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## **INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL CONCEPTS ON ECONOMIC BEHAVIORS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF COASTAL TOURISM DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINA AND FRANCE**

**Summary:** *The development trend of international tourism is to develop coastal tourism economy. China, with the temperate and subtropical marine climate suitable for vacation, like France, has rich coastal tourism resources, a large number of islands and a variety of coastal cultures. However, China's coastal areas are not so successful as the coastal areas in France which have become international hot scenic spots. The tourism industry in China's coastal areas has not become a pillar industry for the local economic development. There are two main reasons: on one hand, the local people are lack of ecological protection awareness which results in serious environmental pollution; on the other hand, the local people remain backward in humanistic and cultural concepts, and the social behaviors are short of cultural values.*

**Key words:** *natural ecology, humanistic and cultural environment, contrast between China and France, regional economy, spiritual value.*

Although China is also rich in tourism resources and has long stretches of coastlines with the temperate and subtropical climate and with the length up to thousands of kilometers, its tourism in coastal areas is far less developed than France. France is the world's largest tourism country: it receives 70 million tourists and gains an income of more than 100 billion US dollars from tourism each year. There are over 3,600 tourism offices all over the country. In the coastal areas, for example, the French lay great emphasis on the protection of nature and cultural heritage, to build the tourism into a green economy chain, from which, foreign tourists can not only enjoy the Mediterranean natural scenery, but also experience the rich and colorful French traditional culture. In contrast, however, China's coastal areas have failed to form golden areas to attract international tourists; moreover, their domestic tourists are also reducing, for instance, the tourists in Sanya of Hainan Province, Xinglong, Boao and other places are reducing by 10% in recent years. Some former tourists from Russia have changed their vacation destinations to Thailand. Main reasons of the changes lie in the following aspects: firstly, most of China's off-shore waters are occupied by aquaculture, resulting in serious pollution of seawater.

Secondly, the local governments take the real estate as the pillar industry. For example, in Hainan Island, the real estate economy accounts for 40% of the local GDP, but the proportion of tourism to the local GDP is only close to 5%. Thirdly,

the scenic route across the coastline is cut off by the real estate development projects, and a lot of ancient villages & towns and buildings have been demolished. Fourthly, the coastal areas have experienced a population boom and rising prices, thus their quality of life declines. Additionally, the local people are lack of the cultural awareness conforming to the social and international tourisms.

For China, the successful experience of the tourism industry in France is worthy of learning. Firstly, the local governments administer the tourist attractions at a high level, and they provide superb tourism services. Secondly, the cultural characteristics are as important as the natural sceneries: take the coastal area in Provence as an example, in addition to relying on the unique Mediterranean environment, the tourism in this place attaches more importance to the customs in the coastal areas, the beautiful residential buildings, and the various cultural & artistic activities throughout the urban and rural areas. Highly civilized and culturally rich lifestyles of the local residents, such as wine culture and vanilla culture, are also highlights of the local tourism. Thirdly, there are strict policies regarding the protection of cultural heritages: France promulgated the *Malraux Act* in 1962 to protect ancient villages & towns and ancient architectures. Moreover, France has established Coastal Commissions in coastal areas to take charge of marine environment and tourism facilities. Fourthly, the natural clear waters, comfortable social services and ancient cultural practices are integrated harmoniously.

In addition to the cultural tradition, national consciousness, civilized education and other factors, the local governments' economic policies and management are the key to the development of coastal tourism. This summer, the author carried out a field study in the coastal areas of Provence, France and found that some provisions of the local government are good examples for Chinese administration authorities to follow:

- Firstly, real estate development projects are not allowed to be carried out in tourism areas, which can not only avoid the destruction of ecological environment in the coastal areas, but can also help to guarantee a balanced population.
- Secondly, aquaculture projects are forbidden in French coastal waters, which can help to avoid the seawater pollution. The tourism benefit from clean sea is far greater than the economic income from the aquaculture industry.
- Thirdly, the municipal governments do not allow any local resident to build houses arbitrarily or make unauthorized conversion of traditional houses, which has effectively protected the local ancient architectural style and the traditional customs of ancient towns. Walking in the small towns with antique multicultural characteristics, such as Fayangsi, Seyans and Krass, is like stepping into the ancient European history. Many of these small towns retain the soul of France and the essence of European culture.
- Fourthly, citizens have a high degree of civilized manner and environmental awareness, for instance, courtesy and smiling service. Local residents consciously abide by the Government's regulations on waste classification.

**If China wants to develop coastal tourism, it is urgent for the government to take the following measures:**

- Firstly, to restore the clean environment of the oceans, to stop offshore aquaculture, to subsidize the fishermen by the state, and to replace the aquaculture economy with the tourism economy, just as the policy of “returning land for farming to forestry” implemented in rural China in previous years.
- Secondly, to stop the development of real estate projects in the coastal areas, and to dismantle the unauthorized expansion or construction of houses.
- Thirdly, local governments have the responsibility to monitor the competence level of tourism agencies, and have the obligation to cultivate the social moral and cultural protection awareness of citizens.

**Based on the above analysis, we draw the following conclusions:**

1. Cultural resources are the most valuable economic vitality; therefore, the development of the economy cannot be at the cost of culture and ecological environment. In addition to China, the tourism management experience in coastal areas of France is also worthy of learning for other countries with inland cultural resources, such as Russia, Ukraine, Poland and other countries.
2. China's annual outbound tourists reach 83.182 million, and they are potential international tourism resources for France. Consequently, it is necessary for France to increase the theme travel and private customized projects for Chinese tourists, such as travels with cultural theme and art theme for artists, and the travels on economic investigations for entrepreneurs. While it is a need for China's tourism industry to increase the medium-to-high end tourism projects, and to cultivate tourism professional teams with a high level.
3. It is necessary to establish tourism cooperation between France and China. China is rich in coastal tourism resources, but is lack of management experience. It is advisable to establish Sino-French joint venture tourist attractions in China's coastal areas and introduce the French management model, to expand the international influence of tourism in the coastal areas. Meanwhile, it is recommended to establish reciprocal intercity tourism cooperation between China and France.
4. The success of the tourism industry in France lies on the level of civilization of the whole society, the citizens' cultural consciousness, and more importantly, the emphasis of tourism culture by the national government.

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