

# *Innovative Development of Fujian Marine Culture from the Perspective of the Maritime Community with a Shared Future*

Da Li<sup>1</sup>, Yaozhao Zhong<sup>2,\*</sup>, Feng Zhang<sup>2</sup>, Lei Wang<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>International College, Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University, Fuzhou, Fujian, 350002, China

<sup>2</sup>College of Physics and Electronic Information Engineering, Minjiang University, Fuzhou, Fujian, 350108, China

\*Corresponding author

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**Abstract:** Under the background of constructing the Maritime Community with a Shared Future and promoting the integration of marine culture, Fujian is the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Core Area. The thesis takes Fujian Marine culture as the research object by combining literature research and case study methods. Fujian marine culture in the historical, cultural and consciousness categories is revealed. Based on the commonality of marine culture and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, the innovative development in the process of implementing the strategic concept of the Maritime Community with a Shared Future is carried out. The Fujian marine cultural heritage represented by ‘Quanzhou: The World Ocean Trade Center of Song and Yuan Dynasties in China’ and ‘Mawei: The City of Chinese Ship Administration Culture’, as well as the cultural products derived from them, have integrated culture and science and technology, and have given equal importance to inheritance and activation. Its brand effect has greatly enhanced the dissemination of Chinese marine culture, and also represents the innovative development direction of marine culture in the new era.

## 1. Introduction

Marine culture is an important component of Chinese traditional culture. Ancient sages discussed the sea, literati and scholars viewed the tides, and the Silk Road connected the world. The Chinese nation has never ceased to recognize, appreciate, and strategize the ocean. Chinese marine culture has presented outward, open, and diverse characteristics in its thousands of years of ocean practice, making it a unique charm in traditional culture. China has proposed the new era of cultural development direction of promoting the integration of marine culture based on the concept of the Maritime Community with a Shared Future. Fully exploring and constructing excellent Chinese marine culture is an important cornerstone for participating in cultural integration and promoting cultural self-confidence. Fujian, as the core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, has abundant marine cultural resources. Su Wenjing [1] discussed Fujian marine culture from the

perspective of historical development, pointing out that Fujian marine culture has a unique commercial spirit. Zhao Junyao [2] revealed the source of Fujian ship culture and its marine culture. Yang Hongyun et al. [3] explored how Fujian marine culture advantages can help build the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Deep exploration of the rich connotations and innovative practices of Fujian marine culture, enhancement of Fujian marine culture communication, activation of Fujian marine culture innovation, and promotion of marine culture integration to build Maritime Community with a Shared Future for mankind are the epochal propositions to be considered in the new starting point. This paper intends to investigate Fujian marine culture in the new era of building Maritime Community with a Shared Future, combining literature research and case study methods, to analyze the innovative development of Fujian marine culture in the process of implementing the strategic concept of Maritime Community with a Shared Future, as well as the cultural brands of ‘Quanzhou: World Ocean Trade Center of Song and Yuan Dynasties in China’ and ‘Mawei: Chinese Ship Administration Culture City’ which are integrated with cultural and scientific creation, and their significant role in enhancing the communication of Chinese marine culture, exploring the innovative development and creative transformation of marine culture.

## **2. The Strategic Positioning of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Core Area**

In March 2015, the National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce of China released the Vision and Action for Promoting the Joint Construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, which explicitly proposed support for the construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Core Area in Fujian. This strategic positioning has both historical and current support. Fujian was the hub of the ancient Maritime Silk Road, and Quanzhou, Zhangzhou, Fuzhou successively became important hubs for maritime commerce in the Song and Yuan Dynasties. Fujian was also a mirror for the Western world to observe China in modern times, and a window for China to connect with maritime civilization. With the reform and opening up, Fujian businessmen seized the opportunity of the times, going north and south, and the prosperity of outward-oriented maritime trade was restored. It can be said that the development of Fujian marine economy has nurtured its marine culture, which in turn has become an important internal driving force for the former.

The strategic positioning of Fujian as the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Core Area is conducive to forming a cohesive force based on maritime culture and historical origins with countries along the Maritime Silk Road. Marine culture is the human understanding, concept, thought and consciousness of the ocean, including the cognition of the natural laws of the ocean, its strategic value and role, as well as a series of legal systems, policy regulations, customs and habits, literature and art, etc., which can be manifested as material and immaterial cultural achievements, various lifestyles towards the ocean, and creative imagination and pattern setting about the ocean.[4] The countries along the Maritime Silk Road are mostly maritime countries, and the marine cultural connotations and characteristics such as adventurousness, extroversion, pioneering, enterprising, tolerance and mystery are easily interactive with Fujian marine culture. The origin of the South Island language family and the Southeast Asian South Island language family, the acceptance of Zheng He culture by Southeast Asian and South Asian countries, and the Islamic cultural sites in Fuzhou, Quanzhou and Putian all show that Fujian is an important source of cultural exchanges or cultural diversity with Southeast Asian and South Asian countries. By focusing on marine culture, exploring the cultural commonalities between Fujian and countries along the Maritime Silk Road, constructing a common cooperation foundation, seeking common cultural cognition, and thus forming regional cultural cohesion.

It is of great significance to delve into and integrate the marine cultural resources of Fujian in order to construct the core area of the Maritime Silk Road. Fujian marine civilization, dating back to the Neolithic Age, has been tempered and accumulated through the Maritime Silk Road since the Tang and Song Dynasties, and has been shaped by the natural environment and historical culture, with its rich cultural connotations and far-reaching influence, including maritime culture, Min-business culture, multi-religious culture, and immigrant culture. It is manifested in the marine cultural landscape such as marine folklore, marine archaeology, Mazu belief, and immigrant trade. Connecting Fujian marine culture in terms of history, culture, and consciousness, based on the commonality of marine culture and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road, and pushing it into the practical field is a feasible path to practice the Maritime Community with a Shared Future and promote the integration of marine culture.

### **3. Promoting the Spread of Fujian Marine Culture**

The strategic position of ‘the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Core Area’ has set high expectations for Fujian's ‘Going to the Sea’ development in the new era. In the process of deepening the Maritime Power strategy, China has realized the importance of the Soft Power of the ocean, focusing on constructing a marine cultural system from the aspects of theoretical innovation, practical application, and service decision-making, so as to enhance the development of marine culture. The development of marine culture includes many elements such as cultural communication, cultural innovation, cultural tolerance, and cultural exploration, which is the key to building a marine cultural power and also the basis for promoting the integration of marine culture. The value orientation of openness, tolerance, harmony, and enterprising of marine culture, as well as its spiritual connotations of pioneering, mobility, and commerciality, are the basic qualities for its participation in international cultural integration and the construction of national soft power.[5] As an important manifestation of its development, the communication of marine culture is also the most effective booster for the integration of marine culture.

The international communication of Fujian marine culture is the necessary path for enhancing cultural soft power and constructing international discourse power under the new civilization form, as well as a new era topic that needs to be discussed. Cultural soft power is the influence, cohesion, absorption, innovation, and communication power that a country or region has based on culture, as well as the competitiveness and influence generated from it.[3] When the centennial changes overlap with the most widespread epidemic of the century, China's economy and the world economy are facing drastic changes, and cultural soft power will become a firm rock to cope with the severe and complex international situation and the huge risks and challenges that follow, and become an important ruler to maintain the sustainable development of the region and measure the comprehensive strength of the region.

The ‘Quanzhou: the world ocean trading center of Song and Yuan Dynasties in China’ has applied for World Cultural Heritage. This is an important step taken by Fujian marine culture to participate in the construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and to participate in the integration of marine culture. The ruins of the administrative institutions of marine commerce and trade in the Song and Yuan Dynasties, the remains of key facilities such as city gates, city walls, and road networks, the religious buildings and statues of diverse communities, the historical sites of cultural monuments, and the water and land transportation network composed of bridges, wharves and navigation towers, reflect the highly integrated overseas trade system and diversified social system of Quanzhou in the Song and Yuan Dynasties. [6] It showed the world the historical picture of the world maritime trade center of Song and Yuan China, conveyed the Chinese model of ‘prospering to the sea, diversity and mutual trust’, and demonstrated the cultural concept of

openness, inclusiveness, co-prosperity and symbiosis. [7] The successful application of Quanzhou as a World Cultural Heritage reflects the international communication power of Fujian marine culture based on both historical and current supports, and also releases the vitality of China's traditional excellent marine culture. It shows the world's acceptance of the historical maritime trading scene centered in China and the exchange of East and West marine civilizations, and is a vivid illustration of China's participation in writing the history of marine civilization development and constructing a new form of marine civilization. The China Model of 'Rising to the Sea and Mutual Trust' and the marine culture concept of 'Openness, Inclusiveness and Mutual Prosperity' demonstrated by Quanzhou World Heritage are the best interpretations of the Maritime Community with a Shared Future.

The Maritime Community with a Shared Future is both a political concept and a development concept, embodying the natural wisdom and humanistic care that contain human well-being. The Construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road is a creative and comprehensive practice of the Marine Fate Community. The construction of the Maritime Silk Road requires the development of the blue economy, but also the promotion of cultural integration. Only by achieving recognition in the cultural field can public opinion be guided, cultural differences and misunderstandings in economic cooperation be eliminated, and mutual understanding and mutual benefit be achieved, laying a solid foundation for economic cooperation. [3] Economic is the material manifestation, and culture is the spiritual source. The development of the blue economy will eventually lead to the cultural integration of the ocean. Exploring the theoretical level and consciousness of the Maritime Community with a Shared Future and constructing the common values of the countries and regions along the Maritime Silk Road is the core essence of the development and promotion of the ocean culture in the new era and new journey.

#### **4. Activate Marine Cultural Innovation**

From a macro perspective, cultural communication is devoted to the formation of cultural identity, the formation of common values, and the enhancement of regional influence. Figuratively speaking, as a cultural carrier, the innovative vitality and brand effect of cultural products will significantly affect cultural communication. As the bearer of marine culture, marine cultural heritage presents the characteristics of a new era of integration of cultural creativity and scientific and technological innovation.

In recent years, Fujian Province has been based on the rich and excellent local marine cultural resources, striving to activate the innovation of marine culture, committed to the development and protection of marine cultural resources, and developing cultural and creative industries. The innovative development and creative transformation of Mawei ship culture is a successful case of marine culture construction in our province.

Mawei District of Fuzhou has architectural complexes such as Luoxing Pagoda, Zhaozhong Temple, Zhongpo Fort, Marine Workshop, Painting Academy, Majishan Mountain, and shipbuilding relics such as the former site of Mawei Shipyard. In recent years, focusing on the overall requirements of 'leaving treasures, activating relics, excavating connotations and displaying style', Mawei District has built the 'Mawei: China Shipping Administration Cultural City' with the Shipping Administration Gezhuyuan as the cultural core area, and at the same time relying on these buildings, cultural relics and neighbourhoods, it has developed ship administration study trips, created and performed the Fujian opera 'Majiang Soul', so that ship administration can be transformed into a vivid classroom that can be felt, heard and seen, and the relevant relics of ship administration will be upgraded from industrial relics to an important carrier to inherit the spirit of ship administration, and protect the historical context and urban memory. [8]

From material culture to spiritual heritage and then to educational travel, the ‘Mawei: China Ship Administration Culture City’ has opened up an innovative development path for the heritage of marine culture. Mawei Ship Administration is a common marine cultural heritage across the Taiwan Strait. Further exploring the modern ship administration sources on both sides of the strait, conducting cultural relic collection for compatriots on both sides of the strait and overseas ship administration descendants, establishing a ship administration historical material database based on digital humanities, using AI technology to reproduce the scene of ship administration before and after school practice and important ship administration historical events, exploring a new model of cross-strait ship administration educational travel, expanding the influence of the ‘Cross-Strait Ship Administration Culture Seminar’, and internalizing the aggregation of marine culture into national cohesion and centripetal force is the innovative development direction of Fujian marine cultural resources in the new era.

The Shell Hill Site of Minhou Tanshishan and the Yuan Dynasty Sea Ship Site of Zhangzhou Shengbeiyu are also treasures in Fujian maritime cultural heritage. The site of Tanshishan, an ancient civilization in the Neolithic period, was selected as one of the ‘Top 100 Archaeological Discoveries in a Hundred Years’ organized by the Archaeological Society of China and China Cultural Heritage News, and has high archaeological research value and distinctive regional marine cultural characteristics. Archaeological results show that the pre-Qin Min ethnic group originated in the Min River basin, and its cultural characteristics are similar to the Fengbitou culture in Taiwan, China, and the age is similar, and some cultural factors even have many connections with the prehistoric culture of many countries and regions in the entire South Pacific region where the Austronesian language family is located. [9] The opening of the exhibition ‘Maritime Pearl: Underwater Archaeological Achievements of Yuan Dynasty Sea Vessels at Shengbeiyu Site in Zhangzhou’ at Zhangzhou Museum, Fujian Province on September 21, 2022 will bring to light an important cultural symbol of the ancient Maritime Silk Road - Longquan celadon, which has been dormant for more than seven hundred years. The excavation of the Shengbeiyu site will provide important archaeological data for the study of Southeast Asian maritime trade, export of Longquan celadon, and the Maritime Silk Road in the late Yuan Dynasty. This has great significance for the research of ancient cultural exchanges between Fujian and Taiwan, and the Austronesian language regions, as well as for seeking the historical origins and cultural identity of Fujian maritime culture along the Maritime Silk Road [10].

Two-dimensional, static museum exhibition models are no longer sufficient to reflect the new era development requirements of Fujian maritime culture represented by the Tanshishan and Shengbeiyu archaeological sites. It is necessary to take the case of Mawei Ship Administration Culture as an example, to carry out a 3D effect real-scene exhibition of Tanshishan archaeological site, and to combine archaeological results and modern technology to reproduce the life forms of Fujian coastal aborigines, enriching the situational experience of visitors. The development, protection, exhibition and dissemination of Shengbeiyu shipwreck archaeological site can be combined with Yuan Dynasty social culture, folk customs, sea merchant legends, and the development of navigation technology and other historical materials to create a real-scene site, develop theatrical scripts, escape room projects and other cultural and tourism projects with the theme of Yuan Dynasty sea merchant exploration, and launch related film and television works or stage plays.

The 14th Five-Year Plan and the 2035 Vision and Objectives Outline designated by the Chinese government proposed to enhance the level of marine cultural tourism development. Fujian province should further integrate excellent marine cultural resources, seek creative utilization of marine cultural tourism resources, and innovate research and development of marine cultural products. Adhering to the orientation of tourist experience, combined with regional marine archaeological

achievements, folk culture, and advantageous industries, we should further enhance the cultural value and regional characteristics of cultural tourism products and services, and enrich the themes, types, crafts, and styles of marine cultural products. We should empower marine cultural creativity for transportation hubs such as airports, docks, high-speed railways, and subways, and empower marine cultural connotations for large-scale exhibitions such as the Xiamen International Marine Week and the Fuzhou Fisheries Expo. We should also expand the publicity path of marine culture.

Academic research is the original driving force of cultural innovation, and enhancing the ability of marine cultural research is essential for the comprehensive construction and innovative development of marine culture. The establishment of the College of Marine Culture and Law at Jimei University in 2021 and the College of History and Cultural Heritage at Xiamen University in 2022 are both reflections of the new era development requirements of Chinese characteristic humanities disciplines. The philosophical interpretation of Chinese marine culture, the history of marine civilization from an Eastern perspective, the development and evolution of the Maritime Silk Road, the selection of marine literature reading materials from the perspective of new liberal arts, and the construction of high-quality marine cultural courses for primary and secondary schools and higher education institutions are all basic construction of marine culture that needs to be promoted, and also the research and study soil for cultivating marine cultural innovation.

## 5. Conclusions

The development of marine affairs has always been the development concept upheld by the Fujian government, and it is also the practice basis of Fujian's strategic positioning as the Core Area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Docking Fujian marine culture in the historical, cultural and ideological categories with the commonality of marine culture and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, and pushing it into the practical category is a feasible path for implementing the Maritime Community with a Shared Future and promoting marine cultural integration. The Maritime Community with a Shared Future is not only a common community of economy, security and ecological environment, but also a common community of marine culture. This cultural community has cultural connotations such as openness, harmony, tolerance and enterprising, based on common values such as sustainable development and ecological humanism, displaying the cultural concept of coexistence with the sea, containing the philosophical wisdom of Chinese sages 'Dao Fa Zi Ran' (following the law of nature), and conveying the value orientation of common development and positive feedback between man and the sea. The Quanzhou World Heritage Site showcases the Chinese model of 'Rising to the Sea and Mutual Trust' and the ocean culture concept of 'Open and Inclusive, Co-Prosperity', which is the best interpretation of the Maritime Community with a Shared Future. In the new era of marine culture construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Core Area, we should take the grand framework of the Maritime Community with a Shared Future as our foothold, draw spiritual sustenance from traditional culture, and deeply explore Fujian's excellent marine cultural products represented by the Mawei ship administration culture, the Tanshishan Site, and the Shengyubei Shipwreck. We should integrate culture and science, emphasize both inheritance and activation, activate the innovation of marine culture, and enhance the communication of marine culture, so as to promote the innovative development of Chinese excellent marine culture.

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