

Research on the Application Strategies of Historical Celebrity Resources in Urban Cultural Brand Building

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Abstract: In recent years, the continuous advancement of urbanization has led to increasing recognition and utilization of historical celebrity resources. Today, these resources have become key components of urban identity and symbolic representation. How to better leverage historical celebrity resources to establish urban cultural brands has become a pressing issue for many cities. This study focuses on the application of historical celebrity resources in urban cultural brand building, using the “Hometown of Jin Yong” cultural brand in Jiaxing as a case study. It examines the development and utilization of Jin Yong’s legacy in Jiaxing, specifically analyzing the heroic spirit embodied in his works—” A true hero serves the country and its people.” Furthermore, the study explores how the spiritual and material heritage left by Jin Yong can be transformed into resources for Jiaxing’s cultural brand development, thereby enhancing the city’s reputation and creating a new urban identity for Jiaxing.

Keywords: Historical celebrities, urban cultural brand, Jin Yong, Jiaxing

1. Introduction

Culture is the unique imprint of a city, shaped by time and history, and serves as a vivid manifestation of a city’s charm and heritage. In the context of rapid economic and social development, the significance of culture in urban growth has become increasingly prominent. It not only constitutes the spiritual core of a city but also serves as a key driver of its progress. Enhancing urban cultural depth and fully unlocking the potential of culture has become an essential strategy for achieving high-quality urban development, playing an irreplaceable role in shaping a city’s distinct image and increasing its recognition [1].

Among the various aspects of urban cultural development, brand building is undoubtedly a crucial element. Without effective branding initiatives, even the most abundant and outstanding cultural resources may struggle to gain widespread recognition. Creating a unique and influential urban cultural brand has several advantages: first, it deepens citizens’ curiosity and engagement with their city, fostering a strong sense of identity and belonging, thereby ensuring the continuity of urban culture. Second, it provides clear strategic direction for the cultural industry, aligning it with market demands and fostering a healthy, sustainable development cycle. This, in turn, facilitates a win-win situation where cultural prosperity and economic growth reinforce each other.

2. Understanding the Value of Historical Celebrity Resources

Historical celebrities are outstanding representatives of urban culture. Through their intellect, talent, and character, they infuse a city's culture with a unique spirit. Their thoughts, literary works, and artistic creations serve as invaluable assets for cultural inheritance. For instance, Su Shi of Hangzhou, renowned for his poetry and governance, left an indelible mark on the city's cultural landscape. When people visit West Lake, they inevitably recall Su Shi's literary elegance and political achievements, illustrating how historical figures breathe life into urban culture. The comprehensive value of historical celebrity resources is therefore self-evident. Their works, achievements, and historical sites not only serve as crucial references for studying their lives and the sociocultural context of their times but also subtly influence future generations, providing fertile ground for nurturing national spirit.

In the modern era, the scientific and rational preservation and utilization of historical celebrity resources are essential. Systematically organizing their cultural legacy, extracting key elements, and refining symbolic representations can significantly contribute to the prosperity of urban culture. This approach strengthens urban brand building, enhances cultural soft power, and enriches the city's cultural identity. Moreover, by distilling the core values of historical celebrity culture, these resources can provide strong spiritual impetus for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, further reinforcing cultural confidence and fostering the creative transformation and innovative development of China's outstanding traditional culture in the new era [2].

3. The Current Landscape of Historical Celebrity Resource Development in Jiaxing

Since modern times, Jiaxing has produced numerous outstanding masters, including Wang Guowei, Xu Zhimo, and Mao Dun, who were all prominent figures in their respective fields. The cultural lineage has continuously flowed, advancing without interruption [3]. However, in the process of cultural development in Jiaxing, the exploration and utilization of historical celebrity resources have been notably insufficient. Many valuable cultural treasures related to historical figures have not been fully developed or transformed, leading to a lack of distinctive and memorable cultural markers in Jiaxing's urban brand creation. The immense cultural potential embedded in these historical figures has yet to be effectively unleashed.

When discussing the unlimited potential of historical celebrities in cultural inheritance and urban image shaping, it is impossible not to mention Mr. Jin Yong. Reflecting on the development of Chinese literature in the 20th century, Mr. Jin Yong grasped the creative regeneration of the Chinese literary tradition. Through the genre of wuxia novels, which preserve the nation's cultural bloodline, he persistently created literature against the backdrop of national history and culture. With unparalleled imagination, he elevated the humanistic spirit of China to a new height. Today, fully exploring Mr. Jin Yong's literary achievements and cultural influence undoubtedly provides Jiaxing with a fresh opportunity for cultural development. Currently, Jiaxing is fully implementing the important speech of General Secretary Xi Jinping during his visit to Zhejiang, vigorously promoting celebrity culture represented by figures like Mr. Jin Yong, and focusing on the creative redevelopment of outstanding traditional Chinese culture. If celebrity culture is the soul of a city, transforming "the hometown of celebrities" into an urban cultural brand becomes a unique channel for spreading the city's image.

4. Jin Yong Culture: Etching the Imprint of the Times

"True heroes serve the country and the people," this resounding phrase, like a shining star, has illuminated the youth journeys of countless individuals. As a literary giant with a vast readership in the Chinese-speaking world, Jin Yong used his brilliant pen to sketch the captivating world of wuxia, creating a romantic legend unique to the Chinese people. "Life is about making a grand entrance and

then quietly leaving.” In 2018, the master of wuxia novels, Jin Yong, left us forever. Mr. Jin Yong was a multifaceted figure; not only was he a renowned patriot, but also a distinguished wuxia novelist, journalist, political commentator, and social activist. Throughout his life, Mr. Jin Yong remained deeply concerned about his country and its people, infusing his works with a profound sense of patriotism. His 15 meticulously crafted works are deeply rooted in the fertile soil of Chinese traditional culture and have bridged a communication gap among Chinese-speaking people worldwide, becoming a common spiritual language for all. His works have also strengthened the cultural confidence of generations and have become brilliant gems in the treasure trove of Chinese culture.

5. Research on Jiaxing’s Urban Cultural Brand Strategy

A visit to the hometown of Jin Yong, looking back at the deep affection for one’s roots. Over the years, Jiaxing has consistently highlighted the profound sentiment behind Jin Yong’s “great heroism” and the homecoming story behind “a dream of the martial world.” On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Jin Yong’s birth, Jiaxing launched a series of cultural events to build the Jin Yong cultural brand, creating a complete urban cultural brand system. The creative development of Jin Yong’s cultural resources will bring both content and form updates to Jiaxing’s urban cultural brand and is also a necessary means of integrating celebrity culture into contemporary life.

5.1. Cultural Seminar: Jin Yong Cultural Academic Exchange

Festival events are a concentrated reflection and comprehensive interpretation of a region’s culture and vibrant moments in life. For cities, they provide an ideal opportunity to articulate their cultural values. The Jin Yong cultural brand series includes six cultural exchange events aimed at honoring and commemorating Jin Yong, exploring his works, and promoting his culture. Through multicultural exchanges and intellectual collisions, these events seek to further promote excellent traditional Chinese culture and help the world better understand China’s wisdom and strength.

In Jiaxing’s Haining city, the “Centenary of Jin Yong: The Everlasting Imaginary World” academic exchange conference was also held. Scholars from around the world who specialize in Jin Yong’s work, along with his fans, gathered to discuss the academic value and contemporary significance of his culture. Through these academic activities, Jiaxing not only showcased the deep cultural heritage of Jin Yong but also promoted the academic exchange and spread of his culture, enhancing the academic depth and cultural richness of the city’s cultural brand.



Figure 1: “Centenary of Jin Yong’s Birth” Event on-site

5.2. Cultural Experience: Jin Yong’s Wuxia Immersive Experience

In addition to the academic events, Jiaxing also planned numerous mass participation activities aimed at Jin Yong’s fans and the general public. During the events, Jiaxing distributed 10,000 “Hero

Passports,” which covered seven exciting locations, including Zicheng, Yanyu Tower, and Xiaopenglai. Fans of Jin Yong could use the passport to visit 29 A-level scenic spots in Jiaxing, such as Zicheng, Nanhu, and Xiaopenglai, offering them free sightseeing opportunities. The content of the Hero Passport is rich and detailed. It includes an introduction to Jin Yong’s life, significant events, his creative journey, and life trajectory. It also features a brilliant presentation of his classic works, evoking readers’ memories of the wuxia world. The passport also includes a carefully crafted “Jiaxing Map,” which features iconic locations mentioned in Jin Yong’s works, such as the Zui Xian Lou in Nanhu from *The Legend of the Condor Heroes*, and the Xincheng Xiaopenglai Park mentioned by Huang Rong. These locations are clearly marked on the map, providing precise guidance for Jin Yong’s fans on their journey to explore the unique charm of Jiaxing as described in his books.



Figure 2: Jiaxing issues Hero Passports

The Zicheng Market event also organized a “Jiaxing Zicheng Sword Discussion” activity, themed “Saluting the Master,” during which poems and recitations from Jin Yong’s wuxia novels were used to vividly present the heroic spirit and emotional connection of his works. The “Qin, Incense, Tea, and Flowers” event, following traditional cultural aesthetics, created a cultural atmosphere with classical charm through multiple sensory experiences such as hearing, smell, taste, and sight. This allowed visitors to understand the cultural connotations of Jin Yong’s work. Traditional martial arts performances used physical movement to interpret the essence of wuxia culture, recreating the thrilling, vengeful world of martial arts as seen in Jin Yong’s stories. This fully recreated the “Sword Discussion at Mount Hua” from his works, allowing visitors to feel immersed in the romantic wuxia world.

From the visitors’ experience perspective, the event featured a large number of immersive elements. In the central area of Zicheng, a carefully designed live wuxia-themed interactive performance blended into everyday scenes. Visitors could naturally interact with actors portraying characters from Jin Yong’s works, offering a chance to encounter “martial heroes” in an unexpected way and immerse themselves in the unique charm of the wuxia world. This series of cultural experiences, leveraging the immersive experience model, encouraged deeper audience engagement, allowing them to learn about Jin Yong’s culture through interaction. This not only effectively sparked visitors’ interest in Jiaxing’s urban culture but also played a significant role in urban cultural brand building, enhancing Jiaxing’s unique appeal in the cultural tourism market and providing strong support for the enhancement of the city’s cultural soft power.

5.3. Cultural Interpretation: Technological Empowerment in Cultural Promotion

Eternal literary dreams of martial heroes, a devoted heart shining upon the mountains and rivers. The stage play *The Living Heroes* opened the first chapter “Jin Yong’s Martial World: Heroic Heart and Righteousness,” with academic experts on Jin Yong’s novels, TV series producers, and martial arts literature researchers engaging in deep discussions. In the second chapter, “Jin Yong’s World: A Heart of Sincerity,” global fans of Jin Yong shared their thoughts on “Jin Yong in My Heart” in a video, while translators of Jin Yong’s novels into English and overseas scholars discussed his works.

The third chapter, themed “Hometown of Jin Yong: Affection for One’s Roots,” featured the Vice Principal of Jiaxing No. 1 High School, a close disciple of Jin Yong, who recounted the story of Jin Yong.

Jiaxing globally released the *The Book and the Sword* Hometown Edition. This version, with Jiaxing’s regional culture as its backdrop, reinterprets Jin Yong’s classic work, presenting readers with a new reading experience through a unique perspective and rich content. This initiative expanded the boundaries of Jin Yong’s cultural dissemination, deeply integrating Jiaxing’s regional culture with Jin Yong’s martial arts culture and promoting it to the international stage, enhancing the global influence and reach of Jin Yong’s culture, and opening new pathways for the study and dissemination of his culture. Additionally, Jin Yong’s *28 Martial Arts Landmarks in Zhejiang: A Picture Guide* was released, creatively integrating Jin Yong’s martial arts characters with 28 “martial arts landmarks,” drawn into a long scroll of landscapes. Readers can begin their journey in “Jiaxing Prefecture” and, step by step, experience Jin Yong’s martial arts world. The AI promotional video *Jiaxing in Jin Yong’s Writings* further demonstrated the deep fusion of AI technology and culture. Using advanced AI technology, cultural resources of famous figures like Jin Yong were deeply explored and reshaped, achieving comprehensive innovation in both content presentation and dissemination methods. This initiative not only revitalized the cultural resources of famous figures but also promoted their transition into a new stage of high-quality development, offering strong support for the promotion of excellent culture and the growth of the cultural industry.

5.4. Cultural Prosperity: Revitalizing the Landmarks of Jin Yong’s Hometown

If celebrity culture is the soul of a city, then the residence of the celebrity reflects the culture they represent, serving as the city’s physical memory and archive [4]. As “living fossils” of history, celebrity residences play an important role in the construction and inheritance of local culture. Jin Yong had deep feelings for his hometown, having visited Haining six times. Haining attaches great importance to the inheritance and transformation of Jin Yong’s martial arts culture, having designed three tour routes linking Jin Yong’s residence, the Yanguan Scenic Area, and the Xieshi Scenic Area. Meanwhile, to better preserve and promote Jin Yong’s culture, Jiaxing has upgraded landmarks such as Jin Yong’s former residence and the Jin Yong Academy, transforming them into key venues for showcasing his life and works.

The experience at Jin Yong’s former residence is rich and diverse, offering visitors an immersive experience. The exhibition is divided into five sections: “A Jiangnan Family,” “Youth in Search,” “The Life of a Sword and a Book,” “A Sincere Heart,” and “Jin Yong Around the World.” Interactive screens along the route display character relationships, story backgrounds, and even offer a VR experience, allowing visitors to virtually experience classic scenes such as the Sword Discussion at Mount Hua. The museum has also collected many precious materials from various locations, including manuscripts and original newspapers, many of which are being publicly displayed for the first time. Additionally, the residence regularly holds seasonal immersive recitation sessions, where young people dressed in traditional Hanfu perform recitations and songs, recreating the wuxia atmosphere. During certain activities, visitors can dress in ancient costumes and role-play classic characters, interacting with “martial arts figures” and deeply experiencing the unique charm of the martial arts world.

5.5. Innovative Inheritance: The Continuation of Jin Yong Culture Among the Youth

In the grand narrative of cultural inheritance, the younger generation has already become the protagonist of the times. They inject continuous vitality into the inheritance and continuation of classical culture through their vibrant energy and innovative thinking. Jiaxing has keenly captured

this trend and specially planned a year-long series of activities called the “Youth National Trend Season.” The aim is to attract post-90s and post-00s generations to immerse themselves in Jin Yong’s cultural world, deeply understanding Jin Yong’s culture in the context of the national trend.

The activities combine both online and offline formats. Offline events are divided into four seasons, with different themes for each season. These events combine Jin Yong’s martial arts world with contemporary national trends, using characters from Jin Yong’s novels as NPCs in various formats such as treasure hunts, flower-picking challenges, arena competitions, and murder mystery games, creating immersive experiences of Jin Yong’s martial arts world. This allows young people to immerse themselves in the depth of Jin Yong’s cultural space and the unique charm of national trends, exploring cultural roots and spiritual values, and experiencing the beauty of the fusion of traditional culture and martial arts spirit. The online activities feature the year-round Jin Yong’s “Jiang” and “Lake” Challenge, where young people can interactively cross time and space boundaries, exploring the charm of Jin Yong’s classics through quiz challenges.

The “Youth National Trend Season” series of activities has attracted the attention and participation of the younger generation through innovative forms and content, injecting new vitality and momentum into the inheritance and development of the city’s cultural brand.

6. Conclusion

There is no shortcut to creating a cultural brand, and it certainly cannot be achieved overnight. In the face of the new situation brought about by market economic pressures and the increasing diversification of social values, to maintain the sustained vitality of refined culture, local governments must genuinely prioritize it to achieve meaningful outcomes [5]. Over the years, the Jiaying government has remained steadfast in its commitment, persevering with long-term effort and mobilizing the entire city to take on the responsibility of inheriting, protecting, and promoting celebrity culture. The government has engaged in multidimensional exploration and development of Jin Yong’s cultural resources and employed various forms to shape and disseminate it. The series of activities has covered multiple dimensions, including cultural exchange, artistic creation, and cultural experience, presenting the charm of Jin Yong’s culture in a comprehensive, multi-layered manner. This has successfully attracted a large number of Jin Yong fans and tourists, enhancing the city’s cultural influence and reputation. As a result, a unique Jiaying city cultural brand has been formed, one that is worthy of study and emulation.

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