



## Shenyang Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Development Model

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### Abstract

Based on a tourism resources analysis of the intangible cultural heritage in Shenyang, this article integrates intangible cultural heritage protection with tourism development and discusses a number of interactive models of development that provides valuable references to protecting the intangible cultural heritage in Shenyang and tourism development.

**Key words:** Intangible cultural heritage; Tourism; Development model

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### 1. DEFINITION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

China is a country of ancient history and civilization that hosts not only a large quantity of material cultural heritage, but also abundant intangible cultural heritage. In the 2005 issue of “Statement of People’s Republic China State Council General Office on Supporting Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection”, the General Office defines intangible cultural heritage as: traditional cultural representations (e.g. folk activities, performing arts, traditional knowledge and skills, and associated containers, instruments, objects and artifacts) and cultural

spaces transmitted from generation to generation of people of all ethnicities and closely related to everyday life activities. Intangible cultural heritage can be divided into two categories: (a) traditional forms of cultural representations such as folk cultural activities, performing arts, traditional knowledge and skills; (b) cultural space, that is, the venues that feature in both spatiality and temporality and that host traditional cultural events on a regular basis or exhibit collective cultural representations.

### 2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SHENYANG’S INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AS TOURISM RESOURCES

Shenyang is rich in intangible cultural heritage. At present it has eight (8) national level intangible cultural heritage projects: that is, Tan-Zhenshan folk tales, Tang-style Peking Opera, Han-Huaxiao Ping Opera, Dongbei Drum Singing, Laolongkou Chinese Spirits brewing techniques, He-Junyou Xibo ethnic group folk tales, traditional crafting techniques (wood coating) in northeastern antique buildings and traditional local opera Fengtian Laozi Singing. These intangible cultural heritages are vivid representations of culture and the genes of indigenous cultures in Shenyang region; rich, and diverse, they are also precious tourism resources, of irreplaceable significance and cultural values. The intangible cultural heritage in Shenyang feature in the following aspects:

#### 2.1 Diverse Representational Forms

According to the “Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural heritage”, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) differentiates between five (5) categories of intangible culture heritage, that is, performing arts, traditional craftsmanship, rituals and traditional customs, language and oral history, knowledge and practices, whereas the

intangible cultural heritage in Shenyang concentrate on the first four categories. The category of performing arts includes Tang-style Peking Opera, the Han-, Hua- and Xiao-style of Ping Opera, Dongbei Drum Singing, Fengtian Laozi Singing, the Drum-and-Stilt-Walk of Hui ethnic group, Dragon-Lion Dance of Xiguan Hui ethnic group, Xin-Yanling Ping Opera performing art, Zhou-Zhongbo Peking Opera performing art, the Talk-and-Singing show of Chaoxian ethnic group, Zhangshi Royal Garden Dragon Dance techniques; the category of traditional craftsmanship includes the techniques for making Tang's Flour-doll, brewing Laolongkou Chinese spirits, making Laobian dumplings and Anshi Dragon Lantern and cooking Dongguan "Four-Unique-Dishes"; the category of language and oral history includes the folk tales of Tan-Zhenshan's, Dongling Man ethnic group's and Xue-Tianzhi's; the category of rituals and traditional customs includes Grabbing Galaha of Xibo ethnic group and the Fertility Goddess of this group.

### **2.2 Indigenously Relatively Strong**

Shenyang's intangible cultural heritage exhibits vivid regional characteristics, of a rich rural flavor and relatively strong sense of indigenously. The folk tales of Dongling Man ethnic group's, Xue-Tianzhi's and Xibo Ethnic group's and traditional lantern riddles integrate entertainment, fun and education; the storytellers and riddle lovers all are genuine local farmers and their materials originate from their local rural work and life. Saman Singing (Manmenghan), Chaoxian "Hui Jia" Birthday Celebration, Shengbei Drum-Suona playing techniques as well as others form a seamless whole with matrimonies, funerals and various kinds of other celebratory customs, work rituals, and festivities.

### **2.3 Extremely High in Value**

Shenyang's intangible cultural heritage has an extremely high value and some of them play important roles nationwide. The venerable artist Mr. Tan Zhenshan, who attended the World Folk Tales Expo'92 in Japan, was the first Chinese storyteller performing abroad. Tang-Style Peking Opera consists of script and stage performance these two parts: the number of the scripts reaches 40 to 50; the stage performance of the historical genre represents an artistic style characteristic of solemnity, heftiness, immensity and generosity. Dongbei Drum has a history of over 200 years as a new type of talk-and-singing art form developed by folk artists and a derivative of Dongbei folk songs and Dongbei Xiaodiao. Han Shaoyun, Hua Shulun and Xiao Junting are eminent Ping Opera performing artists across the nation; their performance styles give rise to the three artistic lines in Ping Opera. Laolongko Chinese Spirits brewing techniques also have 300 years of history. These intangible cultural heritages comprise resources rich in history, culture, economy, education and science; they are precious memories of Shenyang's

traditional culture, influential among local residents and communities, extremely valuable in terms of research.

## **3. TOURISM DEVELOPMENT MODELS FOR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN SHENYANG**

The simultaneous applications of multiple development models are necessary and feasible to arrive at a win-win situation of protecting Shenyang's intangible cultural heritage and tapping into tourism resources: that is, to reduce the negative impacts of tourism development on intangible cultural heritage and to integrate intangible cultural heritage and tourism development.

### **3.1 Festivity Development Model**

Individual cultural tourism resources, scattered or unregulated, are difficult to develop or to attain a certain scale. If put together and embodied in traditional festivities, these individual cultural elements can be developed into tourism products of vivid themes, robust systems, and culturally unique features. The category of performing arts and craftsmanship can be developed through competitive games, festival events, exhibitions and other tourism products. The temple fairs during Chinese Spring Festival can be developed into theme products featuring in folk arts and craftsmanship, including paper cutting, clay figurines, sugar figurines, Peking Opera, dragon-and-lion dance, stilt walk, acrobatics and traditional cuisines; products like these comprise eating, sightseeing, shopping, entertaining and other aspects of tourism, are both festive and ethnically unique. Meantime, the cultural plaza can be a venue for exhibiting intangible cultural heritage, hosting festival events or activities characteristic of local traditions and presenting dances and singings rich in folk cultures and customs; through these activities, intangible cultural heritage can be showcased and transmitted. The tourism products thus developed can easily develop into brand names, to raise the reputations and influences of intangible culture heritage, offer a stage for the successors to express their talents, open sales channels for the products of interest and enrich the cultural ecology in Shenyang; many intangible culture heritage can come back to life through ethnic or traditional festival events.

### **3.2 Hands-on Experience Tourism Development Model**

The development of intangible cultural heritage components as tourism resources should, while maintaining their aesthetic values, emphasize the hands-on experiences of the tourists with the heritage. This emphasis is demanded by the development of tourism industry during an economic era that highlights personal experience. How to provide the tourists a series of

relaxation, pleasure, and novelties under a particular environment and atmosphere is a question that must be pondered over in tourism development. In the development of intangible cultural heritage resources, it is not enough to merely present the tourists the end art products, such as Wang-Guixiang's folk paper cuts; the tourists should also be introduced to the history and meanings of the art pieces and their unique techniques, so as to enhance the sense of knowledge acquisition and entertainment of the traveling experience.

The techniques involved in intangible cultural heritage have many advantages in their development into tourism resources, and they are rich in cultural meanings and remarkable for their unique craftsmanship. On sightseeing spots, to establish ethnic exhibition centers that combine designing, manufacturing, and sales can create impacts through showcasing arts and techniques and the participations of tourists into the processes of art making. The designing and manufacturing techniques of tourist products should not be rigid, or a mere duplication of the past; instead, they should keep abreast of historical developments, seeking innovations and refinements, keeping the fundamental and unique ethnic features; they should instill into folk arts the latest designs, fashions and styles through adaptations and innovations, so as to enhance their practicality, artistry, aesthetics, modernity and marketability.

### **3.3 Central Zone Model**

To integrate intangible and material cultural heritage, with the material heritage as the support, with cultural tourism as the theme and incorporated with a fine selection of intangible cultural heritage, build a unique cultural zone and develop touring routes characteristic of in-depth and personal experiences. Take Shenyang North Market as an example: it concentrates Boxi ethnic ancestral temples, imperial temples, grand theaters and many valuable material cultural tourism resources and meantime Fentian Laozi, Ping opera and other intangible cultural tourism resources; the intangible cultural heritage of Boxi Ethnic group's such as Fertility Goddess can be introduced to develop a touring route in Shenyang that features in the depth and personal experiences of the tourists during travelling.

### **3.4 Industrial Development Model**

To introduce into the market the intangible cultural heritage of potentials for development, to facilitate intangible cultural assets to develop on an industrial scale and build, in turn, their influence as a cultural brand and as an emergent cultural industry. To raise individual appreciations of intangible cultural heritage and their awareness to protect folk cultures as invaluable traditions in the course of raising the reputations of intangible cultural heritage. The intangible cultural heritage will gain strong momentum and initiative if they are linked with the

recreational market and regarded as important recreational products. In no doubt, this is a type of protection enabled through development. The industrialized operation of Kun Qu provides us a good example.

Shenyang should quicken the pace of industrializing "Han, Hua and Xiao" these three artistic styles of Ping Opera, the state-level intangible cultural heritage and intensify advertising. Their charms should be emphasized; inspiring slogans should be brought forward. Meantime, in the city's Central Park statues representing the characters in the operas can be built and accompanied by storytelling; diversified and personalized print materials and audio-video products should be manufactured, and administrations and media on all levels should dedicate sufficient efforts to promote Ping Opera and enhance its reach. In addition, there should be attempts at promoting Ping Opera through different means and actively seeking forms acceptable to contemporary audience, such as the one in tandem with the various of expos and other exhibitions in Shenyang, to quicken the pace of opera tourism development. Setting up Shenyang opera tourism websites, hosting Shenyang opera tourism festivals and promoting Ping Opera through festivities, on the other hand, create opera tourism brands. To increase the possibility of tourist participation in the art of opera and to let tourists participate in stage performance will lend to the tourists the opportunity of immersing themselves in the artistic process.

### **3.5 Collective Representation Model**

The museum model can be adopted. Museums have unique advantages in protecting, researching and exhibiting the material embodiments of intangible cultural heritage, and meantime, museums are superb venues for creating intangible cultural touring experiences. Folk Cultural Garden also has some characteristics of a museum. Folk Cultural Garden tours can present vividly to the tourists the intangible material heritage such as oral history and craftsmanship that are unlikely to have a material or symbolic embodiment; it presents the everyday life of ethnic groups through a collective effort of preservation and exhibition; it provides a site of learning about these folk cultures through direct personal experiences with these cultural forms and the wisdom and spirits of the preceding generations. We can also resort to naturally formed villages or ethnic group residential areas of long cultural history and unique folk cultural features, to develop intangible cultural exhibitions and sightseeing spots that have the capacity for accommodating tourists; the tourists, situated in these indigenous cultural environments, will gain direct personal experiences with the intangible heritage in their indigenous forms through living among the local residents and communicating and studying with them.

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