

Research on the Development of Foreign Cultural Trade in Shandong Province Under the Belt and Road Initiative

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ABSTRACT

From the aspects of cultural resources, cultural industry system and foreign cultural trade structure, this paper analyzes the export statistics of Shandong's foreign cultural trade target market and the export distribution of cultural products in Shandong Province, summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of Shandong's foreign cultural trade, and puts forward countermeasures and suggestions in personnel training, cross-border e-commerce marketing channels, the optimization of cultural trade structure and the cultivation of cultural brands, so as to improve the level of Shandong's opening to the outside world and change the mode of economic growth.

Keywords: *the Belt and Road Initiative, Shandong province, foreign cultural trade*

I. INTRODUCTION

The steady progress of the Belt and Road Initiative has opened up wider space for the international trade market of more and more countries and regions, especially for the foreign cultural trade. Foreign cultural trade has the advantages of low cost, low pollution, high output and high added value. It meets the requirements of optimizing the structure of foreign trade, developing low-carbon economy and sustainable economic development. It has become an important competition field and a new growth point of China's foreign trade.

Shandong province is a big province of cultural resources in China, and also an important intersection of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road. In recent years, Shandong province has made great efforts to develop cultural industry and foreign cultural trade, set up special funds to support key cultural trade enterprises and projects, and the total export volume of cultural products and cultural services has increased year by year. However, due to the small scale of trade and unreasonable trade structure, there are few cultural brands and key enterprises with competitive advantages. Therefore, this paper analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of Shandong's foreign cultural trade under the Belt and Road Initiative, and puts forward development countermeasures and suggestions. It is beneficial to promote the development of foreign cultural trade, enhance the influence of Shandong province in the countries and regions along the routes and promote the

development of Shandong's export-oriented economy and the transformation of its economic structure.

II. ADVANTAGES OF DEVELOPING FOREIGN CULTURAL TRADE IN SHANDONG PROVINCE

A. Rich cultural resources

Shandong province has rich cultural resources and cultural deposits. Qilu culture is the core of Shandong culture. It has a long history, including Qi culture and Lu culture. Since the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring States Period, Qilu culture has focused on Confucian culture. Shandong's paper-cut, calligraphy and painting, pottery and other cultural arts are also favored by the international market. Compared with other provinces, Shandong's cultural resources have obvious comparative advantages in foreign cultural trade and are highly recognized internationally.

B. Foreign cultural trade has maintained a good momentum of development

Shandong's foreign cultural trade is developing steadily with a good momentum. The total volume of cultural products trade is increasing year by year, and the scale of trade ranks first in China. In 2018, the import and export of cultural products in Shandong reached 46.1 billion yuan, of which 45.3 billion yuan was exported, ranking fourth in China.

C. A system of cultural industries has taken shape

Shandong province has increased its investment in the cultural industry. The cultural industry system has

basically taken shape and the industrial agglomeration effect has become increasingly prominent. Its products cover various categories such as entertainment supplies, games and animations, arts and crafts, toys, musical instruments and intangible cultural heritage products. In 2019-2020, there were 65 enterprises exporting key cultural products and services in Shandong province, which formed a strong support for the development of Shandong's foreign cultural trade.

D. Government policy support

Shandong province attaches great importance to the development of foreign cultural trade, and forms a foreign cultural exchange model with the government as the leading role, enterprises as the main body, and the whole society participating. It carries out the innovation project of inheriting the excellent culture of Qilu, and promotes the reform of key cultural fields. Starting from 2013, the Shandong provincial government has allocated at least 10 million yuan each year to set up a provincial-level special fund for the development of cultural industry and a specialized fund for cultural trade to increase export subsidies. In 2017, the implementation advice of Shandong province on "integrating into the Belt and Road Initiative, Qilu cultural silk road tour" was officially released, which played a positive guiding role in giving full play to the unique advantages of the province's cultural resources, carrying out the Qilu cultural silk road tour, and enhancing the influence of Shandong province in countries and regions along the route.

III. SHORTAGE OF FOREIGN CULTURAL TRADE IN SHANDONG PROVINCE

A. Markets along the Belt and Road to be developed

By 2017, Shandong had achieved foreign cultural trade with more than 180 countries and regions. The top five export countries are 6.88 billion yuan of the United States, 3.74 billion yuan of the Netherlands, 3.12 billion yuan of Japan, 920 million yuan of South Korea and 760 million yuan of the United Kingdom. Shandong exported 17.05 billion yuan of cultural products to the United States, European Union, Japan, South Korea and other traditional overseas markets, up 77.9 percent year on year. However, exports to the countries along the "the Belt and Road" were only 1.11 billion yuan, with a year-on-year growth of only 10%, as shown in "Fig. 1". The traditional overseas market is still the main cultural trading partner in Shandong province, and the cultural market along the " the Belt and Road " should be further developed.

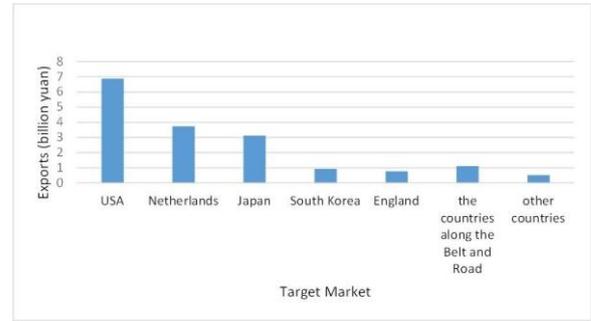


Fig. 1. Export statistics of target market of foreign cultural trade in Shandong province.

B. The structure of foreign cultural trade is unreasonable

When analyzing the structure of foreign cultural trade, products are usually divided into hardware products and software products. Hardware products refer to the carriers and tools used to produce, store and disseminate cultural content, such as game and entertainment equipment, film and television equipment, stage props, etc. Software products refer to cultural content or cultural services, such as online games, movies and TV dramas, animation products, publications, etc. In the cultural trade structure of Shandong province, most of the core cultural products are exported as "hardware". There are few cultural service products that can truly reflect the development level of cultural trade, and the competitiveness of cultural trade is not strong.

According to statistics in the first half of 2017, the import and export volume of cultural products in Shandong province was 20.07 billion yuan, and the top three cultural products in export volume were entertainment equipment and products, arts and crafts and toys. As shown in "Fig. 2", the export volume of entertainment equipment and products is 13.95 billion yuan, accounting for 69.5%, the export volume of arts and crafts is 3.54 billion yuan, accounting for 17.6%, and the export volume of toys is 1.53 billion yuan, accounting for 7.6%. Hardware exports account for almost all the cultural products, while exports of higher-value software products, such as film and television, games, animation and publishing, are still in their infancy.

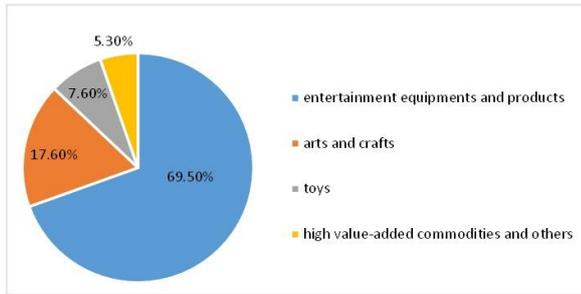


Fig. 2. Distribution of cultural products export in Shandong Province.

C. *There are few key enterprises with brand advantages and competitiveness*

With Shandong province increasing support for cultural trade enterprises, the number of major players in foreign cultural trade has grown steadily. In 2018, there were 3,999 cultural products export enterprises, 1 national cultural export base, 11 national key cultural export enterprises, 3 key projects, 11 provincial cultural trade characteristic service export bases, and 2 Qilu cultural trade overseas centers. Although the number of foreign cultural trade enterprises in Shandong province is increasing year by year, there are still few key enterprises with brand advantages. In addition to the representative enterprises mentioned above, the vast majority of cultural enterprises are mainly engaged in the trade of cultural products, and most of them export low value-added products such as traditional cultural handicrafts. The trade volume of cultural services is very few, lacking international competitiveness.

D. *Lack of foreign cultural trade professionals*

Foreign cultural trade is mainly engaged in trade activities related to cultural products and services, and its core competitiveness is cultural innovation ability, which requires cultural trade talents not only to be familiar with international trade knowledge and practice, but also to have cross-cultural ability and innovation ability. Therefore, China's Ministry of Education has set up the international cultural trade major, which integrates the knowledge of media economy, international trade, cultural studies, economics, communication and other interdisciplinary fields, aiming at the frontier issues and the latest trends in the development of international cultural trade.

Up to now, only the Communication University of China, Beijing International Studies University and a few other colleges and universities offer international cultural trade majors, and the enrollment scale is very limited. With the implementation of "the Belt and Road" Initiative and "going out" strategy of Qilu culture, Shandong province needs a large number of professionals engaged in foreign cultural trade. At present, colleges and universities in Shandong province

have not set up international cultural trade majors, which can only be provided through short-term training by enterprises and the government. The large talent gap is difficult to meet the needs of the international cultural market, which is not conducive to the in-depth and sustainable development of foreign cultural trade.

IV. COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS

The development of foreign cultural trade is inseparable from the active participation of the government, but also depends on the main role of enterprises. At present, Shandong province has made great progress in foreign cultural trade, but it must go through a process of deep tapping, structural adjustment and qualitative change if it wants to become bigger and stronger. In combination with the development requirements of the Belt and Road Initiative, countermeasures and suggestions are proposed from the government and enterprises to realize the development goal of Qilu culture transmission.

A. *The government fully excavates the excellent cultural resources of Qilu*

Foreign cultural trade belongs to international trade, and its international competitiveness is rooted in excellent cultural resources and brand advantages. Shandong province is a major province of cultural resources in China, and many cities and regions have long histories and distinctive traditional culture, especially Confucian culture and its representative figures Confucius, Mencius, Yan Zi, Zeng Zi and other thinkers have written books in Shandong to educate the people, the Confucian culture is profound.

In addition to promoting "Confucian brand" and "Confucius brand", excellent cultural resources such as Qi culture, Taishan culture, Yellow River culture, spring culture and coastal culture in Qilu culture can all follow the road of branding development. In addition, there are more than 40,000 immovable cultural relics, 3 world cultural heritage sites, 101 important heritage site under state protection and 153 national intangible cultural heritage sites. Such huge cultural resources require the overall planning of the government and the standardized business operation of enterprises to fully exploit the excellent cultural resources of Qilu.

B. *Vigorously cultivating foreign cultural trade talents*

In order to achieve Shandong province to become a strong foreign cultural trade province and make Qilu culture go out, innovative cultural trade talents are indispensable. Due to the large shortage of cultural trade talents at present, it is necessary to adopt the mode of "introduction + training" to build an innovative cultural trade talent team with different levels and diversities, so as to promote the co-construction of government, enterprises and universities.

First of all, it is necessary to introduce high-level overseas cultural and trade talents. High-level overseas cultural trade talents are familiar with the commercial operation means of cultural resources and the operation mode of international cultural trade, and can cater to the preferences of overseas target consumer groups to promote Qilu culture communication. Secondly, the government should encourage provincial universities to set up international cultural trade majors and give policy support. The major of international cultural trade is not simply adding cultural courses on the basis of the original major of international trade, but a comprehensive major integrating culture, management, trade, economy, media, history and other disciplines. The training target is international cultural trade talents with cultural creativity, international trade, marketing, foreign language and cross-cultural skills. Colleges and universities should reform their teaching content, write targeted teaching materials, pay attention to the cultivation of students' creative ability and innovative thinking, actively promote Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools, and establish training bases and order training with cultural trade enterprises. Finally, foreign cultural enterprises should establish a mechanism for short-term and long-term training of cultural talents and pay attention to the exchanges between Chinese and foreign cultural enterprises.

C. Establishing diversified marketing channels with cross-border E-commerce as the core

With the help of cross-border e-commerce, foreign cultural trade will form a new model of "Internet + cultural products + cross-border trade". Further integration of cultural products cross-border trade, international culture exhibition services, big data services, cultural creative cultural industry incubation service, cross-border business logistics service, etc., will connect cultural enterprises and consumers, and effectively use the Internet to broaden the cultural products of marketing channels and market coverage, to build the culture trade of the online and offline cross-border electricity chain and industrial chain. Shandong province should speed up the construction of cross-border e-commerce platform for cultural trade, further strengthen the construction of Qilu international cultural trade network, strengthen foreign language publicity and cross-border payment functions, strive to become a cross-border e-commerce service center for cultural trade in the Silk Road Economic Belt, and promote Qilu cultural products to the international market.

D. Increasing the added value of cultural products and optimizing the structure of cultural trade

Shandong province is rich in traditional cultural resources, with a large proportion of handicrafts, such as paper-cuts, kites, shadow puppets, New Year

paintings, dough figurines and so on. These traditional cultural resources are the advantage of foreign cultural trade, but will become the limitation of cultural export if they are inherited but not innovated. The traditional cultural products represented by handicrafts are mostly labor-intensive products with high labor cost but low added value and export profit margin. To develop foreign cultural trade in Shandong province, it is necessary to optimize the cultural trade structure and expand the production and export of core cultural products with high value-added technology.

First of all, cultural enterprises should not only pay attention to the originality and innovation of products, but also pay attention to the development of derivative products to promote the common development of related industries. Secondly, enterprises should also pay attention to the application of high-tech elements in the creation of cultural products, vigorously develop new cultural industries closely combined with high and new technologies, explore new cultural products, and promote the technological content and added value of cultural products. Finally, the government should strongly support innovative cultural products enterprises and their derivatives enterprises to help them build a complete industrial chain, so as to improve the added value of cultural products and obtain higher economic benefits.

E. Cultivating culture brand with competitive advantage

Well-known cultural brands are not only the stepping stone to open the market, but also the powerful motivation for consumers to buy products. At the top of every industry must be globally renowned brand enterprises, which occupy a huge market share and earn high product profits. For example, Hollywood in the United States is synonymous with high-quality films. Consumers' desire to watch Hollywood films is far higher than that of films made in other countries, which is the brand effect. Enterprises should establish brand awareness, pay attention to independent research and development and product innovation, take their own brand road. Secondly, enterprises should enhance communication, combine with each other to realize complementary advantages, build superior enterprises in the upstream and downstream of the industrial chain, shape cultural enterprises with strong international competitiveness, and give full play to their leading role. Third, Shandong province makes full use of its excellent Qilu cultural resources, inherits and innovates cultural products with Qilu characteristics, and actively cooperates with other countries to realize complementary advantages. Finally, the government vigorously promotes the coordinated development of cultural industry and other industries to expand the cultural consumption market.

V. CONCLUSION

Shandong has made great progress in foreign cultural trade, but it must go through a process of digging deep, adjusting the structure and changing radically if it wants to become bigger and stronger. Under the good opportunity of "One Belt And One Road" initiative, Shandong province should give full play to its advantages such as rich cultural resources and obvious location advantages. Use of the opportunities brought about by the initiative, from two levels of government and enterprises, we will develop the cultural trade, actively promote Qilu culture "going out", implement the open economy level of ascension and the province's economic growth mode transformation, build Shandong into the Belt and Road center and an important base for international people-to-people exchanges.

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