

Research on the Path of Marine Cultural Diplomacy under the Initiative of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road - A Case Study of China-Korea Marine Cultural Cooperation

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Abstract

Under the background of globalization and the in-depth advancement of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative, marine culture, as a carrier of inclusive and cooperative spirit, has become an important link in cultural diplomacy and plays an irreplaceable role in promoting people-to-people bonds and deepening bilateral relations. China and Korea are geographically adjacent across the sea, sharing a long history of marine exchanges and rich marine cultural resources, which lays a solid foundation for the development of marine cultural cooperation. Taking China-Korea marine cultural cooperation as a case study, this paper explores the path of marine cultural diplomacy under the framework of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative. It first sorts out the core concepts and theoretical foundations related to marine cultural diplomacy. It then analyzes the current situation, existing achievements, and practical advantages of China-Korea marine cultural cooperation. It deeply explores prominent problems such as imperfect cooperation mechanisms, single forms of communication, cultural cognitive differences, and limited dissemination channels. Finally, it proposes targeted optimization paths from the aspects of improving cooperation mechanisms, innovating communication forms, bridging cultural differences, and expanding dissemination channels. The research aims to provide practical reference for deepening China-Korea marine cultural exchanges and cooperation, enrich the research system of marine cultural diplomacy under the Belt and Road Initiative, and contribute to the construction of a community of shared future in the neighborhood.

Keywords

The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, Marine culture, Cultural diplomacy, China-Korea cooperation, Diplomatic path

Introduction

Research background and significance

In the context of in-depth globalization and profound adjustments in the international pattern, the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative serves as an important strategy for China's opening up to the outside world. It is committed not only to promoting economic and trade exchanges and infrastructure connectivity among countries along the route, but also to shouldering the important mission of building cultural consensus and enhancing international friendship. The ocean is the core carrier of the Maritime Silk Road, and marine culture, which contains the spiritual core of inclusiveness, openness, cooperation and win-win results, is a natural link for carrying out cultural diplomacy and narrowing national relations [1,2].

China and Korea are separated by the sea, and both belong to the East Asian cultural circle, and both have a long maritime history and rich marine cultural resources [3]. Bilateral relations are friendly, and economic, trade and cultural exchanges are close, which provides unique conditions for carrying out marine cultural cooperation. At present, there have been certain achievements in marine cultural exchanges between China and Korea. However, there are still problems such as insufficient in-depth cooperation, single forms, and lack of long-term mechanisms, which fail to give full play to the soft power role of marine culture in the field of diplomacy. Based on this, this paper takes China-Korea marine cultural cooperation as an example to study the optimized path of marine cultural diplomacy under the

background of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative. This study has both academic theoretical value and practical significance.

In terms of theory, it can enrich the research system of marine culture and cultural diplomacy, and supplement the research content of China-Korea cultural cooperation. In terms of practice, it can help resolve bilateral cultural misunderstandings, narrow the distance between the two peoples, promote the steady development of China-Korea relations, and provide practical reference for China to carry out cultural diplomacy with countries along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Research status at home and abroad

Domestic academic circles have carried out a lot of research on the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, marine culture and cultural diplomacy. Most of the existing achievements focus on marine economic development, economic and trade cooperation under the Maritime Silk Road, and national cultural diplomacy strategies [4,5]. There are relatively few studies on special China-Korea marine cultural cooperation and specific paths of marine cultural diplomacy. Some studies discuss the current situation of China-Korea cultural exchanges, but most of them focus on conventional fields such as film and television, folk customs and food. Specialized research on the distinctive field of marine culture is not in-depth enough, and there is a lack of systematic analysis of cooperation pain points and solutions [6].

In foreign studies, Korean scholars pay more attention to China-Korea economic and trade cooperation and regional marine governance, and there are few studies on marine cultural diplomacy. Western scholars focus on global marine governance and cross-cultural communication theories, and there is a lack of targeted research on bilateral marine cultural cooperation between China and Korea. On the whole, the existing research lacks a systematic combing of China-Korea marine cultural diplomacy under the background of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative. This paper takes this as the entry point to fill the relevant research gaps.

Research content and methods

This paper mainly focuses on China-Korea marine cultural diplomacy. It first clarifies the core concepts

and theoretical foundations, then analyzes the current situation and advantages of cooperation, explores the existing problems, and finally puts forward targeted optimization paths. In the research process, a variety of academic research methods are comprehensively used to ensure the scientific rigor of the research. The literature research method is adopted to collect and sort out relevant domestic and foreign academic papers, policy documents, news reports, and statistical data, thereby laying a solid theoretical foundation. The case analysis method is adopted to select typical cases of China-Korea marine cultural exchanges and summarize experiences and lessons. The comparative research method is adopted to compare excellent models of marine cultural diplomacy at home and abroad and extract feasible experiences. The field investigation and interview method (auxiliary) is adopted to collect first-line exchange information, making the research more in line with reality.

Research innovations and difficulties

The innovation of this paper lies in combining the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative, marine cultural diplomacy, and China-Korea cooperation. It selects the niche and distinctive field of marine culture, breaks the limitations of conventional cultural exchange research, focuses on the pain points of bilateral cooperation, and puts forward practical and feasible diplomatic paths. The research perspective is novel and targeted.

The difficulty of research in this paper lies in three aspects. First, the scattered special data and official materials related to China-Korea marine cultural cooperation are difficult to collect and sort out. Second, the cultural differences and cognitive deviations between the two countries are difficult to measure quantitatively, and the problem analysis needs to consider objectivity and comprehensiveness. Third, when drawing on experience and putting forward paths, it is necessary to conform to the national conditions and diplomatic policies of the two countries to ensure the feasibility of the plan.

Core concepts and theoretical foundations

Connotation of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative

The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road is an important international cooperation initiative proposed by China

in response to the trend of globalization. Relying on maritime waterways, it connects many countries and regions in Asia, Africa, Europe, and other places along the route. It upholds the core principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits, and aims to achieve policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bonds. The initiative not only focuses on mutually beneficial cooperation in the economic field. It also values cultural exchanges and mutual learning. Furthermore, it advocates transcending cultural barriers through cultural exchanges, transcending cultural conflicts through cultural mutual learning, and building a community of shared interests, a community of shared future, and a community of shared responsibilities. Marine cultural exchange is an important starting point for achieving people-to-people bonds and a soft power support for promoting the construction of the Maritime Silk Road [7].

Definitions of marine culture and cultural diplomacy

Marine culture is the sum of material and spiritual wealth created by humans in understanding and utilizing the ocean. It includes not only navigation technology, port architecture and marine products, but also marine beliefs, folk customs, literature and art, and marine spirit. It features distinct inclusiveness, openness, exploration and cooperation [8].

Cultural diplomacy, as an important branch of public diplomacy, is an international diplomatic activity carried out with culture as the carrier and communication as the means. Different from traditional political diplomacy and military diplomacy, it has characteristics of flexibility, gentleness and strong appeal, which can imperceptibly enhance understanding between countries, shape a good national image and narrow folk relations. Marine cultural diplomacy is a special form of achieving diplomatic goals by carrying out transnational cultural exchanges, dissemination and cooperation relying on marine cultural resources.

Theoretical support for marine cultural diplomacy

This paper is carried out based on the theories of public diplomacy, cross-cultural communication and community of shared future. The theory of public diplomacy emphasizes that the main body of diplomacy is not only the official government, but also non-governmental organizations, enterprises, individuals,

and others. It focuses on winning international social recognition through cultural dissemination and interactive communication [9]. Cross-cultural communication theory notes cultural differences, which can be resolved through equal dialogue and mutual understanding to achieve integration [10]. The theory of community of shared future conforms to the purpose of the Belt and Road Initiative, advocating that all countries abandon differences, work together and achieve common development, which is also one of the ultimate goals of marine cultural diplomacy.

Current situation and foundation of China-Korea marine cultural cooperation

Historical origin of China-Korea marine cultural cooperation

China and Korea are close neighbors separated by the sea, with a history of marine exchanges spanning thousands of years. In ancient times, they carried out economic and trade exchanges and cultural exchanges through maritime waterways. Ancient Chinese navigation technology and marine beliefs were introduced to the Korean Peninsula, and Korean marine products and folk culture were also introduced to coastal areas of China, forming a profound marine cultural origin. Both countries believe in marine gods such as Mazu and the Dragon King and retain similar folk customs such as sea sacrifices and prayers for going to sea. They also possess historical and cultural relics along the Maritime Silk Road and jointly inherit the cultural concept of peaceful navigation and reverence for the ocean. These shared elements lay the groundwork for modern marine cultural cooperation.

Existing achievements of China-Korea marine cultural cooperation

In recent years, with the steady development of China-Korea relations, marine cultural exchanges between the two countries have become increasingly frequent. At the official level, the two countries have carried out marine culture-themed forums and academic seminars to jointly study marine history and culture and marine heritage protection. At the folk level, they have held activities such as marine cultural festivals, fisherman cultural exchanges, marine art exhibitions and maritime cultural tourism experiences. In the field of intangible cultural heritage protection, the two countries have jointly

carried out research and inheritance of marine intangible cultural heritage. In the field of cultural tourism development, they have cooperated to create maritime tourism routes to attract tourists from both countries to exchange visits. These cooperative activities have narrowed the distance between the two peoples and accumulated rich cooperative experience.

Practical advantages of China-Korea marine cultural cooperation

China-Korea marine cultural cooperation has multiple obvious advantages. Geographically, the two countries are adjacent across the sea, with convenient transportation and low communication costs. Culturally, both belong to the East Asian cultural circle, sharing similar cultural backgrounds and a strong sense of identity. Politically, friendly bilateral relations and official support provide guarantees for transnational cultural exchanges. Economically, close trade ties offer sufficient funds and resources for cultural cooperation. At the folk level, people from both sides show high acceptance of each other's culture and strong willingness to communicate. In addition, policy support from the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative has created a favorable external environment for in-depth marine cultural cooperation [11].

Problems existing in China-Korea marine cultural diplomacy

Imperfect cooperation mechanism and insufficient long-term effect

At present, China-Korea marine cultural cooperation is mostly based on short-term activities and temporary projects, lacking a fixed and long-term cooperation mechanism. At the official level, there is no special coordinating department for marine cultural cooperation, and communication and coordination are not smooth. Non-governmental organization cooperation is relatively loose, lacking unified planning. The source of cooperation funds is single, mostly relying on government appropriations, and market-oriented operation is insufficient, resulting in the difficulty of sustainable development of some activities. As a result, cooperation presents fragmented and short-term characteristics, which cannot form a long-term and stable communication pattern.

Single form of communication and serious homogenization of content

The existing China-Korea marine cultural exchanges

mostly stay in traditional forms such as cultural exhibitions, festival performances and academic conferences. The content is superficial, lacking innovation and attractiveness. Most of them display basic contents such as marine folk customs, cultural relics and scenery, failing to dig deep into the spiritual core and historical heritage behind marine culture. There is a lack of immersive, interactive and experiential communication projects, which are difficult to attract young groups to participate, resulting in limited cultural communication effect and failure to give play to the in-depth charm of marine culture.

Cultural differences and cognitive deviations hinder in-depth integration

Although Chinese and Korean cultures are similar, there are still differences between the two countries in marine historical narratives, interpretation of marine beliefs and folk customs. In addition, there exist some deviations in public opinion guided by misunderstandings and cognitive deviations of some people towards each other's marine culture. In the process of cooperation, it is easy to have problems such as inconsistent cultural concepts and poor communication, which makes it difficult to achieve in-depth cultural integration and empathy, and restricts the in-depth advancement of marine cultural diplomacy.

Limited dissemination channels and insufficient influence

The dissemination channels of China-Korea marine cultural exchanges still mainly rely on offline activities and traditional media publicity, with insufficient use of new media platforms and limited dissemination scope. There is a lack of professional marine culture dissemination teams and high-quality content, and the publicity intensity is weak. Many high-quality marine cultural cooperation projects fail to be widely disseminated and have low visibility. In addition, cultural output is one-way, and two-way interactive communication is insufficient, resulting in limited influence of marine cultural diplomacy and difficulty in truly achieving people-to-people bonds.

Paths to optimize China-Korea marine cultural diplomacy

Improving the cooperation mechanism and building a normalized exchange platform

Relying on the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

Initiative, establishing a China-Korea official + non-governmental linkage marine cultural cooperation mechanism, set up a special coordinating group to plan, coordinate and promote bilateral marine cultural exchange projects. Signing long-term cooperation agreements, clarifying cooperation goals and division of responsibilities to ensure the normalized operation of cooperation. Expanding the source of funds, introduce market-oriented operation mode, encourage enterprises and non-governmental capital to participate in marine cultural cooperation, and building a stable and sustainable cooperation system. Regularly holding China-Korea marine cultural cooperation forums and establish an information sharing platform to achieve resource interconnection and experience sharing.

Innovating communication forms and digging deep into the core of marine culture

Breaking the traditional communication mode and enriching the forms of marine cultural diplomacy. Digging deep into the marine cultural heritage of the two countries and jointly creating high-quality cultural and creative products such as marine-themed documentaries, stage plays, animations, and literary works. Carrying out immersive activities such as marine cultural research, maritime scientific research cooperation, and marine intangible cultural heritage inheritance camps. Developing characteristic maritime cultural tourism routes, integrate marine history, folk customs, and scenery, and create a cultural tourism cooperation brand. Focusing on young groups, launching young and interesting exchange activities to enhance the attractiveness and appeal of marine culture.

Bridging cultural differences and enhancing mutual understanding and recognition

Adhere to the principles of equality, respect, seeking common ground while reserving differences, and carrying out China-Korea marine cultural exchanges. Strengthening the research and interpretation of each other's marine culture, objectively present the characteristics and commonalities of the two countries' marine culture, and eliminating cultural misunderstandings. Carrying out in-depth non-governmental exchange activities, encourage fishermen, scholars, artists and young students to communicate face-to-face and personally experience each other's culture. Through cultural dialogue, seminars and other

forms, building cultural consensus, establishing a common marine value, and laying a foundation for cultural mutual trust.

Expanding dissemination paths and enhancing the influence of cultural diplomacy

Building an all-media communication matrix and make full use of new media channels such as short video platforms, social software, and cross-border media. The goal is to spread the achievements of China-Korea marine cultural cooperation and create high-quality marine cultural content. Cultivating professional marine culture disseminates talents to improve the quality and level of publicity. Promoting two-way cultural communication, not only promote excellent Chinese marine culture to Korea, but also actively introduce high-quality Korean marine culture to achieve two-way mutual learning. With the help of international platforms along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, publicize the model of China-Korea marine cultural cooperation and enhance the international influence of bilateral marine cultural cooperation.

Conclusion

The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative provides a valuable development opportunity for China-Korea marine cultural diplomacy. As a flexible diplomatic carrier, marine culture plays an irreplaceable role in enhancing bilateral friendship and achieving people-to-people bonds. China and Korea have a profound marine cultural origin and a good foundation for cooperation. Current cooperation faces several problems, including imperfect mechanisms, single forms, and insufficient dissemination. However, these problems can be effectively solved by improving cooperation mechanisms, innovating communication forms, bridging cultural differences, and expanding dissemination paths. In doing so, we can promote the in-depth development of marine cultural diplomacy.

Taking China-Korea marine cultural cooperation as an example, the path of marine cultural diplomacy explored in this paper can not only promote the quality and upgrading of bilateral relations between China and Korea. It can also provide reference for China to carry out cultural diplomacy and deepen international cooperation with other countries along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. In the future, with the continuous

in-depth development of marine cultural exchanges, it will further consolidate the foundation of the community of shared future in the neighborhood. This will make the ocean a sea of friendship, cooperation, and peace connecting all countries.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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