



Current Problems and Countermeasures of Religious Cultural Tourism in Chongqing

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Received 15 September 2014; accepted 28 November 2014
 Published online 26 December 2014

Abstract

With rich and unique religious cultural resources, Chongqing develops its religious cultural tourism in a colorful content, but such problems that religious cultural tourism hasn't taken off in a big way, lack of brand, lack of cultural connotation, and lack of resources integration, etc. still exist. Therefore, it is suggested that the government should change ideas, understand and plan Chongqing religious cultural tourism from the perspective of macro-tourism, integrate various resources and plan management as a whole. At the same time, the religious circles should also play an important role in religious cultural tourism, pay attention to build religious cultural tourism projects with Chongqing characteristics, and work together to promote the healthy development of religious cultural tourism in Chongqing.

Key words: Chongqing; Religious cultural tourism; Problems and countermeasures

JÜ, X. T., & Yang, Y. H. (2014). Current Problems and Countermeasures of Religious Cultural Tourism in Chongqing. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 10(6), 121-125. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/view/5711>
 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/5711>

INTRODUCTION

Chongqing, located in the southwest of China, is the largest municipality in China by area. Now, Chongqing exist 5 religions of Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism

and Christianity, and 1.77 million religious believers, about 5.4% of the city population. Among them, about 900,000 Buddhism believers, about 100,000 Taoism believers, about 10,000 Islam believers, about 260,000 Catholicism believers and about 500,000 Christianity believers. 668 religious activity places (points) are registered in Chongqing. Among them, 259 Buddhism temples, 30 Taoism activities places, 8 Islamic mosques, 121 Catholic churches and activity points, and 250 Christian church and activity points. With rich religious cultural tourism resources in Chongqing, the religious culture tourism also has a variety of forms and rich content. However, under increasingly fierce competition in the tourism market, Chongqing religious cultural tourism exist certain problems in brand, resources integration and cultural connotation. In order to get long-term development of Chongqing religious cultural tourism, the first is to accurately grasp the current status of Chongqing religious cultural tourism, and then put forward improvement suggestions, thus promoting the healthy and rapid development of religious cultural tourism of Chongqing.

1. THE CURRENT STATUS OF CHONGQING RELIGIOUS CULTURAL TOURISM

1.1 Concept of Religious Cultural Tourism

Different from simple religious tourism and sightseeing tour, religious cultural tourism, with religious culture as its carrier, has cultural taste and cultural connotation and can satisfy multi-level needs of tourists. Religious cultural tourism not only provides pilgrimage travel services for religious believers, but also provides service activities for ordinary people to understand religious culture, touch religious culture and recognize religious culture. In recent years, with the rapid rise of religious cultural tourism, a

variety of tourism projects have been carried out including religious cultural monuments viewing, religious culture experience, religious holiday for peace and recuperation, and religious festivals, etc. which make religious cultural tourism development presented diversification, and gradually become a new hotspot and new trend of tourism. A variety of rich content of religion such as grand and exquisite building, magnificent holy gods, pure and bright music, and mysterious and solemn ceremony, and extensive and profound classics not only bring a visual enjoyment for visitors, but also make the tourists have baptism and purification in heart. At the same time, the development of religious cultural tourism also bring new business opportunities for the city, and promotes the development of economy within the scenic area and surrounding areas such as catering, entertainment, accommodation, leisure, and tourism commodities, and also promote the employment.

1.2 Religious Cultural Tourism Resources in Chongqing

Chongqing has reserved relatively complete and rich religious cultural resources. Buddhism monasteries, Taoist temple, the Catholic church, architecture, statues, holy books, multiplier, stone carving, calligraphy, painting, music, rituals, hurrying, and practice, etc., not only have high ornamental value, and many resources can be developed, so as to provide people with the experience and enjoyment of minds cultivation and delightfulness. Religious cultural tourism resources in Chongqing are widely distributed, including the main city and the surrounding counties, along the Yangtze region and the southeast of Chongqing mainly with Miao and Tujia nationalities. Religious cultural tourism resources are superior in quality, with 3 national major temples, 5 national relic protection units of religion, and a world cultural heritage.

Buddhism exist world cultural heritage Dazu grottoes, the national relic protection Arhat temple, south Ciyun temple, and Liangping Shuanggui hall, national cultural relic protection units giant Buddhist temple of Tongnan, second Buddhist temple of Hechuan Laitan and Mahakasyapa Buddha dojo Jinyun mountain which was the highest Buddhism institution of the republic of China and the ancient school site of world Buddhism college and Sino-Tibetan teachings etc. In addition, the city intangible cultural heritage Dazu stone carvings, Dazu grottoes, pilgrim association in Baoding, Shuangguitang temple fair, and Laba festival of Hua Yan temple, etc. are all related to Buddhism. Bayuwu culture is the important origin of Taoism culture, and Taoism has rich tourism cultural resources. The Laojun cave temple was written into *science and civilization in China* by Joseph Needham, and is famous in the world. Fengdu culture is mainly originated from Taoism and Buddhism. The Baiyun temple in Qijiang count, Tianxian temple in Fengjie, Erxian

temple in Hechuan and Shaolong, Baiyun temple in Bebei also have high visibility. Tongnan, Dazu, Jiangjin and Hechuan etc. all have a lot of Taoism inscriptions statues and murals. Islam has eight mosques, and the Chongqing mosque (the original west mosque) is one of the important meeting places of Islam Anti-Japanese Movement. Catholic (including Chongqing, Wanzhou parish) has 57 churches. The hundred years churches are Joseph church of Yuzhong, De lesa church of Jiangbei, Cimu church of Nan'an, Lude church of Bishan and Shima zhenyuan church of Dazu. Christian has 60 churches. The hundred year's churches are Sheng'ai church of Yuzhong, Fuyin church of Jiangbei, Libai church of Da dukou Mawang street and Jiuzhu church of Kaixian.

2. THE CURRENT PROBLEMS OF CHONGQING RELIGIOUS CULTURAL TOURISM

Chongqing religious cultural tourism has obtained some certain development, but still exist some problems that cannot be ignored in the process. These problems mainly reflect in the following three aspects:

2.1 Religious Cultural Tourism Hasn't Taken Off in a Big Way, Scattered and Lack of Brand

At present, the religious cultural scenic areas in Chongqing are lack of overall planning. The development of religious cultural tourism is still in its infancy, and hasn't taken off in a big way. The planning scope of all religious cultural scenic spots is narrow, often confined to itself, and lack of overall viewpoint, which caused that some projects already built are very scattered in the overall layout, and not reasonable. It is difficult to have religious culture of the brand in a higher stage and attract a large number of tourists. The formation of religious cultural tourism brand is not only influenced by historical factors, such as well-known Buddhist, Taoist mountains, legends and so on, but also needs the modernization building and publicity for brand. For example, the Dazu stone inscription is equally famous with: "China' four big grottoes". Due to inadequate building and promotion, its influence is far from the big four grottoes. Religious culture scenic areas have their respective camps, tourism publicity lagging, low compound, and lack of tourism brand. These all seriously hindered the development of religious of cultural tourism in Chongqing.

2.2 Religious Cultural Tourism Lack of Cultural Connotation

Chongqing religious cultural tourism, with relatively single forms and still on the religious cultural sightseeing tour level, fails to place enough stress on religious cultural tourism projects of other high level, and develop less. However, the tourism project that regards tourists as the main body, guide visitors experience and participate in

the religious culture is still in the stage of exploration, and development speed is relatively slow. Many tourists only take pictures, and pray to Buddhism in the religious cultural tourism scenic spots, not only in the form of monotonous, boring content, but also hard to lead visitors to appreciate the connotation of the traditional religious culture. Because of brief interpretation at many important religious culture scenic spots, and tour guide lack of religious and cultural knowledge, it's hard for them to provide comprehensive explanation and difficult to reveal the profound religious culture connotation and far-reaching historical significance. This also makes the tourists difficult to obtain deep infection of culture, not only reduce the attractions of scenic spots themselves, but also fail to meet the tourists' needs of higher religious cultural pursuit.

2.3 Resources Lack of Integration, Mainly Because of Inadequate Management of Tourism Authority, and Short of Religious Participation

Religious cultural tourism resources in Chongqing are lack of integration, resulting in the phenomenon of fragment and blind development. Some religious cultural resources with long history, beautiful environment, religious culture connotation and good quality cannot get deep development and utilization, or the efficiency is not high. For example, Jinfo mountain has ascended into the world natural heritage list. However, its inefficient development and utilization of religious culture resources result in its limited visibility and appeal. Some scenic spots overdevelop their religious culture resources, which caused landscape destruction and scenic spot repeated construction. It's not only waste of resources but also damages the tourism image of Chongqing city. At present, the tourism department is mainly responsible for the development, management and operation of religious cultural tourism projects. However, religious circles have insufficient participation, and its positive role cannot be developed effectively. Most religious sites, such as the faculty in temple is only engaged in chanting, prayer, and keep order, not really involved in the management of religious cultural tourism activities, making religion and religious cultural tourism disconnected seriously.

3. SUGGESTIONS TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHONGQING TOURISM

The purpose of the religious cultural resources development in Chongqing is to build the religious culture exchange and service system of high quality, to enrich cultural connotation of Chongqing, to improve the quality of Chongqing culture, and to meet the culture and leisure needs of tourists. To achieve this aim, we put forward the following suggestions:

a) Change ideas, to understand and plan religious cultural tourism of Chongqing from the perspective of

big tourism. In order to make religious cultural tourism of Chongqing become the trump product of tourism, it is necessary to change ideas, to understand and plan religious cultural tourism of Chongqing from the perspective of big tourism. First of all, all relevant departments should further study and understand the religious policy of the party and the country, further improve the understanding of development and utilization of religious cultural scenic areas, out of the narrow tourism category, and to grasp tourism from the perspective of human flow. The form of religious cultural tourism can be rich and colorful, not only including religious cultural heritage sightseeing, but also religious holy land pilgrimage, religious cultural experience, religious holiday for peace and recuperation, and religious folk festivals, etc.. The development of diversified religious culture tourism project is beneficial to the formation of all-round and multidimensional religious cultural tourism, and to maintain the vitality and attraction of scenic area for a long time so as to attract a large number of tourists. In addition, all relevant departments should actively communicate and coordinate with each other, fully absorb and learn the experience of the development of religious culture tourism at home and abroad, and jointly plan the construction of religious culture scenic area. There are some mature religious culture tourism projects at home and abroad. Learn their successful experience, thus effectively avoid the problems in the process of development, management and operation.

b) Integrate resources from all circles, operate and manage as a whole, and joint efforts to push forward the healthy development of religious cultural tourism in Chongqing. Integrate resources of different fields such as government, tourism, religion, education and so on, operate and manage religious cultural tourism as a whole, and joint efforts to push forward the healthy development of religious culture tourism in Chongqing. First of all, the government should strengthen guide on religious cultural tourism, and provide support and help in policy for scenic areas, attractions with rich religious culture resources. In addition, the tourism sector cannot blindly pursue the economic interest, should fully inspect religious cultural resource of each scenic area, scenic spots. Adhere to the "moderate development, also protect" principle, and to avoid building religious cultural tourism project without strict proof. Under the premise of sustainable development of religious cultural resources, promote the healthy development of religious cultural tourism. Thirdly, the integration of religious cultural tourism resources emphasizes on the comprehensive application of religious culture in the tourism market. Therefore, religion should be actively involved in the development, management and operation of religious culture tourism. Religion should cultivate highly qualified staff, let the staff lead and help visitors to experience the connotation of religious culture, and to feel the charm of religious

culture. Fourthly, religion is a cultural phenomenon, so the academics should strengthen the research of religious culture, explore the religious culture connotation, promote the development level of religious culture tourism, and provide theoretical support for the healthy development of religious cultural tourism. Chongqing has diversified religion type and distinct regional characteristics, therefore, to analyze the advantages of religious cultural tourism resources, which are beneficial to build distinctive religious cultural tourism brand in Chongqing.

c) Make religion play an important role in the religious cultural tourism, lay emphasis on believers' travel, attach importance to the development of religious cultural tourism from modern value of the religious cultural resources. Faculty in our country, especially in Buddhism, Taoism, generally have strong flavor of out of secular, and less likely to participate in social activities, thus ordinary people is difficult to play a positive role in the religious culture tourism, so must fully arouse the enthusiasm of the staff and vast majority of believers, and lead them to participate in the development, management and operation of religious cultural tourism resources. First of all, we must recognize that believers travel is the main force of religious culture tourism. Religious culture is sacred, durable, and living for believers, thus improving tourism projects levels, ensuring the quality of tourism projects helps to form a long-term, stable tourist source. Secondly, make the staff and believers involved in the management and business operation of religious culture tourism, so as to improve their responsibility and mission sense in religion. In the religious cultural tourism, many developing projects need a lot of manpower, material resources and financial investment, also require power of the social believers, thus encouraging them to participate in the construction of religious culture tourism, and get a reasonable return. Thirdly, attach importance to the development of religious culture tourism from modern value of the religious culture resources. Religious cultural tourism resources development must ensure the purity of religious culture and dominance of religious groups as the prerequisite, and avoid using complete business model to dominate the religious culture tourism. At the same time, explore resources with positive significance and contemporary value, such as health care resources, etc. and bring positive life guide for tourists.

d) Attach importance to building unique religious cultural tourism projects, and promote the characteristic development of religious culture tourism of Chongqing. First of all, make clear the characteristic advantage of religious cultural resources in Chongqing, and pay attention to build religious cultural tourism products brand. Religious cultural tourism resources are national, regional featured humanistic tourism resources. According to the characteristic advantage of each religious scenic spots and

the characteristics of religious buildings, statues, music, rituals, painting, classical, etc., to develop and create distinctive religious cultural tourism projects and brand. On the development of the project, pay attention to satisfy tourists from sightseeing to experience tourism, focus on developing and guiding visitors to actively participate in interactive which can refine their body and mind, such as wellness experience, vegetarian dishes, releasing projects. Religious cultural tourism products brand building is to rely on good quality resources, reasonable and perfect planning, scientific and effective management, characteristic project, and fascinating propaganda, etc..

In addition, develop diverse religious culture tourism projects and innovate characteristic religious cultural tourism products. Temple in Chongqing should be encouraged to develop unique vegetarian dishes and vegetarian tourism products processing, such as vegetarian experience of Hua Yan temple, Laojun dongdaojia meal flavor, etc. which all can form their own characteristic brands. At the same time, each scenic area and spot, according to their own characteristics, innovate unique religious cultural tourism products, such as the micro stone carving souvenirs of Dazu grottoes, picture album of Fengdu ghost town, vegetarian gift box of Huayan temple and so on, which can not only meet the shopping needs of tourists, but also pull the economic income of scenic spots.

Finally, attach importance to the cultivation of religious cultural tourism management expert team of high quality. All the guides, staff of scenic spots, and faculty of temple, Taoist abbey and church should undertake systematic and comprehensive training on tourism, religion, and management knowledge, so as to improve their own quality, enhance service awareness, improve service ability and set up good public praise among tourists and industry. This can be both to increase the attraction of religious cultural tourism industry in Chongqing and to promote the progress and development of religious cultural tourism market.

CONCLUSION

Characteristic project ideas of Chongqing religious culture tourism

a) Urban religious culture tour. City tour is indispensable among Chongqing tourism projects. Huayan temple, Ciyun temple, Polun temple, Laojun cave, and Joseph hall are representative Buddhism, Taoism and the Catholic churches in urban area of Chongqing. With Huayan temple, Laojun cave, Ciyun temple, Polun temple, Joseph hall together, it is the urban tourism experience project which can best represent religious culture connotation in Chongqing. In urban religious culture tourism project, visitors can not only enjoy the picturesque "Huayan eight sights", appreciate the cultural charm of the "east Sichuan first temples temple", enjoy the sight

of unique religious buildings with Chinese and western combined of Ciyun temple, taste the unique Taoist flavor meal of Laojun cave, and feel the love and divine of risk of grand-saint Joseph. At the same time, urban religious cultural tour also can provide Chongqing city sightseeing, night view appreciation and other services for visitors. It is worthy of development as one-day religious cultural tour project.

b) Zen Buddhism learning experience tour of Shuang Guitang, Yinxin Tang. Shuanggui hall and Yinxin hall are the representative halls of Chongqing Zen Buddhism culture with “two halls of Chuandong” reputation. Shuanggui hall is Zen Buddhism ancestral Chamber of southwest. Lineage spread all over the southwest provinces and two lakes, affect the whole country. Both Shuanggui hall and Yinxin hall are located in the eastern counties far away from urban chaos with large covering area, picturesque natural environment, long history, and profound culture, which is suitable for Zen learning experience. Therefore, it’s necessary to make good protection, development and utilization of Buddhism culture resources of Shuanggui hall and Yinxin hall, to expand the Buddhism’s influence and appeal of Liangping and Shizhu. Gradually establish infrastructure of scenic areas and Zen Buddhism culture system with Shuanggui hall and Yinxin hall at the core. Zen Buddhism learning experience project can not only attract a large number of Buddhism believers, but also provide close, all-round study of Zen culture for ordinary tourists interested in Zen culture.

c) Ghost culture tour of Fengdu ghost town. Fengdu ghost town is a master and typical representative of the ghost culture in Chinese traditional culture and also the unique religious culture tourism area with ghost culture as its theme. Its unique religious culture tourism resources can attract many tourists at home and abroad. Therefore, ghost culture tourism project of Fengdu ghost town is the focus of the characteristic religious culture tourism projects in Chongqing. Fengdu ghost town should comply with the laws of religious culture itself, and improve cultural connotation of the scenic area, avoid excessive secularization and even vulgar. At the same time, intensify propaganda of ghost culture tour, involve in the film and television production, graphic media, art creation, and other fields, and expand the visibility and influence of Fengdu ghost town. What’s more, the scenic areas can build theme park with ghost culture as the core, enrich and perfect ghost culture tour project type of Fengdu ghost town, and make the tourists feel unique charm of Fengdu ghost town.

d) Taoism health maintenance education tour of Jinyun mountain. Taoism health maintenance culture tour is in the ascendant throughout the country. However, people are lack of health science and religion common sense, which has also led to a series of problems, such as lack of scientific spirit and over promoting private health experience, lack of transcendence demands and prevailing personality cult. At present, the Baiyun temple

and Shaolong temple of Jinyun mountain have a higher visibility. On the premise of following the scientific spirit and humanistic spirit and on the basis of Taoism culture resources of Baiyun temple and Shaolong temple, create Taoism health maintenance education tour project of Jinyun mountain, provide Taoism health experience service for visitors, let visitors understand traditional religious culture, and at the same time learn the way of self-cultivation.

e) Urban religious concert. Religious culture has a rich variety of forms. The pure and bright religious music is an important way to sacrifice to the gods and cultivate one’s mind. Urban religion concert is to show the charm of traditional religious music in the form of modern concert, pass through religious culture by music. It’s the religious culture tourism projects across ethnic and borders. At present, the religious concert of United States, Australia and other countries is already mature and orderly. Some domestic cities such as Fuzhou, Baoji have also held such activities. In order to make urban religious concert into a famous tourism projects, Chongqing still have to take from the experience of other regions, and enrich experience itself. At present, the religious music research institute of the southwest university maintains leading position in the national religious music research field. With the academic guidance of religious music institute of southwest university, integrate all religious groups, establish a religious music art troupe, provide high levels of religious music performance for visitors, and improve the religious culture tourism level of Chongqing.

To sum up, the religious cultural tourism is of special significance both for believers and ordinary people. In the tourism market facing both opportunities and challenges, Chongqing religious cultural tourism should actively integrate resources and innovate characteristic religious cultural tourism projects. As long as the government and religious work together to promote the healthy development of religious culture tourism in Chongqing, the prospect of religious culture tourism will be more brilliant.

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