Effects of Social Commonweal Organizations in the City Brand Construction of Hangzhou, China—a Case Study of Ramunion in Zhejiang Province

Hang LI,1,*, Xiao-Yu SHAO,b Xin-Zu LI,c Fei-Ran LI,d Jing FANG,e and Wei-Dong WANG,f

China Jiliang University, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China

a 445273931@qq.com, b 1603491897@qq.com, c 3189768259@qq.com, d 1140509345@qq.com, e 949981035@qq.com, f 542803770@qq.com

*Corresponding author

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Abstract. Based on the relation between social commonweal organizations and city brand, the Ramunion in Zhejiang province is taken as a typical case to analyze its positive role during the G20 Hangzhou Summit (2016). Based on the Chinese Traditional Dragon Boat Racing, the Ramunion brings the city culture of Hangzhou and Chinese civilization out of China to the world. The practice of the organization fully demonstrates that social commonweal organizations should and are able to play positive roles in moulding city brands. Therefore, it is necessary to further play the positive role of all kinds of social commonweal organizations in the city brand building of Hangzhou.

Introduction

Ever since the reform and opening-up, market competition in China has become increasingly fierce. Meanwhile, with the acceleration of the globalization and urbanization processes, the market competition is not only limited in the commercial field. The competition of administrative subjects—cities also becomes fiercer. In such context, how to make full use of and properly allocate urban resources, highlight city characteristics, and give full play to the superiority, so as to stand out in numerous cities has become an important issue that urban administrators have to solve. No doubt, building city brand is an effective approach for solving the problem. In the development of modern cities in China, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as the third sector independent of the government and enterprises play more and more important roles in the city construction, service, and administration with the progress of simplifying administrative procedures. Social commonweal organizations as important constituent parts of NGOs will make greater contributions to the construction of city brand.

For the above reasons, the research takes the Ramunion in Zhejiang province as a typical case and carries out bibliographic study and case study. The authors attempt to reveal how the Ramunion, an important social commonweal organization, gives play to its advantages and takes part in the city brand building of Hangzhou.

Relation between Social Commonweal Organizations and City Brand

The connotation of city brand can be explained from the material and spirit perspectives: The material aspect involves natural resources and economic industries. For example, Hangzhou lauded as "on the shore of West Lake" and "the side of Paradise" becomes a tourist attraction just due to its beautiful scenery; Jingdezhen drives the local porcelain manufacturing and other industries merely because of its title of "capital of porcelain". At the spiritual level, cities have cultural deposits, historical allusions, or city atmosphere. For instance, Qufu and Zoucheng in Shandong province are
also famous for their special identity as "the hometown of Confucius and Mencius" in spite of their less developed economic power in comparison with other cities.

Then, what is the relation between social commonweal organizations and city brand construction? Firstly, social commonweal organizations are the participants of the city brand construction. Compared with the government, NGOs are more flexible and professional. Taking the Rescue Team of Ramunion (RTR) in Zhejiang province as an example, ever since the launching of the "24-h commonweal emergency search", thousands of lost senior citizens have been helped. It puts the public welfare into effect and becomes a brand public benefit activity of the RTR and even Hangzhou city, and leaving the public the impression of Hangzhou as a commonweal city. Secondly, social commonweal organizations can narrow the distance between the government and the public, make the public identify the city image and therefore unite social forces to jointly build city images and brands. The characteristics of social commonweal organizations determine that they have the enthusiasm and internal motivation for changing social situations. They can go deep into the society to propagandize policy trends relating city image to the public and encourage the public to participate in the building of city brand. Aside from this, the social commonweal organizations can also find public demands ignored by the government and the market and therefore express the aspiration and suggestions of the public for city development. Thirdly, social commonweal organizations are part of the city image. A good social commonweal organization can not only help a city to build and propagate its spirit, but also is a material support for city image. It reflects the cultural connotation of the city and makes the public more intuitively perceive the city image, so that the public can more easily accept and identify the city image.

Although possessing a city image of distinct orientation and prominent characteristics is enviable, it is also very important to bring forth new ideas and update the city image. Since ancient times, Hangzhou has enjoyed the reputation of "the side of Paradise". It is not complacent but keeps looking for new development and sets up new city images. In recent years, the reputations of "energetic city", "fertile ground for entrepreneurs", and "the happiest city in China" of Hangzhou have kept rising. Especially after the G20 Summit in 2016, the popularity, reputation, and influence of Hangzhou constantly grow, which put forwards a new challenge for the image of Hangzhou city. With regard to the image positioning of Hangzhou during the G20 Hangzhou Summit, Zhang Hongming, the mayor of Hangzhou, says that Hangzhou needs to be built as a world-famous city according to the samples of historical and cultural city, innovative city, orient city of high quality, and Beautiful China. It suggests that Hangzhou has begun to build and greatly popularize a new city brand taking G20 Hangzhou Summit as an opportunity. In the process, people are very eagerly looking forward to the effects of social commonweal organizations. In the following section, the Ramunion in Zhejiang province is taken as an example to explore the role of social commonweal organizations playing in the construction of city brand.

Young entrepreneur He Jun set up the Ramunion in 2003 to perform goodness of ram and meet outstanding figures with the public benefit spirit. Since then, he has started a commonweal journey to delight people's life and offer public benefit assistances in the globe. While with the development of public welfare, members of the Ramunion realized that merely doing charitable donation cannot improve the current situations. For this reason, the RTR was established in 2009. As a rescue team of the Ramunion, the RTR mainly takes part in rescue activities including national natural disaster rescue, emergency responses in mountainous regions and cities, and seeking lost old citizens. The RTR, as a relatively mature social rescue organization starting early in Hangzhou, has great influences in the whole China.

At present, the RTR has about 500 rigorously treated, trained, and examined volunteers who have solid rescue knowledge and practical experience. Every member has professional skills. As to the rescue equipment, the RTR builds three combat readiness warehouses in Hangzhou, Chengdu (Sichuan province), and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China. Special purpose vehicles for emergency response, assault boats, air boats, pilotless aircrafts, satellite telephones, professional medical tents (including supporting facilities), and numerous mountainous and water rescue
equipments are stored in these warehouses. With regard to the personnel organization, the RTR has a captain, a chief of staff, and a secretary general, all elected and appointed by the committee, along with six departments and five teams. In addition, compared with government’s rescue programs which need to request instructions level by level, the RTR sets up the 24-h alert mechanism for immediate response. Once receiving a message, the RTR can call up team members to hurry to the scene immediately, which guarantee the rescue speed and improve the rescue efficiency.

As a social commonweal organization, the RTR has close communication and cooperation with the government. The "24-h commonweal emergency search" program fully embodies the advantages and achievements of the cooperation of the two parties. The program is initiated by the RTR in the whole society, aiming at 24-h commonweal search and rescue of the unexpected lost old citizens. At present, the public security organs of Hangzhou and the RTR have built the joint-action mechanism: when personnel of mental deficiency are lost, the investigation of police officers and the emergency search and rescue of the RTR are carried out simultaneously. In this way, the police officers and members of RTR work together in the search and rescue, which realizes the high-efficient cooperation of the two parties in information exchange and emergency search and rescue and makes citizens feel warm in the city.

Successful Practice of the Ramunion in the City Brand Building of Hangzhou

Public Benefit Activities of the Ramunion in the G20 Hangzhou Summit

G20 Hangzhou Summit is an international conference of the highest level held in China so far. Therefore, maintaining the order and safety of the summit and facilitating the summit to go smoothly are the obligations of citizens in Hangzhou and even the whole country. The Ramunion as a social organization of the city actively participated in maintaining social order during the summit and provided voluntary services for the holding of the G20 Hangzhou Summit.

Safeguard of Water Safety during G20 Summit. The RTR dispatched the marine emergency rescue team to carry out emergency diving, salvage operation, and rescue work in the water areas of Qiantang River to coordinate with the maritime departments.

Relief of Accidental Disasters during G20 Summit. To prevent the occurrence of sudden disasters during the G20 Summit, the US&R rescue team of the RTR conducted comprehensive drilling for rescue in building collapse and utilization practice of professional equipments.

Temporary Information Emergency Disposal. During the G20 Summit, the temporary information emergency disposal team solidly promoted the operation of various works and boosted all kinds of protection works: The Ramunion of Hangzhou organized volunteers to carry out emergency training of AHA cardiopulmonary resuscitation, tested the translation telephones in hotels in the encampment every day before the summit, and assisted the certification center to issue reporter certificates. Apart from these activities, the team also investigated the work and life of reporters registered in foreign media according to the instructions of the directorate of foreign media and kept company with and appeased reporters of the Global Times of the United States. In addition, it provided interview questions for BBC reporters of the Britain and timely corrected mistyped English words in the media handbook on the official website of the G20 Hangzhou Summit.

Safety Patrol during G20 Summit. The RTR carried out safety patrol in each community of the prosperous Changqing sub-district.

Security Guarantee during G20 Summit. On 24 August 2016, the public security office in Shangcheng district worked together with the RTR to check hideouts in Wushan and conducted security works. The locations where criminals tend to hide were marked with warning flags.
**Militia Protection during G20 Summit.** The trainband of the Changqing sub-district in Xiacheng district constituted by RTR members performed guard training in the fire-protection training center of Hangzhou. Additionally, they were trained with first aid knowledge, including skills of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and simple wound bandaging.

All of the security works done by the RTR during the G20 Summit demonstrate the contributions made by a non-governmental rescue organization to the successful holding of the summit. The RTR not only realizes its functions in rescue support and disaster prevention and reduction, but also makes the public aware of its power, which exerts certain positive effects in the city brand building of Hangzhou.

**European trip of Chinese Traditional Dragon Boat Racing of the Ramunion**

In 2016, the Ramunion brought the traditional dragon boats made in Jiangcun village, Hangzhou to Dallas in the United States to spread the orient dragon spirit and the traditional dragon-boat culture in the United States. In 2017, the Chinese Traditional Dragon Boat Racing was carried out in the Europe and showed its unique Chinese fascination in Austria, Italy, and France.

To carry forward excellent Chinese traditional culture, the Ramunion positively played its role as a leader to bring the Jiangcun Dragon Boat Pageant to the world. On 23 June 2017, the last three stations (European stations) of the Global Chinese Traditional Dragon Boat Racing began in Vienna. The Ramunion built a friendly bridge. On the beautiful Danube countless boats set sail and competed, which left deep impression there. On 1 July, the Ramunion brought the dragon-boat culture to the Seine River of Paris where a Chinese culture feast was offered for the people of the both countries. On 8 July, the dragon boat racing was held in Florence. Audiences on both banks of River Arno expressed their utmost admiration for the artistic performance.

During the activities in Austria, the then President Madam Bures of the National Council of Austria praised that the Ramunion is the ambassador for the communication of international humanitarian and traditional culture. It was also highly praised in Italy and France. Taking Chinese dragon-boat culture as the bridge, the Ramunion conducted Global Chinese Traditional Dragon Boat Racing and the Global Public-Benefit Galleon Show in countries along the One Belt and One Road. The Chinese Traditional Dragon Boat Racing also shows the cultural connotations and courage of a big country.

Just as one can see what is coming from a small clue, a commonweal organization can set up the image of a country, it can also form the impression of a city. The positive images of the Ramunion in Zhejiang province in emergency rescue and public-benefit activities demonstrate the personality and value of Hangzhou. Professor Kvein Lane Keller from Duke University (the United States) states that the brand of a city is the resources and intangible assets of the city. Undoubtedly, while bringing the Jiangcun dragon boats overseas in the European trip, the Ramunion adds certain ancient cultural conception and lingering charm to Hangzhou.

**Fully Playing the Positive Pole of Social Commonweal Oragnizations in City Brand Building of Hangzhou.**

The prestige and social public awareness are important for a social commonweal organization, while a good commonweal organization plays significant propelling effects in building the brand and characteristics of a city. Then, how to improve the reputation and popularity becomes the common problem confronted by numerous social commonweal organizations.

At first, social commonweal organizations should have solid strength and rich experience. The success or failure of a social commonweal organization greatly depends on its self-construction and whether it can gain social credit or not. Taking the Ramunion as an example, since the establishment in early 2003, the organization has always been in the forefront of public welfare. In 2005, it went to Kangba pastoral area in Ganzi and the Yi nationality mountainous regions in Liangshan Prefecture of Sichuan province to assist the local people. The Ramunion went through the great northern line in Ali, Tibet in 2007; in 2008, earthquake relief work was organized in Wenchuan, Sichuan province; in 171
2009, the RTR was set up; in 2010, the Ramunion went to Yushu, Qinghai province for post-quake assistance. Even after the recent 7.4-magnitude earthquake in Jiuzhaigou county, Sichuan province, the RTR hurried to the disaster-hit area for disaster relief in the night of the earthquake with life detecting equipments and rescue dogs. For a better development, commonweal organizations themselves have to be more excellent.

Secondly, proper and effective publicity means need to be taken. According to the characteristics of social commonweal organizations, the commonly used publicity means mainly include: propagandizing public-benefit activities by cooperating with the government; broadcasting public-benefit theme activities by collaborating with enterprises, institutions, and news media; advertising commonweal organizations and programs using different news media; inviting public figures as commonweal ambassadors; uniting, taking advantages of, complementing, and propagandizing organizations in the same industry; inviting outstanding commonweal delegates as propaganda models; and organizing internet propaganda. Different publicity means need to be taken under different circumstances.

Apart from having flexible publicity means, social commonweal organizations should also keep pace with the times and make full use of software that widely used by citizens such as WeChat and MicroBlog for authoritative propaganda. Taking the Ramunion as a case, it has WeChat official accounts including the Ramunion, service account of the Ramunion, Ramunion Academy of Community Service, and RTR. It is also a MicroBlog verified user. However, it still has some shortcomings: the profile is inadequate and the trends are updated not timely. In addition, the content published is less serious and authoritative. Therefore, it needs to pay attention to the following points: 1) the Ramunion needs to master audience psychology and analyze the public demands; 2) it needs to understand the social environment and pay attention to the external environment of the launched activities; 3) the organization should grasp news points and fully consider internal and external factors; 4) it is necessary to get along with the cooperators and build favorable relationships with press units and 5) it is expected to take proper propaganda techniques, select approachable activities for breakthrough, mobilize all the members for propaganda, fulfill daily propaganda, and calmly confront negative reports.

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