

City Culture Capital and City Image: Study on the Spring Culture Capital and the Construction of Jinan City Image

LI Juan^{[a],*}; YU Xingxing^[b]; SONG Fang^[c]

^[a]School of Foreign Language Studies, Shandong Jiaotong University, Jinan, China.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

Under the guidance of Pierre Bourdieu’s Culture Capital Theory, this research attempts to probe into the relationship between the spring culture capital of Jinan and the construction of the city image. The capitalization of the spring culture resources is an arduous and complicated process. This paper tries to provide some feasible strategies and suggestion to the popularization of the city image of Jinan and helps to materialize the positive interaction between the spring culture capital and the city image.

Key words: Culture capital theory; City culture capital; City image

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INTRODUCTION

Jinan is the world famous “the city of springs”. The rich spring culture resources, which are formed during the

long history, formed the most distinctive culture symbol of Jinan. Under certain historical condition, the culture resources can be relatively scarce, and the ownership of resources is a symbol of profit. In the circumstances, culture resources become culture capital and culture capital is then extended to the macro city culture capital by researchers. The city culture capital emphasizes on the “capital” meaning of the objective, embodied, and institutionalized city culture. As one of the powers for the sustainable development of the city, city image is the outward expression of the competitiveness of a city. The construction of the city image is in fact one of the forms of the capitalization of the city culture. Nowadays, the competition among cities is not only the competition of economy, environment, science, and technology, but also the competition of the soft power like culture and humanistic connotations. As the most important culture resources of Jinan, the spring culture has great impact on the construction of Jinan city image.

1. CULTURE RESOURCES, CULTURE CAPITAL, CITY CULTURE CAPITAL AND CITY IMAGE

Resource means the supply of money, labor, etc., that an organization or a person has and can use. Culture resources refer to the resources that are produced in the people’s long-term production and life and can bring profit and boost cultural productivity and economic growth. Culture resources include all the natural resources and social resources that have cultural value. In terms of the form, culture resources can be divided into tangible culture resources and intangible culture resources. Tangible resources include the historical relics, folk houses, and ethnic costumes etc... Intangible resources include myths and legends, social customs and habits, and ethnic festivals etc.. (Yu, 2009) In terms of contents,

culture resources can be divided into cooking culture, folk culture, spring culture etc..

Culture resources are not necessarily culture capital. The concept of culture capital was firstly put forward by the famous scholar Pierre Bourdieu. In his work, he did not give a definition to culture capital but he divided culture capital into three forms: in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problems, etc.; and in the institutionalized state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the culture capital which it is presumed to guarantee (Bourdieu, 1986).

Enlightened by the “culture capital theory”, Chinese scholar Zhang Hongyan firstly connected the two definitions “city image” and “capital” and put forward the conception of “city culture capital” in his work entitled *City Image and “City culture capital Theory”: From City Management, City Marketing to the Operation of City Culture Capital*. He firstly extended the micro individual culture capital, i.e., education and related culture resources, to macro city culture capital. Different from Bourdieu’s culture capital, city culture capital refers to the existed spiritual culture, material culture, and systematic culture of a city and the capital meaning of wealth. According to this theory, the material cultural heritage of the city, the famous historical person and their spiritual value, the systematic cultural symbol and cultural sign all have distinctive capital characteristics. Besides the above works, Yao (2007) summarized the contents and the forms of culture capital and discussed its function in city development. Xu (2008) discussed the ways of transforming city culture resources to city culture capital and the specific operation modes of city culture capital. Zhao (2009) probed into the quantitative indicators of the city culture capital and constructed a relatively concrete and standard measurement system. By taking the example of Huangshi city, Chen (2012) analyzed the relationship between city culture capital and the city cultural image and put forward some suggestions for the reproduction of the city culture capital and the sustainable development of the city.

The city image refers to the extrinsic “physical image” and the intrinsic “spiritual image” of the city. It is the comprehensive embodiment of the natural conditions, historical development, and cultural background of the city. It is also the overall cognition, impression, feeling, and evaluation of the public to the elements formed during the development of the city. A city image includes the political image, the economic image, and the cultural image of the city. In terms of Jinan’s city image, the political image of Jinan refers to the political impact of

the city, the competitiveness of the city, the influence of the city, the recognition by the public, and the status of the city in the country or in the world. The economic image of the city refers to the economic power and present situation of the industries. It includes the income of residents, the employment status, the development of the city industries, and urban consumption. The cultural image of Jinan refers to the unique quality reflected from the city. It includes the accumulation of culture, the attraction of the city, and sense of identity of the city.

2. STATUS QUO OF JINAN’S CITY CULTURE CAPITAL

How to transform culture resources to culture capital is complicated. To some extent, culture is a scarce resource and has some “scarcity value”, which the natural resources cannot replace. It does not exist in an illusory or abstract world, but exist in a concrete form that can be generated in human society. The transformation of culture resources to culture capital should firstly base on the existing culture resources. Thus the protection of the culture resources is of utmost importance. The government and parties concerned should take active measures to protect the varieties and sustainable development of the culture resources.

Jinan has rich culture resources. Existing in the form of historical relics, the culture resources formed the unique humanistic connotations of the city. The culture resources include the spring culture, Longshan culture, Shun culture, the Yellow River culture, religious culture, folk culture, and commercial port culture. Among them, the spring culture is the most distinctive. The following is an analysis of the objective, embodied, and the institutionalized state of the spring culture capital of Jinan city.

2.1 The Objective State of the Spring Culture Capital

The objective state of the spring culture refers to the culture resources in physical sense. As the Chinese saying goes, “the springs of Jinan are the best in the world”. In Jinan, The springs are distributed in over ten districts and counties. Baotuo Spring group, Pearl Spring group, Black Tiger Spring group, and Five Dragon Spring group are the traditional four main spring groups. Besides the four main spring groups, there are Bai spring group, Yong spring group, Yuhe Spring group etc. and all together 10 spring groups and 645 famous springs in the region. Besides, the spring culture related landscape, the spring culture park, and the spring culture street adds a unique charm to the city. The existing state of the springs in Jinan forms the objective state of the spring culture capital.

2.2 The Embodied State of the Spring Culture Capital

The embodied state of the spring culture fully reflects the peculiarities of the Jinan’s city culture. According to the

different forms of the springs, the great sage, Confucius, had once compared to spring to the morality, charity, etiquette, wisdom, bravery, persistency, and justice of people. Almost all the virtues of people can be enlightened from the spring water and these greatly enriched the contents of the spring water. The clear sweet spring water, which endowed the city with delicate quality and vigorous vitality, is the blood and soul of the Jinan city. From ancient times, there are numerous legends, poems and art works of the springs. It is believed by the Chinese people that human beings are shaped by the land they grew up. Numerous celebrities and patriots came from Jinan in history. The spring culture in Jinan has rich embodied state.

2.3 The Institutionalized State of the Spring Culture Capital

The institutionalized state of the spring culture capital refers to the rules and regulations, customs and taboos about the springs. The existing folk customs, laws and policies are the embodiment of the institutionalized state of the spring culture. To protect the heritage, the Research Institution of the Famous Springs had done lots of work: Over 20 famous springs, including Li spring, Mizhi spring were restored and the 72 famous springs were reevaluated and the corresponding tablets were inscribed; The new 10 main spring groups were delimited; Great efforts were put to protect the springs and preparation were made to declare the world culture and natural heritage; the research project about how to protect and develop the springs were conducted. In fact, the institutionalized state of the spring culture exists in people's daily life. The tea brewed by the spring water, which has rich micronutrients and great texture and flavor, is very popular in Jinan. Drinking tea while appreciating the spring has become part of the local people's life. Besides, as the birthplace of Shandong Cuisine, Jinan has well combined in the spring culture of the food culture. Lotus flower, lotus leaf and lotus root, which grow in spring water, are taken as the raw materials by many cuisines.

3. STRATEGIES OF IMPROVING THE CITY IMAGE OF JINAN

The city image, which includes the political image, the economic image and the cultural image, is the manifestation of comprehensive strength of the city. The cultural image is not only the representation of the historical context, the cultural spirit, the core value embodiment, the unique cultural icon and distinctive characteristics of a city, but also the precious spiritual wealth and cultural creative power to the city. The cultural and economic image building of a city is advantageous to the improvement of the political image. The image building can show the unique charm of the city. The use of the core culture capital plays an important role in the building of the city image.

Through the theoretical research, the authors of this paper found that the objectified state, embodied state and institutionalized state of the spring culture capital have some influence on the cultural, economic and political image of the city. To promote the building of the city image through the spring culture capital, some upgrading strategies are proposed.

3.1 Strengthening the Protection of the Spring Resources

As the major form of existence of the spring culture capital, the objectified state is the necessary objective existence from that people can perceive the spring culture. Therefore, the government should attach importance to the conservation of spring resource and protect the areas of the spring ran through like Jinan city spring area, Baimai Spring area in Zhangqiu District, Hongchi Spring area in Pingyin district and other spring conservation areas. The construction that needs to dig deeply underground and destroy the spring vein should be prohibited. The historical landscape area should be protected and restored to make original scenery described in the famous literature book *The Travels of Laocan* as "flowing streams by every house and willow trees by every door" reappear. Through these efforts, the view of the harmonious coexistence of nature and city will show.

3.2 Strengthening the Culture Transmission and Cultivating Spring Culture Brand

Besides traditional media, the government website, industry website and Weibo (Chinese twitter), and Wechat (a popular online chatting software in China) and other medias should be used to transmit the spring culture and boost the "spring city" image. The government should develop and find the historical resources of the city and cultivate the brand that has the distinguished feature of Jinan. Meanwhile, the products of the "The City of Springs" brand should be further developed. The evaluation and cultivating system of spring culture brand should be established and perfected. Culture enterprises should be guided to strengthen their spring brand awareness and emphasis brand management.

3.3 Hosting the "Spring Culture Series" Activities, Establishing and Perfecting the Management System

From June to August in 2013, the first "Spring Culture Festival" was held in Jinan. Over thirty activities were held to combine the spring culture to tea, food, dance, sports, music, film, poem, academic seminars, regimen, and bodybuilding. These activities help to the transmission of the spring culture in different industries and have great effects on the society, economy, and culture civilization. The success of the "Spring Culture Activity" shows that during the transmission of the spring culture, various activities can be held to create the atmosphere. The involvement of the people from all walks

of life will enhance the connotation of the spring culture and construct the city image of Jinan.

Besides, some other measures can be taken. For example, the “spring file museum” and “spring culture program library” can be built; hand-drawn spring maps can be published to the society; the city folk customs, folk handicraft and folk arts etc. can be collected and “Folk Street” in the historical block can be built; the spring culture festival and the spring culture summit can be hosted in Jinan; the spring culture research institution can be established; connection with the famous spring cities and spring scenic spots at home and abroad should be encouraged. Meanwhile, rules and regulations about preservation and utilization of the spring resources and spring culture should be enacted. All these help to make sure that there are laws to abide by and have rules to follow, and finally realize the sustainable development of the resource utilization and development of the spring culture.

3.4 Developing Spring Culture Products and Building Spring Culture Project

In addition, the merging of the spring culture products of other elements, for example, the mountain, lake and river can be added to enrich the spring culture content. Various spring-experience products and derivative products can be developed to build the spring industry chain. The spring culture can be transformed into the culture program that has a good economic and social benefit to promote the development and the use of the spring culture. Accordingly, this will promote the construction of the city image. For example, the spring culture museums, the spring culture experience park and the spring outdoor scenery performance park can be built to form the distinctive industry system. The major project can be built and this will in turn expand the influence of spring culture and highlight the city image. To summarize, spring is the soul of the Jinan city. As the most important city culture capital, the spring culture will surely contribute to the construction of the city image.

CONCLUSION

For a city, having rich culture resources does not mean it has a rich cultural capital. For a government, it is of utmost importance to find appropriate ways to transform

the existing city culture resources to culture capital. The study on the city culture capital and the city image is applicable for the practice of city development, the promotion of the city’s popularity and the expedition of the sustainable development of the city. Through this study, it can be concluded that the different states of the city culture capital have some effect on the construction of the city image. Meanwhile, a good city image will increase the contents city culture capital and accelerate the overall harmonious sustainable development of society. Jinan is the capital city of Shandong province and is renowned from home and abroad for its springs. This had formed an invaluable culture capital for the city. The operation of the city culture resources may increase the impact and reputation of a city. The conclusion of this paper will help to find the internal relationship between Jinan city culture capital and city image, and thus helps to protect the utilization spring resources effectively.

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