

Analysis on the Present Situation of Zigong

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(Received: 30-4-14 / Accepted: 5-6-14)

Abstract

Zigong is a prefecture-level city of Sichuan Province and located in the southwest of People's Republic of China. It has the reputation as the Salt City of More than Two Thousand Years, Hometown of Dinosaur, Lantern City of Southern China and City of Delicacy. This paper introduces the three big wonders and three small wonders of Zigong. It aims to let people at home and abroad to know more about Zigong and help Zigong to be more international.

Keywords: Zigong; Three Big Wonders; Three Small Wonders.

1. Brief Introduction of Zigong

Zigong is located in the south of Sichuan Province of People's Republic of China. The latitude of Zigong is 29.23 degrees north and the longitude is 104.46 degrees east. It covers an area of 4,372.6 km². The highest point of Zigong is 901 meters above sea level and the lowest point is 240 meters above sea level.

It is one of the 23 earliest designated cities of China. It was one of the wealthiest cities of China, because there were plenty of well salt merchants before. The people of Zigong donated the highest amount of money in the anti-Japanese war. At present, Zigong is composed of four districts (Ziliujing, Gongjing, Da'an and Yantan) and two counties (Rong county and Fushun county). The population of Zigong is about 3,271,000. On December 8th of 1986, Zigong was confirmed as the state-list famous historical and cultural city by the State Council of China. At present, there are 123 state-list famous historical and cultural cities in China. Zigong was one of the first national geological parks. In February of 2008, Zigong was approved by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization to establish world geological park. The world geological park of Zigong is composed of three parts, including Dinosaur Park, Salt Park and Spinulose Tree Fern Park. The world geological park of Zigong is a comprehensive park with multiple functions including being used for scientific research, science popularization, tourism and vacation.

2. Three Big Wonders of Zigong

2.1 Salt City

Zigong has an about two-thousand –year history of well salt mining. The first salt well was sunk during the period of emperor Zhang of Eastern Han Dynasty (A.D. 56-88). The name of Zigong is consisted of two Chinese characters Zi and Gong. Zi is from Ziliujing (the district mentioned above) and Gong is from Gongjing (the district mentioned above). Ziliujing and Gongjing are two famous salt wells. So, the name of Zigong is closely related to salt and the process of construction of Zigong is related to Salt as well. Zigong is the production center of well salt since the middle of Qing Dynasty (A.D. 1616-1912).



Figure 1: Salt History Museum, http://www.ziggeopark.com/products_view.asp?id=31

Salt history museum of Zigong was founded in 1959. It is located in the downtown area of Zigong and is one of the first founded specialized museums in the history of China's museum development. At present, it is the only salt history museum in China. Its basic function includes collecting, researching and displaying of historical relics of well salt (X Wu, 2005). It is located in Xiqin Hall (Xiqin hall was built by the salt merchants who were born in Shaanxi in Qing Dynasty to contact their fellow countrymen, to get together and discuss with each other). There are a large number of precious historical relics, models, photos and specimens in the museum. The development of the well salt production technology is shown from many aspects including well drilling, brine extraction, brine transportation and salt making. Ancient well salt production technology centered on deep well drilling embodies the working people's intelligence and creativity throughout the ages. Shenhai Well of Zigong is called the first more-than-1000-meter (1001.42 meters) deep well dug by men in the world, which was dug in 1835. At present, the layout and style of the 19th century is still kept in Shenhai Well.



Figure 2: Shenhai Well, http://qkzz.net/article/086da388-afa9-4638-b387-97b9fff9fc00_3.htm

It is a typical well salt production site of Qing Dynasty. Shenhai Well was a sign of mature drilling technology in ancient China, marked an important milestone in the science and technology development of the world and had unique historic value and scientific value. In January of 1988, Shenhai Well was listed as the national key cultural relic protection unit by the State Council of China.

2.2 Hometown of Dinosaur

Zigong is an important area of dinosaur fossil in China. The continental stratum of Jurassic Period (135 million years ago to 210 million years ago) developed very well in Zigong; dinosaur fossil was just buried in the continental stratum of early Jurassic Period and of mid Jurassic Period. Therefore, dinosaur fossil in Zigong provides abundant and crucial original material for exploring the evolution of dinosaurs in the world (T Zhou, 2012).

Zigong Dinosaur Museum, Dinosaur National Monument of America and Dinosaur Provincial Park of Canada are hailed as the three biggest dinosaur museums of the world. Zigong Dinosaur Museum is located in the eastern Zigong town of Dashanpu. The characteristics of the dinosaur fossils in the town of Dashanpu include having large quantity of fossils, having all kinds of fossils, buried in a certain place and well preserved, etc. As a rare natural and historical heritage, the museum not only has important value of popular science education and sightseeing, but also fills the gap in the fossil materials of early Jurassic Period and of mid Jurassic Period. Zigong Dinosaur Museum has significant scientific value in exploring the evolution, physiological feature and living environment of dinosaurs and relevant ancient animals.



Figure 3: Zigong Dinosaur Museum, <http://62813010.114133.com/user/6575/31567.html>

In shape, Zigong Dinosaur Museum looks like a huge rock cave. It is China's another big professional museum after Xi'an Banpo Museum and Terracotta Warriors and Horses of Qin Shihuang Mausoleum. There are three topics for Zigong Dinosaur Museum. The first part emphasizes on the introduction of basic knowledge related to dinosaurs, such as biological evolution, fossil, geologic age, evolution of dinosaurs and classification of dinosaurs etc. The second part focuses on the different kinds of dinosaur fossils in the town of Dashanpu. The third part is the burial site of dinosaurs.

2.3 Lantern City of Southern China

There have been many lantern shows in the wonderful land of China for thousands of years. Zigong Lantern Show is harmony of Chinese lantern culture, stands out among the lantern shows of China and has the reputation as the Finest Lantern Show under Heaven.



Figure 4: Zigong Lantern Show, <http://www.nipic.com/show/1/92/5699629k52566dda.html>

In the year of 1992, approved by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, Zigong raised a large amount of money to build the Chinese Lantern Museum in Lantern Park of Zigong. At present, Chinese Lantern Museum is the only professional museum concerning the lantern culture.

Zigong Lantern Show can be called second to none at home and abroad with its imposing manner, exquisite lanterns, fine workmanship and strong local characteristics. Zigong Lantern Show has been displayed more than 200 times in 40 countries and regions like America, Germany, Canada, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea and Japan etc. As the Chinese culture messenger, Zigong Lantern Show spreads Chinese lantern culture to other countries and regions worldwide. From October 1st of 1997, Zigong Lantern Show has been displayed on the Internet, in this way; more and more people all over the world could enjoy its charm and grace.

The first Zigong International Dinosaur Lantern Trade Fair opened on January 10th of 1978. The 20th Zigong International Dinosaur Lantern Show opened on January 13th of 2014, lasted 57 days and ended on March 11th. The 20th lantern show received 2.05 million tourists from all over China and other countries. Foreign visitors include consul general of U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu Peter Haymond, consul general of Australian Consulate General in Chengdu Nancy Gordon and vice consul general of Royal Thai Consulate General in Chengdu Panot Kiatkong, etc. China Central Television went to Zigong for the first time to conduct a live broadcast of the 20th lantern show.

3. Three Small Wonders of Zigong

3.1 Gong Shan

Gong Shan (bamboo-braided fan) appeared in the late 19th century. Zigong Gong Shan has the reputation as the Finest Fan of China.



Figure 5: Gong Shan, http://www.artsbj.com/html/index/ov/wysy/index_52.html

It is China's intangible cultural heritage and precious folk artwork (S Wang, 2006). Gong Shan is bamboo-braided craft fan with complicated craftsmanship. It is peach-shaped and the diameter of it is about 26 centimeters. The raw material for Gong Shan is Yin Shan Sui Zhu (Zhu is a Chinese character, which means bamboo; Yin Shan Sui Zhu means the one-year bamboo which grows in the shade of the mountain). Gong Shan is a hand-made artwork. The craftsman uses a knife to cut the bamboo into bamboo filament which is as thin as 0.01 millimeter to 0.02 millimeter. Based on the calligraphy and painting of the famous artists, the craftsman uses 700 to 2000 bamboo filaments to form the pattern on the fan vividly. The fan is rich in content, including landscape, figure, legend, etc. Gong Shan is as thin and soft as silk, as smooth and bright as mirror.

3.2 Tie Dye

Tie Dye is an ancient dyeing technique of textile in China, which appeared in Qin Dynasty. Generally, the raw material of Tie Dye is white cotton cloth or white ramie cotton cloth; the main dye is the indigo solution from natural plants, such as *polygonum tinctorium*, *radix isatidis*, Chinese mugwort, etc, *radix isatidis* is the main choice. There are two main steps in the process of dyeing. The first step is called embroidering. The main method is sewing; sewing, folding and binding are combined in the first step. Embroidering has exquisite appearance and endless change. The second step is called dip dye. The cotton cloth is dipped in clean water for a while and then put in the dye vat. After a period time of cold dyeing or warm dyeing, the cotton cloth is taken out to dry in the air. After that, it is put in the dye vat for dip dye again. Dip dye is repeated many times. After one dip dye, the color gets deeper. Different from chemical dyes, traditional dye is the indigo solution from natural plants, mainly *radix isatidis*, so, it has no negative stimulus on the skin. It has natural color and fades slowly. It does not hurt the cloth and is durable in use. It wears comfortable.



Figure 6: Dye, <http://zg.scjrb.com/htmls/20120727085527.html>

Tie Dye of Zigong is one of the indigo prints and it is renowned at home and abroad (S Song, Y Ou, 2009). Nowadays, the raw material of Tie Dye expands to include cotton, ramie, silk, satin, panne velvet, leather, etc. The main products of Tie Dye include clothes, tie, wall hanging, handkerchief, long scarf, curtain, table cloth, bed sheet, etc.

3.3 Paper Cut

Paper Cut is also called engraved paper or picture cut.



Figure 7: Paper Cut, http://zsm.sh1122.com/show_431933_201303.html

In China, Paper Cut is a splendid traditional art with a history of more than three thousand years. After years of development, graver has taken place of scissors as the tool for paper cut. Only one layer or two layers of simple pattern can be cut by scissors; however, ten to twenty layers of more exquisite pattern can be cut by graver on a stencil plate. Nowadays, aluminum gold paper is used in Paper Cut, which greatly strengthens the expression and impressiveness of the artwork. Paper Cut of Zigong mainly include paper-cut for window decoration, paper-cut for shoe decoration, paper-cut for pillow decoration and paper-cut for apron decoration, etc(L Lin,2009). The content of paper cut is mainly about *Producing Good Harvests, the Domestic Animals are All Thriving, Surplus Year after Year, etc*, which shows the yearning for a better life of the people.

4. Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the three big wonders and three small wonders are of local characteristics of Zigong, they should be known by more people at home and abroad. This paper just tries to make Zigong be more recognized internationally. Now, Zigong is the regional central city in the south of Sichuan Province and the central city in the south of Chengdu-Chongqing economic circle. The national high-tech industrial development zone of Zigong is one of the four national high-tech industrial development zones in Sichuan Province. Under the background of integration of world economy, Zigong needs to be recognized by more people worldwide and then it will have better development.

The research is financed by **Research Project of Education Department of Sichuan Province**. (Item number: **14SB0128**)

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