There is no doubt that as a tourist, she will regret coming to this place when she falls into this mood. And this is the first impression about the place, no wonder she desires to escape from there.

But Ellida does not think like that all the time. In the final scene, the scene on stage is full of dramatic tension. Tourists will notice her interaction with the people around her. For example, the conversation between her and her husband Wangel, "I spoke in anger and bitterness. And grief over losing you. But I love you, Ellida. I'll show you now that I love you. Leave with him. Your ... foreigner. Go back to the sea. Clear your mind of all regret and worry about me. Go." "Do you mean what you are saying?" Wangel's anxiety and pleading, Ellida's hesitation and conflict, all seem to be in an emotional vortex. When Ellida finally makes a choice, tourists may feel a complex emotion. If she chooses to stay at home, tourists may feel that it is a return to traditional responsibilities, but they may also feel that she has lost the opportunity to pursue inner freedom. If she chooses to walk towards the sea, tourists will be amazed by her courage, but at the same time, they will also worry about the uncertainty of her future. "She belongs to me now, as before, as in the first years of our marriage. She is calm. But now she is no longer my *lady from the sea*." Tourists will be curious about why Ellida has such a reaction and what her inner world is like. In the final act, Ellida is given the initiative to choose her future life and partner, which subverted the object status of women in the patriarchal society. This subjective narrative technique makes readers feel empathetic substitution, breaking the example of depicting from the perspective of male characters in the past. Instead of taking men as the dominant melody, readers focus on women from the perspective of subjective narrative, so that the works can show the writer's thoughts and intentions more truly and comprehensively [10]. From the perspective of tourists, Ellida's decision in the final scene can be seen as a conflict between personal freedom and traditional responsibility. In the social and cultural context of that time, women were often constrained by the expectations of their families and society. Tourists will see the manifestation of cultural conflict in Ellida. She is expected to be a virtuous wife and mother, but her heart yearns to be free and unrestrained like waves. In the eyes of tourists, this conflict is a cultural phenomenon, just as people have different definitions of freedom and responsibility in different cultural environments. Tourists will also be interested in the symbolic elements in the drama. Ellida stood by the seaside, a symbol of her deep desire for freedom. From the perspective of tourists, the seaside environment gives a sense of openness and mystery. The sound of waves and the blowing of sea breeze create a natural atmosphere that is both free and uneasy. Tourists may be attracted by this atmosphere and feel that it is a scene full of unknowns and possibilities. The image of Ellida is complex in the eyes of tourists. She is dressed in exquisite clothing, but her eyes reveals a sense of confusion and struggle. The ocean symbolizes freedom and the unknown, while the family represented by Wangel symbolizes stability and responsibility. When Ellida wanders between the two, tourists will contemplate the cultural connotations behind this symbolic meaning. In many cultures, the ocean represents a mysterious power and a spirit of freedom, while the family is the fundamental unit of society, carrying responsibilities and obligations. This comparison is very interesting in the eyes of tourists, as it reflects the eternal contradiction between human pursuit of freedom and fulfilling responsibilities.

4. Tourist Experience and Character's Reconstruction

Ellida's inner journey can be regarded as a spiritual "travel experience". She constantly explores her inner world by recalling her past life at sea, her wedding ceremony with strangers and her longing for the sea. In Ibsen's *Lady from the Sea*, the Stranger appears several times, each time significantly impacting the plot and the protagonist -- Ellida: Ten years ago, in late autumn, the Stranger arrived at the harbor with an American ship. He first met Ellida there, and they quickly

developed a deep connection. Both were passionate about the sea and spent a lot of time together. However, the Stranger had to leave suddenly after killing the captain. Before departing, they performed a symbolic “sea marriage” by throwing their intertwined rings into the ocean. The first debut creates a mysterious atmosphere and arouses audiences’ curiosity.

For tourists, this sudden insertion of an unfamiliar element is like encountering a mysterious visitor while visiting a familiar old house. Readers will be curious about the identity and purpose of this stranger. For instance, when watching a stage play or reading the script, tourists will start to guess who he is and whether he is looking for Ellida’s old lover or has other intentions. This curiosity will prompt tourists to pay more attention to the development of the plot, just as when tourists encounter a mysterious landmark or a legendary figure during a real trip, they will want to explore the story behind it. From the perspective of the tourist experience, this creation of mystery enhances the appeal of the work. It breaks the rhythm of what might otherwise be a rather mundane life scene, like adding a suspenseful element to a travel itinerary. Tourists will look forward to what will happen next and what changes the stranger will bring. This sense of anticipation enriches and intensifies the tourists’ experience.

The second appearance happens in the present timeline of the play. Ellida is now married to Dr. Wangel, but her life is still haunted by memories of the Stranger. In the final act, the Stranger unexpectedly returns to the Wangel’s household and confronts Ellida. He urges her to leave her current life and return to the sea with him, claiming that she truly belongs there. The foreigner’s blue eyes, the sea symbolized by him, the unknown, mystery and freedom have fatal attraction to her. In the context of her life, the foreigner represents an unexpected and exotic element that disrupts her routine. Just as a tourist brings new perspectives and experiences to a place, the foreigner’s arrival introduces Ellida to new possibilities and ideas about freedom. One second she is still talking about her marriage and husband on land, and the next, Ellida begins to wonder whether she will regret it if she does not leave. Somehow, it is the same nature of the sea that attracts them to each other. Strangers are another kind of existence of the sea for Ellida. His reappearance only makes Ellida’s mind shake with a few words, and with the magic of demagoguery, it tempts Ellida to approach him, approaching the unknown like the ocean.

At the same time, it is Ellida’s obsession with the sea that makes it difficult for her to refuse the temptation of strangers after ten years. The presence of strangers becomes an external stimulus, prompting Ellida to objectively examine her role and responsibility in the family and challenging her existing worldview, much like how a tourist’s fresh eyes can highlight the unnoticed aspects of a family environment. It forces Ellida to confront her inner desires and the limitations of her current situation, setting the stage for her character’s transformation. She thinks that the beginning of marriage is just an equivalent exchange of getting what she needs -- Wangel bought her because he lacked a wife, and she was forced to accept a marriage that could provide her with a stable shelter because her parents died and she was penniless, a fair deal. Wangel regards it as a free choice out of love, a happy combination.

After re-examining the nature of her marriage, Ellida thinks that she and Wangel are not really husband and wife, and she is eager to leave this cage and find real freedom. The appearance of strangers gave Ellida a chance to pursue the freedom she wanted, but with Wangel’s step-by-step question, ‘How can someone like you, a helpless, hysterical woman, completely inexperienced in the ways of the world, speak of freedom?’ “Freedom is just a flash of light which is gone even before you can finish crying.” “An instant. At the moment you are feeling it, it’s already past. The new unfreedom has begun”, highlight the fleeting and illusory nature of the freedom he offers.

Ellida’s character reconstruction is a central theme in the narrative. Initially, she is portrayed as a dependent and somewhat naive woman, as Wangel suggests. Her sense of self is intertwined with her role as a wife and mother, and she is confined within the societal expectations and norms that define her identity. Ellida’s attempts to articulate her thoughts,

often starting with “He said...”, but lacking follow-up, reflect her struggle to define her own identity and desires amidst the dominant male discourse. At that time, she does not know where the stranger is taking her, and it does not matter how they make a living, because Ellida suddenly realizes that perhaps what Wangel has said is right, and women always depended on a male. As she engages with the stranger and contemplates the idea of freedom, her character begins to undergo a significant reconstruction. The process of character reconstruction is marked by her growing self-awareness. Ellida starts to recognize her own desires and the constraints that bind her. Her realization that “women always depended on a male” signifies a crucial turning point in her journey. She begins to question the traditional roles and dependencies that have defined her life, seeking a more authentic and independent self. This internal struggle and transformation are what drive her character reconstruction.

Wangel’s proposal to set Ellida free is a masterful use of language that ultimately serves as a trap. On the surface, it appears to offer Ellida the freedom she craves. However, as she navigates this “freedom”, she is confronted with the reality that it is an empty promise. As Ellida says, “I don’t know what my dream is, I only know that a huge deep impulse completely overwhelmed me ...” After Ellida chooses Wangel, it seems to give up the sea completely and becomes a wife and mother. Wangel calls it “adaptation” and “evolution”, but it is actually a deeper imprisonment. The original imprisonment is limited to the body. Her awakening of self-awareness makes her realize that she might never be truly independent and free in society. Ellida’s final choice, whether to stay with Wangel or leave with the stranger, is not a definitive resolution but rather a continuation of her exploration of self-identity and freedom. If she chooses to stay with Wangel, it may seem like a surrender to the traditional roles and dependencies, but it can also be seen as a choice to confront and perhaps transform the existing structures from within. On the other hand, leaving with the stranger represents a leap into the unknown, a pursuit of the freedom she longs for, but also a recognition that true freedom is a continuous journey rather than a destination. In conclusion, the “tourist experience” brought by the stranger and Ellida’s character reconstruction are intertwined in her quest for freedom. The narrative highlights the complexities and challenges of self-discovery and the pursuit of independence in a society that often imposes constraints on individual identities. Ellida’s journey is a poignant reminder that the search for freedom is an ongoing process, marked by moments of realization, struggle, and continuous self-exploration.

This emergence of the foreigner deepens the plot conflict and enhances the tourists’ sense of immersion. When the stranger comes into sight for the second time, the relationship between him and Ellida begins to become clearer, while also intensifying Ellida’s inner conflict. For tourists, this display of conflict is like encountering a difficult problem or a choice during a trip. For example, when visiting a historical site, tourists learn that a fierce battle once took place there, and both sides had their own reasons. In *Lady from the Sea*, Ellida struggles between her husband and the stranger, former lover, and tourists will unconsciously immerse themselves in Ellida’s role, thinking about how they would choose if they were in her shoes. On the other hand, the stranger’s second appearance further heightens the tension of the plot. Tourists will resonate with Ellida’s emotional ups and downs. When Ellida has an emotional entanglement with the stranger, tourists will feel that sense of entanglement and struggle. This enhanced sense of immersion will allow tourists to have a deeper understanding of the work, just as when tourists can empathize with the emotions of historical figures in a place during a trip, they will have a more profound understanding of that place.

In Act 5, the Stranger occurs once more in the Wangel garden for a final showdown with Ellida and Dr. Wangel. He demands to know if Ellida will come with him. When Dr. Wangel grants Ellida the freedom to choose, she firmly refuses the Stranger, declaring that she no longer wants to be with him and that she is free from his influence. Driving the plot to a climax and satisfying tourists’ expectations. The stranger’s third appearance is also the climax of the plot. At this stage,

he may bring some crucial information or make an important move, directly leading to a turning point in Ellida's fate. For tourists, this is like reaching a long-awaited destination or experiencing a long-awaited activity during a trip. For example, when visiting a museum exhibition with a suspense theme, the final exhibit reveals the truth of the entire suspense story, which is the satisfaction tourists have been expecting. The stranger's third appearance fulfills the expectations that tourists have developed due to their curiosity and immersion. Tourists will see if the clues that they have previously guessed are correct and how Ellida's fate is impacted. This resolution of the plot will give tourists a sense of relief, just as when tourists review their entire journey after a trip, all their questions are answered, and all their experiences form a complete story. They will leave with a sense of satisfaction.

In conclusion, from the perspective of the tourists' experience, the three appearances of the stranger in the play gradually guide the tourists into the plot through creating mystery, deepening conflicts and pushing the climax, enhancing their sense of participation and satisfaction, and making the work *Lady from the Sea* more attractive and valuable to watch for the tourists. Each of the Stranger's appearances profoundly affects Ellida's life and inner world, driving the plot forward and ultimately leading to Ellida's self-awakening and true understanding of freedom. The appearance of strangers provides an opportunity for Ellida's inner journey. He represents the free spirit of the sea, arousing Ellida's memories of her past life and her longing for the future. From the perspective of tourism experience, a stranger can be regarded as a kind of "catalyst for tourism experience", which inspires Ellida's pursuit of freedom and pushes her out of her comfort zone.

Ellida's pursuit of freedom reflects the plight and struggle of women in society at the end of the 19th century. Her story can be regarded as an exploration of women's freedom and liberation, which embodies Ibsen's concern for social problems. From the perspective of tourism experience, the pursuit of Ellida also inspires modern women to bravely pursue their dreams and freedom in the face of life pressure and traditional constraints. Under the background of globalization, the development of tourism in Norway has also brought about the problem of identity. Ellida's identity dilemma reflects the contradiction and struggle between tradition and modernity, native and foreign at that time. This problem of identity still exists in today's society. As a way of cultural exchange, tourism experience can help people better understand and identify with different cultural backgrounds.

Tourists' understanding of the play will stimulate their interest in the small town, and then go to the local area to experience it for themselves, thus further strengthening the cultural image of the area in people's minds. Increasing the number of tourists in the development of tourism economy: The popularity of *Lady from the Sea* has attracted many literary lovers and drama fans to travel to small towns in northern Norway. In return, tourism experience enhances emotional resonance: The description of the sea and the characters' yearning for freedom in *Lady from the Sea* can arouse the emotional resonance of tourists. When tourists appreciate the beautiful scenery of the sea, they will associate with the feelings and experiences of the characters in the play, so as to feel the charm and freedom of the sea more deeply and make the tourism experience richer and deeper.

Through the analysis of *Lady from the Sea* from the perspective of tourism and tourists' experience, we can see the deep meaning of the themes expressed in *Lady from the Sea* and how they affect the psychology and behavior of the characters. This analytical angle not only enriches the connotation of literary works, but also provides readers with profound thoughts on freedom, marriage and personal identity, revealing the complexity and challenges of women in the process of pursuing self-awareness and independence, as well as the importance of gender equality and women's autonomy in this process. The themes discussed in this play, such as freedom, love and life choice, having certain spiritual enlightenment for tourists. In the process of traveling, tourists can think about these profound themes, so as to obtain spiritual

satisfaction and sublimation, so that tourism is no longer just a physical movement, but also a spiritual touch.

5. Conclusion

Through the analytical framework of tourism and tourist experience, this essay has demonstrated that *Lady from the Sea* operates on multiple levels: as a psychological drama of female awakening, as a cultural map of Norwegian identity, and as a timeless meditation on the tension between freedom and responsibility. Ellida's evolution from a passive "*lady from the sea*" to a woman who actively chooses her destiny—whether that choice leads her back to the ocean or toward a redefined life on land—reflects Ibsen's nuanced understanding of the constraints imposed upon women in patriarchal society and the arduous path toward genuine autonomy. The Stranger's three appearances function as catalysts for this transformation, each deepening Ellida's self-awareness and challenging both her and the audience to reconsider the nature of freedom, love, and belonging. Moreover, the play's vivid evocation of the Norwegian coastal landscape transforms the fictional setting into a powerful cultural destination, one that continues to attract literary pilgrims seeking to connect the textual experience with physical place. Ultimately, *Lady from the Sea* reminds us that the most profound journeys are not merely geographical but interior—that true tourism, in its deepest sense, is the exploration of the self. Ellida's story, therefore, remains as relevant today as it was in 1888, inviting modern readers and travelers alike to reflect on their own negotiations between the familiar and the unknown, the expected and the desired, and the social roles that define us and the authentic selves we struggle to become.

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