

Macau's Advantages and Its Tourism Industry

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Abstract

The prosperity of gambling industry in Macau makes people have the stereotype as Macau is only a city of gambling and a cultural desert. In fact, Macau has the long history and diverse cultures. The diverse cultures coexist harmoniously in the tiny space, and that is different with the condition of many regions where many cultures coexist. The negative social effect of single big industry in Macau, which is gambling, forces Macau should develop other industries. One good choice is the tourism industry, because the gambling industry has laid the foundation of tourism industry, and the long history and diverse cultures are the advantages of Macau compared to Las Vegas. The successful experience of Las Vegas is mainly the good cooperation with the advertisement companies. Macau should learn the successful experience of Las Vegas, and also make good use of its advantages.

Keywords: Macau, Gambling Industry, Las Vegas, Culture, Economy.

Introduction

When people talk about Macau, the main topic is gambling, beside, they would think it is a cultural desert. In fact, Macau is a cultural city, which has a long history and prosperous cultures. In the tiny space, which is only 23 sq.km., and the population of it is only more than 40 m, there are lots of museums. Many music festivals takes place in Macau every year, and there are numerous kinds of magazines and newspapers published everyday. In the modern history of China, Macau has profound influence.

After Macau was handed back to China in 1999, the profit of gambling became more and more. But many scholars believe that the gambling results in many negative social phenomena and makes some economic dangers for Macau. They warn that the single industry in Macau would be very dangerous. In December 2014, China's president Xi Jinping delivered the speech and suggested Macau developed the culture, sport and retailing.

Developing other industries is necessary for Macau. Las Vegas provides many successful lessons for Macau in the sphere of tourism industry. But Macau should also realize the advantages and disadvantages of Macau and the difference between Macau and Las Vegas.

In the long history of gambling, Macau lacks of high-tech talents seriously, for the gambling industry has the low entry cost. Developing the tourism industry is a suitable choice for Macau, because tourism industry is very close to the gambling industry and does not need the

high-tech talents very much, besides, it can integrate the advantages of Macau.

Cultural factors are necessary for the tourism industry, and Macau has many cultural resources. Compared to Macau, Las Vegas has no long history and lacks of historic culture, but Las Vegas still made great success in recent years. The successful experiences should be learned by Macau.

Literature Review

Searching the CNKI with the key word “Macau culture”, one would find 408 results. From 1980 to 2014, the papers increase by years. Especially in 1999, the papers about Macau culture amounted to 40.

Most of scholars notice the unique phenomenon of cultural diversity and harmony in Macau. Macau culture reflects the communication between China and the western world, especially between 16 and 18 century, Macau became the important bridge of communication. It is embodied in the religious faiths, festival customs, the import of western technology and the fusion of literatures and arts. (Gao, F. 1999) The literature of Macau has the character of both China and the western cultures. (Rao, P. 2001) Since Macau opened the port in 1557, in 400 years, the condition of harmonious coexistence of western and Chinese cultures was formed. The high and low, traditional and modern cultures still coexist harmoniously. Although Macau is very narrow, it has the complicate cultural phenomenon. (Rao, P. 1999) Macau culture has the character of openness, compatibility and symbiosis. The cultural resource is worth of being exploited for it would has great realistic meaning for the coordinated development of Macau economy. (Sun, J. 2002) Compared to Hong Kong, Macau locates in an edge place, keeps low profile and is more like a silent garden town. It is static city, but it has an advantage over Hong Kong, which is a dynamic city. (Huang, K. 2003) Macau is the best example of cultural exchange between China and the western world in modern history. In the city, the Chinese and western cultures coexisted peacefully for more than 400 years. In the new century, Macau culture would make the new contribution for the world. (Huang, H. 2003)

Macau, a tiny space, shows the picture of harmonious coexistence of many ethnic cultures, which is on contrast to the cultural conflicts described by S.Huntington in his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. S. Huntington continues the cold war thinking and in his opinion, the difference between the western and non-western is too obvious to coexist. But in Macau, the different cultures not only coexist but also the cooperation between the different cultures is necessary. The theory of civilization clash is popular because both that S.Huntington provides a new way to explain the international political development pattern and that the western is still conflicting with the Islamic world seriously. In modern time, the harmonious coexistence of different cultures and work for the same goal are the common need of the human being. The successful experience of Macau proves that the harmonious coexistence of ethnic cultures is possible and provides an important reference for the construction of harmonious culture and society. (Zhou, D. 2006)

Some scholars notice the local cultural feature of Macau. The worship of Mazu reflects the nautical culture of Macau Chinese, and the guan-god belief and bao temple reflect the worship for the hero and upright officer of Macau Chinese respectively. Mrs. Jinhua reflects the mother worship. (Xu, X. 2002) As a place featured by gambling, Macau witnessed too many disastrous tragedies caused by gambling, which the living lessons were provided to the people in Macau to warn the next generation away from the pornography, gambling and drug. Such thought is the embodiment of Lotus Spirit. In Chinese tradition, lotus is a kind of plant which grows up from the dirty silt but is very pure and noble. (Liu, X. 2003) Macau literature does not achieve excellent artistic style, but it records the history honestly, describing the historic and cultural phenomena vividly. (Zhu, S. 2009)

It is a long time for Chinese culture exists in Macau. Even in the colonial times of Portugal, Chinese culture was not disturbed very much. In recent history, Macau culture and Chinese culture did not receive any political impact. So the Chinese culture in Macau is integrate,

some visitors from the mainland of China would think that the Chinese culture in Macau is the living fossil. After Macau was handed back to China, it is important to make the Chinese culture in Macau play more important role in order to improve the grade of Chinese culture and education, generalize and enhance Chinese language in Macau, promote the cultural communication between Chinese and the foreign cultures, preserve and update the cultural tradition, accelerate the progress of literary art, launch the academic research centered on Macau study. (Liu, D. 2001)

There are also some scholars notice the value of Macau culture for the tourism economy, but such papers are rare. For example, Yuan Jun and Zhang Meng's paper *On Sustainable Development of Cultural Heritage Tourists in Macau from the Perspective of Eco-tourism* believes Macau should coordinate the relevant interests, complete the capacity control of travel circumstance and tourist facility and management of cultural heritage, establish the committee of Macau cultural heritage, promote sustainable development of tourism economy of Macau, since in 2005 historic monument of Macau is assessed as world cultural heritage by UNESCO. Macau should catch the opportunity to develop the cultural heritage tourism. (Yuan, J. & Zhang, M. 2010)

There are also many papers analyze the dangers of Macau economy, especially that Macau depends on the gambling industry almost solely. The gambling industry has been in Macau for more than 100 years, but it has never depends on the gambling so absolutely before than now. The industrial structure is so single that the economy of Macau is unsafe. What under the gambling industry of Macau is the gambling of Macau economy. (Wang, W. 2011)

Some scholars notices the social problems caused by the gambling industry. Since 2002, when the gambling industry was liberated, the gambling industry brought about many social problems, such as the employment structural unbalance, the social conflicts caused by the foreign workers input, the infliction on education, the pathological gamblers and the environmental problems, and all the problems exist superficially or hiddenly. (Lin, S.2012)

Features of Macau Culture and Value for the Tourism Economy

First, the most obvious feature of Macau is cross-cultural. The Portuguese invaded Macau in history. They constructed many buildings which featured by the Portugal and southern Europe style. The people of Macau also brought in the Portugal food such as curry crab and wine. There are also diverse religions in Macau, which coexist harmoniously. The religions in Macau treat each other with great tolerance. "Such tolerance is very obvious in the religious festivals. The catholics who parade with the icons on their shoulders and the believers of Buddhism and Taoism who bang drums and beat gongs are faithful to their own religions respectively and harmoniously."(Yang, Y. 1993)As the transfer station of Chinese and western cultures, Macau is featured by many languages. In the literature of Macau, there are many cultures coexist harmoniously. In the literature of Macau, the poems, proses, novels, music and painting all are featured as cross-cultural. So the Macau literature has special research meaning. In the research sphere, the scholars in mainland still lack of study. " (Wang, Y. 2012) Macau has not only Chinese culture and the western culture, but also has other cultures. Macau "is featured by the diverse cultures such as Lingnan culture, Mazu culture and Portuguese culture and Chinese culture."(Wang, Y. 2012)

In history, the diverse cultures made Macau as the window to communicate with the western world, and that resulted in the reformation of China. "In the macroscopic context of Chinese culture, Macau is the frontier in the exchange of cultures and religions of Chinese and western, and complementation of modern and tradition cultures." (Wang, Y. 2012)But that is often ignored by many people, because Macau does not have the influence in modern world as before. Additionally, the gambling industry is very prosperous in modern Macau, so the stereotype of a gambling town is formed in the public opinion. The public often neglect the effect of cultural exchange of Macau in modern Chinese history.

Second, Macau is not featured by mass culture but the consumer culture. Mass culture is a

kind of culture in which the main character is electronic media. The space of Macau is very tiny, and the influence of its electronic media is little in mainland of China, so in the sense, the mass culture is not obvious in Macau. But the consumer culture is very obvious. "Macau is the heaven of the rich people. It is featured by the commercial culture but not mass culture, legal culture and elite culture. It is the status of consumerism plainly." (Wang, Y. 2012) As the center of the world gambling industry, Macau makes the gambler become millionaire or the beggar in one moment. In such condition, the life of the gamblers is carnivalized. The sudden wealth makes the gamblers consume much, and in the foundation, the consumerism culture is established.

Third, the culture of Macau is influenced by the gambling industry very much. The gambling industry can be traced back to the later Qing Dynasty, when the gambling industry was still very premature. In 1840, the opium war broke and as a result the *treaty of shimonoseki* stipulated that Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo and Shanghai as the trading ports. Before that time, Macau was the only one trading port in China. When other five cities were stipulated as the trading ports, Macau trading port was not as important as before. In such condition, the income of the government of Macau became lower. In order to change the plight of economy, in 1846, the governor of Macau, Jose Gregorio Pegado, approved opening casinos. In 1847, the governor Joao Ferreira do Amaral declared that the gambling was legal in Macau. Soon afterwards, the casinos were monopolized by the individual through invitation for bids.

Hong Kong had the casinos in one period of history, but England was the strong industrial country. With the British industrial base, Hong Kong developed the economy by the industry and commerce. So the casinos in Hong Kong attracted much public opposition, and as a result the casinos were prohibited. When the British occupied Hong Kong, they declared Hong Kong as free port, and the declaration also accelerated the economic progress of Hong Kong. But compared to England, Portugal was not so strong in economy, and Portugal declared the gambling was legal to get out of the financial crisis. In the period of He Hongshen, the gambling industry developed very fast.

After the handover of Macau, the gambling industry developed faster than ever, especially after 2003, the mainland Chinese tourists could apply for the free travel in Hong Kong and Macau, numerous tourists swarmed into Macau, and the Macau's gambling industry developed very fast until 2014. On December 20 2014, Chinese president Xi Jinping delivered the speech for the 20th anniversary of the handover of Macau, and suggested Macau should develop the culture, sport and retailing industry.

In the opinion of the public, the gambling is illegal. In fact, the legalization of gambling was approved by the King of Portugal. In the times of He Hongshen, the industry of gambling became more and more prosperous. The factors of gambling are indulged in the Macau culture. In the next coming years, Macau would not get out of the dependence on the gambling industry, since the gambling industry has existed in Macau for almost one hundred of years. The gambling becomes an important cultural perspective of Macau, and such kind of culture would be the foundation of the tourism culture of Macau in the future.

In the analysis of above, we would find that Macau is not the desert of culture. It is not only the window of the cultural communication between China and the western world, but also the base of many cultures. In the future, the development of Macau should also rely on the colorful cultures of Macau.

Macau should Get Out of the Dilemma of Single Big Industry of Gambling

The origin of gambling industry was because of the crisis of economy of Portuguese-Macau government. In history, Macau was the important port and lots of Chinese labors worked there. The labors were not educated well, so they would take part in the activities of gambling. In modern times, Macau located in Zhujiang Delta, where the economy is very active in China.

But the gambling industry in Macau has some negative influence for Chinese economy to some extent in recent years, so the gambling industry would be restricted to avoid the negative influence. Besides, the single big industry of gambling has made Macau economy in crisis.

In the future, Macau economy would walk into the way of multi-industries. One important industry of Macau would be the tourism, because the gambling industry has provided Macau the foundation of tourism, for example, the most luxurious hotels in the world.

The Successful Experience of Las Vegas

Las Vegas, a city which is famous for its gambling industry, transformed to a tourism city in recent decades. Macau should learn the experience of Las Vegas.

The natural environment of Las Vegas is abominable. In the first decades of years, it became the famous city of Casino. Later, it developed the tourism and established the excellent urban image. In Las Vegas, there are not only the casinos, but also the luxurious tourist facilities. "In Las Vegas, the hotels of diverse styles are worth for enjoying except for the casinos and the Grand Canyon Colorado nearby. MGM, Excalibur Hotel Casino, mirage, Treasure Island, Luxor etc. All the appearance of the hotel building reaches the the best criteria of the world in the combination of human imagination and the technology." (Chen, Y. 1993) In Las Vegas, the income of the casino relies on the gamble of little money, but in Macau, that relies on the VIP, who would spend millions of money for gamble.

The History of Las Vegas

The paper will describe the history of Las Vegas in two phases with 1960 as the dividing line, because before 1960, the gambling industry profit was not influenced much and after 1960, it was so influenced that Las Vegas began to develop other industries.

Las Vegas before 1960s

The natural environment of Las Vegas is so hostile that no one would have expected it become a famous city in western America, but it became a famous city of casino and tourism marvelously in only fifty years.

In early 19th century, some explorers discovered the Las Vegas valley. In the Middle of 19th century, the west of America was developed, and during the time, the gold mine was discovered. Las Vegas became the campsite of the gold industry, from where the water and material was provided. The construction of railway accelerated the development of the gold industry, and Las Vegas became a town had some hotels, shops and bars. The World War I brought the increase of the need for iron ore and the town became very prosperous in short time. With the end of the World War I and the striking, the town became destitute.

In the 1930s, Las Vegas became prosperous again with the Hoover Dam construction and the legalization of gambling in Las Vegas. The construction of Hoover Dam needed lots of labour and solved the problem of short of water and electricity. During the time, many immigrants went to Las Vegas and the consumption became more. World War II also brought the prosperity for Las Vegas, because the weather of Las Vegas was suitable for flight, Las Vegas became the base of the military industry and facility, numerous soldiers went to Las Vegas and some of them would also become the clients of gambling.

The gambling not only brought the economic profit for Las Vegas, but also brought the crime. Many gambling houses had the intimate relation with crime, so the government raised higher tax on the gambling houses. That made some administrators believe the gambling industry would not brought high economic profit in the long run. Although the worry about Las Vegas existed, Las Vegas developed very fast during 1940s and 1950s, because the real estate investment concentrated with the stimulation of military-industry and tourism.

Las Vegas After 1960s

But in 1960s and 1970s, matters changed. Especially in 1970s, many cities of America faced the recession of economy, but Las Vegas still developed fast, so many cities applied for the legalization of gambling. When more and more cities got the legalization of gambling, the profit from the gambling became less. Besides, the military-industry moved away and the soldiers became less, so the clients of the gambling became less accordingly.

So Las Vegas began to develop other industries, and one of the industries was tourism. In the beginning, Las Vegas tried to develop the family tour, but the effect was not obvious. Later, Las Vegas developed the retail industry and established many conference centers in the hotels. Lots of brand shops and supermarkets grew up. The city was more like shopping paradise than the gambling space. The wedding-industry was also the important industry in Las Vegas for its high profit, because marriage is important for everyone and the new couples would spend more time and money in Las Vegas. With those measures, Las Vegas kept the prosperous although the profit from the gambling became less during that time.

The Successful Experience of Las Vegas

The urban development of Las Vegas is unique, as it relied on the tourism but not the manufacture and high-technology industry in the condition of lack of water, electricity, gas and good university. Many cities of west America developed with the prosperity of manufacture industry, but Las Vegas did not rely on the manufacture industry, so it developed the tourism.

But in the public opinion, tourism depends on the diverse cultures and long history. In order to develop the tourism, Las Vegas always tried to get the urban image advertised positively. It has cooperated with many famous advertisers. One of the advertisers was J. Walter Thompson Company, which established the public image of Las Vegas as embodiment of west spirit, dazzling huge playground and marvelous natural spectacle. Las Vegas gave the interviewers and editors the high treatment in order to make the urban image get propagandized positively.

By the good cooperation with the advertisers, Las Vegas established the image of excellent tourism without the long history, diverse cultures, and fertile soil. In the forming of urban image of Las Vegas, advertisement played an important role. Although Las Vegas has no long historic culture resource, it *formed* the culture by advertisement.

From the perspective of cultural representation, the understanding of a city is not caused by the original physical existence, but by the psychological perception of it. So the advertisement of a city is very important for its urban image forming.

The advertisement of Las Vegas would be changed according to the need of the propaganda. For example, J. Walter Thompson company tried to form the image of a sunny and active city by lots of the advertising boards erected beside the intersection of many important highway, on which were the cowboy figures.

Because too many criminals phenomena were in Las Vegas, so some interviewers represented Las Vegas as the sin city, and of course, such image was a very disadvantage for it. In order to counter such image, West-Marguis Advertising Company described Las Vegas as a friendly city by some smiling cowboy figures on the advertising board. In order to dilute the perception of divorces and gambling in Las Vegas, some advertising companies propagated Las Vegas as a place of many marvelous spectacles and mild climate, featured by the cheesecake.

The advertisement of Las Vegas promoted its economy effectively. The propagation formed a kind of cultural phenomenon, which changed the perception of the city and drew thousands of tourists. What Macau lacks of is the effective advertisement, because in the public opinion,

Macau is a city of only gambling. So advertisement would be very important for Macau.

The Differences between Macau and Las Vegas

Macau and Las Vegas are similar in many aspects such as the gambling history, destination of travelling etc. But there are still many differences between Las Vegas and Macau.

First, compared to Las Vegas, where the western gambling clients tend to use slot machine, Macau depends on the VIP clients, who are the high rollers and most of them are Asian, and those high rollers like gambling on desktop, especially the baccarat. (Gu, X. 2006) Above is the different ways of gambling for the western and Asian clients. But the Asian like gambling more than the western people. So in such perspective, the gambling would still existed in Macau for a long time.

Second, the cultures of Macau and Las Vegas are totally different. Las Vegas located in the desert interior region and its history is very short, but Macau has the long history and diverse cultures. Macau located in the prosperous Zhujiang Delta, and its communication with the other city of the Delta is intimate. Zhujiang Delta is the important economic region of China. So for Macau, how to use the long history, diverse city and the peripheral communication with the cities of Zhujiang Delta is important and would influence the future of Macau greatly.

Third, compared to Las Vegas, Macau relies more on the policy than the market. When the policy is changed, Macau's economy changed more. Since the handover of Macau in 1999, it's developed the gambling industry very fast with the proper policy. But for Las Vegas, there was no special policy for it. When the economy became difficult in 1970s, other cities could also apply for the gambling right, so the policy was not specially for Las Vegas.

Fourth, the natural environment of Macau and Las Vegas is very different. Las Vegas located in the desert interior, however, Macau has the fertile soil and the important port. Macau was the window connecting China and the western before, but now such impression becomes dim under the shallow of the reputation of gambling industry. The function of port should play the important role since Macau located in the prosperous economic region and it still has lots of connection with the western world because of the historic relation. So of course, Macau has lots of environmental advantages to develop its economy.

The Way to Develop Tourism Industry of Macau

In the future, Macau should learn about the successful experience of Las Vegas, but it still should not ignore its own advantages. Las Vegas successful established its positive urban image through the cooperation with the advertisers without historic cultural resources and draws millions of tourists. Macau has the foundation of tourism because of the gambling industry which has brought up many luxurious hotels and entertainment facility, besides, Macau has the long history and diverse cultures. Cultures of Macau would be the attractive factors in the tourism.

Society volume of *Encyclopedia of China* defines culture as "The culture in a broad sense contains the material civilization and the spiritual civilization that the whole human society gradually creates. In a narrow sense, culture refers to the products of language, literature, art and all the ideologies." (Editorial Board of Sociology of Encyclopedia of China, 1991) Culture of Macau is unique. If it is propagated enough, the positive and sunny urban image would be formed, and the negative image that brought up by the gambling would be eliminated to some extent. All those would be beneficial to the diversity of industries of Macau.

Compared to the Las Vegas, Macau should learn the successful experience of advertisement. Although Macau has diverse cultures, it still unknown for most of the people except for some professors and experts who study Macau, and the perception of Macau is very stereotypical as a gambling city. It is obvious that the condition cannot support the tourism of Macau. If one

searches the news in the Internet by Baidu by the word “Macau”, he or she would find that almost all the news about Macau is the gambling. In the recent news about Macau, the anti-corruption action of the mainland of China is mentioned again and again, especially the economic loss of Macau caused by the anti-corruption action.

In 2014, Macau went to the intersection of history, because the gambling industry did not get the policy support as before. To develop the other industries seems very necessary for Macau, especially the tourism industry, but the tourism depends on the good urban image. To change the perception of Macau, it is necessary to propagate the positive urban image of Macau by the mass media. In order to change the perception of Macau, the following steps should be finished.

First, the advertisement should erect the positive Macau image, which has little relation with the gambling. In recent years, there are many the most luxurious buildings in the world appeared in Macau, and that lay the foundation of tourism and if it is propagated properly, it would be the feature of Macau, which would enhance the urban image. Such advertisement can emphasize the entertainment facility of Macau but not the gambling.

Second, the cultures and history of Macau should be emphasized especially. Diverse cultures and long history are the advantages of Macau compared to Las Vegas, and if that is propagated properly, people would find a new Macau. The historic monuments and stories of Macau have not be studied very thoroughly. There were some researchers, such as Zhang Fating, who studied the handwriting of many historic monuments in Macau, but has not got enough attention in the academic field. In the public opinion, the historic cultures are not obvious.

Third, education and sports should be developed more in Macau. There are several universities in Macau, such Macau University, City University of Macau etc. The students of a good university would come from all over the world, so the students can be the propagation factor of Macau, besides, the research institutions in the universities would support the study of Macau historic cultures. Sports is another factor to erect the positive image of Macau. Although Macau is only a tiny space, but it is very famous in the world. There are also many sports facilities in Macau, which reach the international standard. If there are more athletic games held in Macau, the gambling perception of it would has less influence.

But all the measures should have the foundation of advertisement, because if there is no advertisement, there would be no positive urban image.

Conclusion

Macau is not the cultural desert. The gambling industry is too prosperous to let many people notice its long history and diverse cultures. In fact, Macau is the connection point of the western world and China, and the cultures coexist harmoniously in the tiny space, which is different from some other places in the world. The prosperity of gambling industry makes Macau has many the most luxurious hotels in the world, and those buildings have formed the unique cultural phenomenon.

Since the handover of Macau in 1999, the gambling industry progressed very fast until 2014, when the anti-corruption action of China mainland became more obvious. The negative social influence caused by the gambling industry and the fragility of the Macau economy urge people to develop the diverse industries in Macau. President Xi Jinping delivered the speech and suggested Macau develop the culture, sports and retail industries.

Las Vegas, which is also famous for its gambling industry, develops the tourism industry successfully. Macau should learn the successful experience of Las Vegas, and first of all, Macau should have good cooperation with the advertisement companies just as Las Vegas did. Besides, Macau has many advantages, such as the good location, long history and diverse cultures. The peripheral cities such as Zhuhai, are also the tourism city. In 2009, Hengqin, a

region of Zhuhai, became the free trade zone, and that provides Macau an opportunity to develop the new industries faster. Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge, which is built in recent years, makes the three cities connect with each other more intimately. Macau should learn the successful experience of Las Vegas and catch the opportunity to develop the other industries.

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