

# *On Museum Tourism Development from the Perspective of Cultural Identity Experience*

—Taking the Core Area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road as an Example

Yanyan Luo <sup>a</sup>; Deping Chu\*; Di Xing; Jixiao Pan; Yarong Huang; Jiangbin Yu

College of Tourism  
Fujian Normal University  
Fuzhou, Fujian 350108

<sup>a</sup> 508789140@qq.com

\*Corresponding author, e-mail: chudeping2000@126.com

**Abstract**—Cultural identity experience involves a process of self-identification, which helps to strengthen cultural confidence. As the core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, Fujian Province represents an important starting point and birthplace of the ancient Maritime Silk Road, while numerous museums are the symbols of the culture in the region. At present, the tourism development of China's Marine Silk Museum faces five constraints: static display restricts comprehensive perception, emotional barriers restrict the empathy, one-way infusion restricts active thinking, interactive limitation restricts participation of tourists, and association offline restricts cultural self-confidence. To this end, sensory experience, emotional experience, thinking experience, action experience, and associated experience are integrated into the construction of the museum, hence promoting the tourism development of the Marine Silk Culture Museum.

**Keywords**—cultural identity; cultural experience; museum tourism; core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

## I. INTRODUCTION

China's Belt and Road Initiative is based on cultural identity between countries and regions along the route, and it is necessary to deepen cultural connotation of the Silk Road to facilitate international cognition and synergy [1]. In 2015, the proposal of building Fujian as the "core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" was put forward, and the museum quickly became a significant place for the exchange of Chinese and foreign Marine Silk culture. As an important carrier to promote the deeper cultural integration of China and the West, museum tourism has gradually become a crucial measure to implement construction of the core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and the Belt and Road Initiative as well.

## II. CULTURAL IDENTITY EXPERIENCE AND MUSEUM TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Cultural identity shows the common culture between individuals and groups. In this process, individuals are

\* The project is funded by 2018 "10,000 Tourism Talents Program" (No. WMYC20183-016) of Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, 2018 Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project of Fujian Province (No. 201810394047) and 2019 Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project of Fujian Province (No. S201910394008).

influenced by the group culture, and then self-identity recognition will be experienced, that is, the experience of cultural identity. In Schmidt's strategic experience model, five experience modes were proposed—"sensory experience, emotional experience, thinking experience, action experience and associated experience". By strengthening construction of the five experience modes, the experiencer can better understand it and recognition of the target culture will be deepened [2].

Tourism symbolizes the spiritual and cultural activities of tourists, which is cultural in nature. Obtaining cultural identity in the process of tourism is one of the potential motives of tourists while the degree of tourist identity experience is related to the cultural resources of destinations, therefore cultural diversity and richness in the destinations are one of the essential components of local tourism attraction. Fujian, as the core area of "Marine Silk Road", boasts of abundant resources of its culture and masses of museums are the symbols of Marine Silk culture. It is an important place to gain the identification experience of the culture. The identification of Marine Silk culture displays that tourists are confident in culture in the process of understanding, absorbing and integrating Marine Silk culture. Methods to allow tourists get this cultural identity experience has gradually become an important development orientation of museum tourism in the core area of the Maritime Silk Road.

## III. INTERPRETATION OF THE UNIQUE VALUE OF THE CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE CORE AREA OF MARITIME SILK ROAD

The "Maritime Silk Road" is a peaceful road where ancient and modern maritime traffic carries artistic communication, cultural exchanges and ideological blending with business dealings. In 2015, Fujian was proposed to build the core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road in "*Vision and Proposed Action Outlined on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*". Located in the southeast coast of China, Fujian is the main cradle of the Maritime Silk Road and enjoys a time-honored history, numerous remains, and abundant Maritime Silk cultural resources.

#### A. *Indispensable Component of “Maritime Silk Culture” Blending*

“Maritime Silk Culture” is the open, diverse and compatible material culture and spiritual culture created by the Maritime Silk Road from the Qin and Han Dynasties to the end of the Qing Dynasty. Fujian is the thoroughfare of Maritime Silk route of East China Sea and South China Sea. Since the Han Dynasty, it has been mainly responsible for Maritime Silk trade. It boasts of many “Maritime Silk Culture cities” resources such as Quanzhou, Fuzhou and Zhangzhou. For instance, the distinguished “first port of the East” Quanzhou is the main port of the Maritime Silk Road; Fuzhou is the famous trading port of the Tang Dynasty and a vital base for Zheng He's voyages to the West. “Maritime Silk” is spread over the land of Fujian. The material cultural landscape includes ports, religious sites, buildings and stone inscriptions, such as Longhai Yuegang, Qingjing Temple, Shipbuilding Institution and Cliff Inscriptions; non-material cultural landscape mainly includes Mazu culture, Minnan culture, shipbuilding culture and so on. Fujian is an important link for humanities exchanges, which has accumulated more than 15.8 million overseas Chinese resources for overseas Chinese living abroad. It enjoys geographical proximity, blood relationship, cultural patrimony and business connections, greatly promoting the deeper level of connectivity and integrated development of Maritime Silk culture in Chinese and Western countries.

#### B. *Important “Mission” of the Exchanges of Chinese and Western Cultures*

The cultural exchanges between China and the West flourished by the Maritime Silk Road before the Song and Yuan Dynasties, and were interrupted after the Yuan Dynasty. On the Ming and Qing Dynasties, as Western colonists successively continued their cultural exploration on the southeast coast of China, the cultural exchanges between China and the West revived and became better and better. Fujian stands for the frontier platform and main window for the West to understand Chinese culture, and has become an essential starting point for Chinese civilization to join the world. The re-convergence of Chinese and Western cultures has brought Chinese culture into the West while instilling many new elements, such as the plants collection of British people in Fujian, the missionary activities of the Jesuits in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Sino-West rites controversy in Fujian, and the cultivation of Zhuxi's theory on the West [3].

#### C. *Unique Value of Museum Development for Marine Silk Culture Identity*

In the 21st century, the Silk Road pays special attention to cross-regional cultural integration, such as “cross the ocean: China's 'Maritime Silk Road' nine-city cultural heritage boutique co-exhibition”, etc. With the abundant Marine Silk cultural heritage of the museum, it is of vital significance to enhance the Marine Silk culture identification of nations in terms of emotional cognitive value. In the fusion of the culture, Fujian has continuously contacted national friendship and reviewed the “Marine Silk Spirit”. The cultural heritage of the Marine Silk Museum acts on the cultural confidence and

cultural identity of the countries along the route, forming an indestructible cultural lifeline. It allows a harmonious coexistence of the ever-lasting unique multi-ethnic Marine Silk culture system, becoming a “spiritual treasure house” of experiencing the multi-culture of the Chinese nation as well as an excellent garden for the identification of Marine Silk culture.

#### IV. CONSTRAINTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE MARINE SILK CULTURE MUSEUM

Fujian Province, as an important starting point and birthplace of the “Ancient Maritime Silk Road”, is the most significant participant and witness of the “Maritime Silk Road”. The Marine Silk Museum is a gathering place for the remnants of Marine Silk elements. The historical track and cultural characteristics of Fujian's “Maritime Silk Road” are behind the thousands of collections, reflecting the prosperity of the “city's ten continents” and “numerous businesses on the rising of the sea” and bearing the inclusive Marine Silk spirit daring to fight and win. However, nowadays, there are still some setbacks needed to make up for the tourism development of the Marine Silk core area museum. Firstly, static display restricts overall perception. The single exhibition will only bring the cultural relics to the booth, so that the museum will be in a semi-dormant state for a long time, which is unable to mobilize the visitors' comprehensive perception system. Secondly, the emotional barrier restricts empathy of Marine Silk. In the construction of the museum, the emotional appeal of tourists is neglected, and the rational cognitive information and perceptual one acquired by the immersive experience of tourists are unbalanced. Thirdly, the one-way infusion restricts active thinking. The relatively dogmatic cultural output lacks respect for tourists' self-thinking in interpretation. Fourthly, the interactive limitations restrict the participation of tourists. The highly summarized single presentation is a common way of museum exhibitions. Lack of interactive channels in the exhibition, there is an imbalance between “museum rights” and “freedom of the audience”. Fifthly, associated offline restricts cultural confidence. Personal emotions are separated from the cultural connotations contained in the museum, and there is no benign excessive mechanism to hinder the construction of cultural confidence.

#### V. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF MUSEUM TOURISM BASED ON CULTURAL IDENTITY EXPERIENCE

##### A. *Sensory Experience*

Firstly, exhibitions should be showcased on behalf of the meeting, letting the cultural tourism industry chain “long”. With the influx of social economy and the public's wide attention, the Marine Silk Museum has entered into an unprecedented stage of development. It has evolved from the old “warehouse” museum into a new industrial chain of “exhibitions on behalf of the meeting and promotion of tourism through the meeting”. According to the unique attributes of the Marine Silk Core Area Museum, the concept of “hyperlink museum” was introduced [4]. The museum should adjust measures to local conditions; conduct various types of Marine Silk culture professional exhibitions, Marine

Silk cultural heritage performances and traditional Marine Silk cultural costumes, etc. The exhibition of individual items will be transformed into a two-item exhibition. Through the sensory experience, the target of tourists will be achieved, hence providing methods for realizing cultural identity. Secondly, the scientific and technological guidelines make the cultural heritage “live” [5]. The cultural relics have their own unique historical, cultural, aesthetic and artistic properties. Of course, they must “live” and go out of the solidified “stand”. In the era of information technology, technologies such as AR, virtual reality and artificial intelligence should be fully integrated into the museum, so that cultural relics can “speak”, “talk”, and “speak good words”. In this way, the sophisticated content can be impressive through the form that people like. However, “activation” is not the same as excessive entertainment. The short video of “Playing cute” and the cultural relics of “swaying” may easily mislead the public's perception of the connotation of cultural relics and detract from the historical bearing of cultural relics. Therefore, the degree of “activation” should be paid attention to. The first is to learn to combine cultural relics; the second is to well beat the rhythm of “activation”; the third is to tell the story behind it, and the four is to inherit the traditional spirit. Thirdly, the mobile exhibitions make the collections of cultural relics “moving”. Compared with traditional museums, mobile museums have a wider scope of sights and receive more audiences, which is an important supplement to the existing museums. Under the Marine Silk culture, the concept of “Mobile Museum plus Collection Witness” is formed, and a “Piece of Witness” is used to express emotion, and a “Mobile Museum” is used to tell a history of Marine Silk. It can also realize the identification of Marine Silk culture from various perceptions such as sight, hearing and touch for visitors outside the museum.

### *B. Emotional Experience*

Embedding the concept of eco-museum into the construction of the Marine Silk Museum, that is, the residents are the owners of Marine Silk culture and they have the right to identify and explain their culture, protect the Marine Silk cultural heritage in an integrated way. Visitors can recall the intangible cultural heritages such as folk customs, Marine Silk spirit, and system of laws and regulations during their experience. Firstly, guided by the “custom civilization”, the spiritual heritage of the eco-museum can be inherited. After a thousand years of wind and rain, the Marine Silk culture represents the patriotic character of a group member, an inclusive feeling and an idea of fight and win. The concept emphasizes the inheritance of traditional culture in the construction of ecological museums, prompting tourists to reproduce the spirit of Marine Silk in the local experience. Secondly, under the guidance of the “Cultural Heritage Hospital” model, the protection of the cultural heritage of the ecological museum will be realized, the process of restoration of cultural relics will be made into images, and the cultural relics hospital will be established for visitors. In that way, visitors can deeply understand the arduousness of repairing cultural relics, hence promoting tourists to trace back to Marine Silk.

### *C. Thinking Experience*

On the one hand, the museum should use the Marine Silk IP thinking to guide its construction, increase the attraction of the Marine Silk Museum tourism, and give full play to the driving role of the “Marine Silk” strategic fulcrum city Quanzhou, Fuzhou and Zhangzhou, and differentiate the positioning of the Marine Silk Museum. The museum should enhance the competitiveness of its tourism development, such as the cultural exchanges between the two sides of the Quanzhou-Taiwan margin museum and highlight the culture of Mawei shipbuilding culture, Chen Jinggu culture, etc. It should concentrate on its own high-quality resources, tap the cultural potential, highlight the characteristics and make the featured brands bigger, hence endowing the Marine Silk Museum tourism with an irreplaceable advantage in the fierce market competition. On the other hand, under the principle of “openness, compatibility and diversity”, the museum should broaden creative ideas, give full play to people's subjective initiative, and attract well-known designers to participate in the research and development of the museum “cultural and creative industries of Marine Silk”. It should pay attention to the “star collection”, refine the Marine Silk elements and design the related products that can trigger tourists' active thinking.

### *D. Action Experience*

Firstly, open the “post-museum era”. The creative re-conception and re-processing of museum identity is a major feature of the post-museum era. One of the important signs of the post-museum is to have a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between culture, spread, learning and identity [6], transforming from “serving cultural relics” to “serving the public” and implementing the “people-oriented” concept. In the museum, the basic service facilities are set up in a “live” manner, such as the decoration style of cafes, restaurants, and bookstores to cater to the culture of Marine Silk, to convey the culture of Marine Silk in “living state”, and to feel the culture of Marine Silk in the experience and touch the imprint of the history of Marine Silk. Secondly, open the “night museum era”. Traditional museums generally follow the “opening from nine am to five pm, closed on Monday”, and the current market demand is that the night life of the audience is gradually enriched, and the pursuit of night culture and leisure experience is becoming more and more desired. Therefore, “the nighttime museum era” needs to be opened up. The nighttime landscape lights are arranged in the museum's outer exhibition halls, and activities such as “Impression of Marine Silk”, “Marine Silk Museum Wonderful Night” and “Light Show” are carried out to meet the needs of tourists.

### *E. Associated Experience*

As the core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and one of China's most important ancestral home of overseas Chinese, Fujian enjoys a special history and human resources, and the essence of Marine Silk culture is particularly prominent here. Overseas Chinese have exerted their own strengths, including numerous associations, strong cohesiveness and wide influence, to provide advice and

suggestions for the development of Marine Silk culture. These groups are deeply influenced by the culture of Marine Silk and are important promoters for the development of Marine Silk culture. Linking the cultural connotation contained in the core area museum of Marine Silk with the personal feelings of overseas Chinese, the museum should establish various associations of Fujian Nationality, set up a “museum-association” dual-track platform and form a regular contact mechanism; the museum should establish the “Marine Silk Forum” of Fujian Nationality to propose suggestions for museum development and Marine Silk culture identity; the museum should hold various “blood borders, geography” root-seeking meetings, and Marine Silk cultural exchange meetings to inject cultural exchange factors into the development of the Marine Silk museum and promote confidence of overseas Chinese culture [7].

## VI. CONCLUSION

“Marine Silk Culture” is a complete cultural system. The long history and diverse cultural participation determine its openness, diversity and compatibility [8], which is rooted in the deep level of Chinese culture. The core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, as the main birthplace of “Marine Silk Culture”, its value is an important strategic resource for participating in the construction of national cultural soft power. Cultural identity, as a fusion of group consciousness and humanistic spirit, has the characteristics of “super-ego” and can provide rich cultural resources and industrial value for the cultural tourism industry. From this

perspective, the tourism development of the Marine Silk Museum has gradually joined the construction of cultural soft power to create a unique development model.

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