

Japan's successful experience in cultural construction and its reference significance for China

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Abstract: In recent years, China has paid more and more attention to the development of cultural industries, and regarding cultural construction during the "14th Five-Year Plan" period, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China put forward: "prosper and develop cultural undertakings and cultural industries, and improve the soft power of national culture". But as is known to all, attention alone is not enough, and the country objectively lacks experience in some areas. However, since the Meiji period, Japan has established a complete system of cultural protection and cultural industry development through the designation of laws and policies and become a cultural power that has attracted worldwide attention, which means their successful experience is of great reference to us.

1. Introduction

Since ancient times, culture has been playing a pivotal role in the development of the country. Internally, culture, politics and economy are intermingled and become an indispensable internal driving force for the development of the country. They are also shaping the character of the nation and forging national cohesion. Externally, culture is an essential business card for the country to base itself on the international stage, both influencing the first impression of a country in the international community, and even affecting the relationship between countries. Entering the 21st century, outside the political and economic arena, we are increasingly seeing the rising status of culture in international competitions, and it has also played an important role in promoting political and economic development. Take the United States as an example, as of 2012, as the world's largest cultural industry power, its cultural industry output value accounted for 25% of total GDP, exceeding the aviation industry and becoming an important pillar of US economic development.^[1] On the one hand, the national traditional culture rooted in history determines people's attitude towards major international emergencies; on the other hand, the modern cultural industry represented by news media often becomes an important public opinion battlefield that influences people's thoughts.

Today, Japan has not only made great achievements in protecting traditional culture, but also formed a folk culture protection system represented by the "Cultural Finance Protection Law". Various festival sacrifices and religious ceremonies have received widespread attention and love at home and abroad; at the same time, in the modern cultural industry, manga, Japanese songs, idols, movies and TV dramas have flourished, attracting a large number of enthusiasts at home and abroad.

However, as a country with the largest cultural heritage and a large amount of intangible cultural heritage defined by UNESCO, although China has a rich historical accumulation in the course of 5,000 years of history and has cultural advantages of multi-ethnic integration, from an international perspective, according to international standards, China is still a weak country in the development of cultural industries. This is not only incompatible with China's cultural advantages, but also with China's international economic status as the world's second-largest economy. At the same time, there are still many deficiencies in the protection of traditional culture in China. Taking drama as an

example, some folk operas are still in a situation of neglect for a long time, lacking substantial protection and living inheritance, and have long been on the verge of disappearing.

Therefore, we can see that understanding, researching, studying and drawing lessons from the advanced experience of Japan's traditional cultural protection system and cultural industry development have very vital practical significance for China's traditional cultural protection and cultural industry revitalization. Through self-learning and improvement, China can effectively solve the current situation that culture has become a "deficiency" restricting development, practically promote national cultural self-confidence, enhance cultural soft power in international competition, and provide continuous endogenous power for development.

2. Historical Evolution of Japan's Cultural Protection and Cultural Industry Development Strategy

2.1 Meiji Period to Before World War II—The Bud of the Consciousness of Traditional Culture Protection and the Breeding of Modern Cultural Industry

Before the middle of the 19th century, under the Tokugawa Shogun, Japan was in a state of seclusion for a long time, and only traded with a few countries, like China and the Netherlands. Later, due to the US Navy opening Japan's doors by force twice, Japan was forced to start to integrate with the international community. Faced with the colonial threat of Western powers, the reformers in Tokugawa Shogunate had hoped that after the reform requirements were not met, they turned to the emperor and supported the Emperor Meiji to win the official throne in 1867.

On the one hand, due to the tense confrontation situation in the country at the beginning of the regime rotation, the Meiji government is eager to emphasize the legitimacy of the emperor's "monarchy divine" through ideological cleansing and reshaping. Therefore, the Meiji government has focused on both improving the status of Shinto religion, a native Japanese religion that emphasizes the concept of the imperial family, and on suppressing the status of Buddhist religion, a foreign religion that had a broad mass base among the people due to government support during the Tokugawa Shogunate period. The two measures eventually led to a nationwide religious reform, and under the misreading of local governments, led to the "Abolition of Buddha Destruction." During this period, a large number of Buddhist cultural relics of great historical significance in Japan, including Buddhist statues and paintings, and temple buildings, were severely damaged, and the Japanese Buddhist community also caused unprecedented chaos because the authorities encouraged monks to crack^[2]. This movement "directly aroused the awareness of the protection of cultural heritage in Japan from the government to the public" and contributed to the promulgation of the "Ancient Weapons and Antiquities Conservation Law" of 1871, which "is generally regarded by the academic community as the beginning of the Japanese historical and cultural heritage protection system."^[3]

On the other hand, on the basis of the education laid by the Edo period, the Meiji government began to "civilize and enlighten" the action. In 1872, the Meiji government promulgated the Proclamation of the School System, which opposed the social ideological trend of "empty talk" and "learning for the country" prevailing in the period of the Shogun, emphasized the self-interest, pragmatism and universal character of education, adopted the French school district system, and popularized basic education and the training of professionals^[4]. At the same time, after the Black ship turmoil, "Outsiders have become more and more in Japan. They not only founded English newspapers in Japan, but also Japanese newspapers to bring brand-new news information into Japanese society."^[5] The arrival of a large number of foreigners has contributed to the introduction of Western culture into the folklore and brought to Japan such advanced Western ideas as "Scientific Democracy" and "Natural Human Rights". Against the backdrop of popular education and the influx of Western cultures, a new generation of young writers in Japan is greatly encouraged. In the 19th century, the Japanese literary scene set off a reform movement, "advocating a standardized writing style, that is, 'language consistency'. This style slowly affected the writing habits of the Japanese, "and finally gave birth to a group of Meiji literati represented by Mori Ogai and Natsume Soseki^[6].

It is in their writing that the veil of Japanese native culture and thought has been unveiled to the outside world. At the same time, Japanese floating world printmaking also began to flow to the western world. Driven by Hayashi Chusei, a student studying in France, and Dingjiro Yamanaka, an art merchant, finally formed a floating world painting boom in the West in the 1870s, which greatly affected impressionist painters in the West during the same period^[7]. However, although Japanese folk culture is moving towards the west with the continuous development of international trade and exchange activities, the Japanese government officials still maintain a consistent conservative attitude towards the spread of culture with the Tokugawa Shogun. For example, there are still strict official controls over the media industry that are similar to those of the Shogunate era. Compared with the media's dissemination of Japanese culture to the outside world, the government obviously "recognizes the importance of the paper media (mainly the newspaper industry) in shaping the image of the government and guiding public opinion, and strives to dominate and control it".^[8] According to the Constitution of the Great Japanese Empire promulgated in 1889, "Japanese subjects have freedom of speech, publication and assembly within the limits of the law"^[9], which means that the freedom of the media industry is limited and temporary, and can be transferred at any time according to the will of the emperor himself or the government. Under such control, the content, thoughts, and forms of newspaper dissemination have been greatly suppressed, and a group of paper media with an official background have grown up with the support of the government.

2.2 After World War II to the present - the establishment and improvement of the traditional cultural protection system and the continuous development of the cultural industry

After World War II, the fire at Horyuji Temple Golden Hall in 1949 "triggered a comprehensive discussion on cultural heritage in Japan, and the whole people unanimously demanded that the Japanese government attach importance to traditional Japanese culture and art, and strictly protect Japan's remaining cultural heritage." ^[10] Against this background, the Japanese government promulgated and implemented the Cultural Finance Protection Law the following year, including "intangible cultural wealth" and material cultural heritage into the officially recognized protection category. After promulgation, the decree made seven major revisions and more than 30 general revisions in 1951, 1954, 1975, 1996, 2002 and 2004, focusing on the improvement of the classification of cultural wealth and the protection system of cultural wealth at the local level^[11], and finally formed a set of cultural wealth protection system with feasibility, concreteness and universal nature. At the same time, in addition to the national system for the protection of cultural relics, the Japanese government also attaches great importance to international cooperation at the level of cultural protection. "It has always attached great importance to and actively committed itself to the application of Japan's cultural heritage as a world cultural heritage." In order to complete related work, it has "specially established a liaison meeting of relevant provincial departments and established a preparatory list". It also actively supports and participates in relevant UNESCO activities and strives to penetrate some of Japan's cultural concepts. Its intangible cultural finance concept has more or less affected the concept of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage^[12].

After the end of World War II, Japan was plagued with holes, and the focus of its national development strategy was to quickly restore the Japanese economy. In addition to restoring the primary and secondary industries, the Japanese government is also committed to promoting the tertiary industry. Since the 1970s, "Japanese nationals' awareness of the necessity of strengthening the promotion of traditional culture and promoting academic exchanges has begun to increase^[13]". With the great improvement of the material living standard of Japanese citizens in the 1980s, the richness of material life has stimulated the higher requirements of citizens for spiritual living standards, which has greatly stimulated the development of Japan's domestic cultural industry. At the same time, Japan began to export contemporary popular culture to the world. Entering the 21st century, the Japanese government recognizes the importance of pop culture in building a cultural country, so it has launched a large number of projects to promote Japanese pop culture and incorporate it into the soft power of Japanese culture. Under the dual stimulation of government intervention and the popularization of the Internet at the beginning of the century, Japanese culture

has greatly accelerated worldwide, attracting a large number of overseas audiences represented by young people in terms of animation and comics, pop music, fashion of clothing, and food trends^[14].

3. Current Situation of Japanese Cultural Protection and Cultural Industry Development

3.1 Cultural Protection System——Focus on the Law on the Protection of Cultural Finance

After more than 70 years of development and improvement, Japan has formed five categories of cultural treasures, namely, tangible cultural treasures, intangible cultural treasures, folklore cultural treasures, monuments and traditional buildings as the object of protection. The Department of Culture of the Ministry of Culture and the three museums directly under its jurisdiction (Tokyo National Museum, Kyoto National Museum, Nara National Museum) and two research institutes directly under its jurisdiction (Tokyo National Cultural Finance Research Institute, Nara National Cultural Finance Research Institute) as the main administrative organizations^[15], are jointly developed by the government, cultural finance owners, civil society and all citizens, and have detailed legal norms, system supervision, and financial protection systems that include procedures for appointment, registration, selection, and active use. On this basis, all Japanese people have participated in cultural protection, and successful cultural protection experiences have emerged, represented by the "Xionggou Family House" in Daejeon City, Shimane Prefecture, the "Tibetan Field" site in Akita City, Akita Prefecture, and the Shiriji City Museum in Niigata Prefecture, Niigata Prefecture^[16].

On the other hand, focusing on international traditional cultural protection exchanges and cooperation, the Japanese government has also made many successful attempts. With regard to the application of native culture and in response to the "three ones" principle of the UNESCO Keynes Resolution (i.e. "restrictions on national declarations with more World Heritage sites, one country can only declare one item a year; special support is given to the declarations of States parties that do not have World Heritage sites"), in response to the restrictions on the application of Japanese heritage sites, the relevant parties of Japan have made timely and flexible adjustments to the thinking and strategies of applying for heritage sites when suffering setbacks by virtue of the strict examination of the Japanese government and relevant departments, the strict planning of the location of the candidate projects to be applied for, and the rigorous inspection of experts and scholars in relevant fields in Japan, which has significantly improved the efficiency and success rate of Japan's application for heritage sites^[17]. At the same time, Japan also cooperated with China and South Korea to study how to protect cultural heritage from environmental pollution, cooperated with relevant Chinese parties to study and protect ancient Asian capital sites, and organized a Japan-China joint research and international cultural heritage cooperation project aimed at restoration and protection with the Dunhuang Academy of China, etc.^[16], accumulated experience in collaboration, exchange and research, and applied it to the protection, restoration and research of Japanese cultural relics.

3.2 Cultural Industry Development——Focusing on the "Cool Japan" Strategy

The connotation of Japan's current "Cool Japan" cultural strategy can be divided into three aspects: chassis building strategy, industrial enrichment strategy, and overseas development strategy^[18]. The Baseboard Building Strategy focuses on the training and support of domestic cultural industry professionals, the shaping and marketing of local cultural brands and the transformation of creativity to create a solid foundation for the development of the Japanese cultural industry superstructure and ensure the sustainability of the prosperity and development of the cultural industry; The Industrial Enrichment Strategy focuses on the shaping of the 'Cool Japan' brand, promotes the transformation of cultural value of cultural industry products to actual economic value, and promotes the all-round protection, support and publicity of Japanese local brands, so as to promote the close integration of cultural industry development and economic development; the Overseas Development Strategy aims to enhance the overseas influence of Japanese cultural soft power, and on the one hand, promotes the Japanese culture to 'go out' through

various specific means, and on the other hand, attracts tourists from all over the world travel to Japan and experience Japanese culture up close.

Through the above channels, Japan has achieved great success in the development of the cultural industry. "According to data released earlier by the Japan Trade Revitalization Conference, in 2003, the total revenue of Japanese cartoons and related products sold to the United States was \$436 million, which was four times the total revenue of Japanese steel exported to the United States. The animation industry in a broad sense actually accounts for more than 10 percentage points of Japan's GDP, and has become a profitable industry that surpasses the automobile industry."^[19] According to statistics, 61,000 people were employed in the cultural industry in Japan in 1995, accounting for about 9.6 percent of all jobs in Japan. From 1990 to 1995, employment in the cultural industry increased by 5.3%, while all industries in Japan increased by only 3.6%. The cultural industry accounted for a large proportion of the national employment share^[20].

4. Enlightenment of "Japanese Wisdom" for China's Cultural Protection and Cultural Industry Development

As neighbors of the East Asian cultural circle, Japan and Chinese culture have many commonalities: China and Japan have extensive cultural connotations and are jointly invaded by Confucian culture. The mutual influence of thousands of years has caused many similarities in the traditional cultures of the two countries. At the same time, because of the huge amount of cultural heritage, they have encountered similar bumps on the road of applying for heritage. Since modern times, China and Japan have been colonized by the West, so their native cultures have been greatly impacted and challenged by Western culture. Although in the Second World War, the two countries, as warring parties, one was the victor and the other was the victor of the war, the degree of the reshaping effect of the war on the economy, politics and culture of the two countries is indistinguishable; both China and Japan are facing cooperation opportunities and huge challenges initiated by cultural giants represented by Hollywood and Disney in the United States. Based on the above four points, neighboring Japan, which has achieved great success in the current cultural industry development strategy, can obviously be used as a reference object for China's cultural protection and industrial development. Its reference significance is mainly in the following aspects.

4.1 Protection of traditional culture and heritage application: emphasize fine and efficient, specific feasibility and participation of the whole people.

4.1.1 Fine and efficient

Although restricted by the "Keynes Resolution", Japan still successfully declared the cultural heritage such as Mount Fuji with its strict screening and review in China and flexible and variable heritage application strategies. In recent years, we have often been embarrassed by the malicious robbery of traditional culture by other countries. We have learned from Japanese experience, improved the efficiency of applying for heritage through more meticulous and efficient examination and approval, and more flexible ideas to correct the name of our cultural heritage.

4.1.2 Specific feasibility

With the Law on the Protection of Cultural Property, although the current Law of the People's Republic of China on Intangible Cultural Heritage clearly stipulates that "the state encourages and supports citizens, legal persons and other organizations to participate in the protection of intangible cultural heritage", it does not clearly and clearly stipulate specific responsibilities and powers. Due to the vast characteristics of our country, the current protection system is still extensive, the specific implementation is difficult, the feasibility is low, and the results are often not satisfactory. Take Fujian Yongan Grand Opera as an example. Although this kind of local small drama was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list as early as May 2006, it is still in an endangered period, and the situation of no one has not changed because of national recognition.

4.1.3 Participation of the whole people

Due to the improper ideological trend of the New Cultural Movement and the Cultural Revolution, the people have long had a stereotyped negative impression of traditional culture. Although with the emphasis on cultural self-confidence in the country since the 21st century, the people's recognition of traditional culture has become higher and higher, but the categories of traditional culture that have changed the endangered situation because of this trend of thought are still very few, and the current active behavior of some traditional culture is still relatively limited, and it has not really penetrated into the core of culture, so it will inevitably fall into the shackles of consumerism. Taking the popular Hanfu culture in recent years as an example, most of the people's current understanding of it is limited to patterns and shapes, and they may know little about the deep connotations such as history and meaning behind it. However, we understand that it is not possible to complete the real protection of Hanfu culture by buying a Hanfu. Therefore, we should still focus on deepening and expanding the participation of the whole people, carry out more in-depth research, protection and popular science education on the traditional culture categories that are now protected, pay more and more attention to the traditional culture categories that have not been protected, attract the participation of social organizations by relaxing the examination and approval system, and build a cultural protection environment like Japan that is "top-down" (that is, government-led) and "bottom-up" (that is, the participation of all sectors of society).

4.2 Activities of traditional culture: Emphasize inclusive, open, calm and rational attitudes and close integration with modern cultural industries.

On the one hand, in the face of foreign cultures, we should take a cautious view. We should not reject all opportunities to tolerate and absorb advanced cultures and feel the cultural diversity of the world in order to avoid potential and possible risks. We should treat foreign excellent cultures with the attitude of foreign friends we look forward to treating Chinese culture. On the other hand, we know that if traditional culture is only protected without trying to use it actively, it will eventually derail from the modern cultural industry and eventually be eliminated by the flood of time. To this end, we can make use of traditional culture from multiple angles through various channels such as cultural tourism, cultural experience, cultural science popularization, and cultural creativity, so that traditional culture can glow in the new era.

4.3 Construction of Modern Cultural Industry: Exert force both inside and out.

Internally, it is crucial for us to prioritize the comprehensive protection and strategic development of local brands. We must also underscore the significance of intellectual property rights and enhance relevant laws and regulations, in order to severely combat the widespread issue of plagiarism in modern society. Simultaneously, we must empower cultural and creative workers to think outside the box and take bold actions, by relaxing restrictions and fostering a more conducive environment for creativity.

Externally, we should offer incentives, encouragement, and recognition to attract individuals, organizations and groups versed in both Chinese and Western cultural contexts. This will enable them to spontaneously promote Chinese culture to the wider world in a way that can be easily understood, accepted, and identified by the Western world. In this way, we can effectively present a comprehensive and modern cultural image of China as a cultural powerhouse.

5. Conclusion

Japan has experienced many years of development and perfection. On the one hand, it has formed a feasible and detailed traditional cultural inheritance and protection system around the "Cultural Finance Protection Law", on the other hand, it has taken into account the development of modern cultural industries, drawn inspiration from traditional folk customs, combined with the development trend of modern culture in the world, and promoted Japanese culture to become a "cool Japan" that affects the world.

China is on the march of the Second Centennial Plan. To build a modern power in the new era that is "prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful", the power of "civilization" is indispensable. This article only starts from a similar East Asian country, Japan, the angle is limited, but we believe that adhering to the concept that "the stones of other mountains can attack jade" and deeply studying the specific paths of cultural protection and industrial development in different countries, China will certainly be able to get out of the socialist cultural system with Chinese characteristics, effectively improve the cultural self-confidence of the Chinese people, and truly become a "cool China" that inherits the 5,000-year Chinese civilization and opens up the new era of Chinese culture.

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