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**«SILK ROAD TOURISM» – RESEARCH ON THE ECONOMIC
DIVIDENDS OF CULTURAL TOURISM BETWEEN CHINA AND BELARUS
UNDER THE «BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE»**

The relevance of the topic of the article is to determine the ways of development of cultural tourism and the tools of functioning in the economic transformation of the two countries of the Republic of Belarus and China.

Keywords: *economic cooperation, Silk Road Tourism, cultural tourism*

In 2013, President Xi Jinping proposed the joint construction of the “Belt and Road” initiative for the first time. On October 18, 2023, General Secretary Xi Jinping announced China’s support for high-quality cooperation in his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the third «Belt and Road» International Cooperation Summit Forum. Among the eight actions for building the «Belt and Road», the sixth is to support people-to-people exchanges. On the basis of the Silk Road International Theater, Art Festival, Museum, Art Gallery, and Library Alliance, the Silk Road Tourism Cities Alliance was established [1]. 58 cities at home and abroad in 26 countries have joined the alliance as founding members, including 22 domestic cities such as Xi’an in Shaanxi, Dunhuang in Gansu, Luoyang in Henan, Ningbo in Zhejiang, and Kashgar in Xinjiang, as well as Minsk in Belarus, Hurgada in Egypt, and Seme in Iran. 36 overseas cities including South Africa, Iguazu in Brazil, and Pointe-Noire in Congo (Brazzaville) [2].

«Silk Road Tourism» expands new space for international cultural tourism economic cooperation, adds impetus to the exploration and establishment of an international rules system for cultural tourism economics, promotes the construction of a new development pattern, and promotes the «Belt and Road» joint construction of national cultural tourism economic development.

1. «Silk Road Tourism» is a new highlight of the China-Belarus cultural tourism economy in the joint construction of the “Belt and Road Initiative”. Silk Road Tourism plays an important role in the cultural tourism economy of China and Belarus. For example, on the Silk Road Economic Belt, China and Belarus carry out tourism cooperation and jointly develop tourist routes and attractions. For example, the two countries can cooperate to develop cultural sites, historical buildings and natural landscapes along the Silk Road to attract more tourists to visit and experience. This not only promotes tourism but also brings economic growth and employment opportunities to the local area.

2. «Silk Road Tourism» is conducive to sharing market opportunities between China and Belarus’ cultural tourism economy and creating a vertical and silent cultural tourism experience. After outbound travel is fully liberalized in 2023, the number of searches and questions about the countries co-building the «Belt and Road» has increased significantly. In addition, the «Northern Myanmar» e-mail fraud has caused Southeast Asia tourism to be cold, while tourism in Eastern Europe and Central Asia has attracted more attention. higher. Countries such as Russia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan have also attracted a large number of Chinese tourists. Compared with Southeast Asian countries, tourists spend longer in European and Central Asian countries and have more in-depth itinerary experiences.

3. «Silk Road Tourism» is a new carrier of international cultural tourism economic cooperation and is of great significance. For example, China and Belarus can deepen the understanding and friendship between the two peoples by holding cultural exchange activities, art exhibitions and folklore experiences. At the same time, in tourism cooperation, the two countries can jointly protect and inherit their respective cultural heritage and promote the development of cultural industries. In this way, Silk Road tourism not only promotes cultural exchanges between China and Belarus, but also provides new cooperation opportunities for the cultural tourism industries of the two countries.

4. Taking «Silk Road Tourism» as the starting point to promote the economic construction of China-Belarus cultural tourism along the «One Belt and One Road» is of great significance. For example, along the Silk Road Economic Belt, China and Belarus can jointly develop tourism infrastructure such as regional cuisine, hotels and immersive tourism experiences. At the same time, the two countries can also strengthen tourism cooperation and investment, build a tourism industry cooperation platform, and jointly develop cultural tourism projects and cultural tourism products. Through these efforts, Silk Road tourism will promote the development and prosperity of the cultural tourism economy in China and Belarus and bring more benefits to the people of the two countries.

Taking Ningbo, Zhejiang as an example, as one of the «Silk Road Tourism Cities Alliance», Ningbo has actively served and integrated into the joint construction of the «Belt and Road» in the past 10 years, and is committed to building an international open hub city. As one of the starting points of China's Maritime Silk Road, Ningbo is a place with a long history and rich culture, and its foreign trade economy is also among the top 5 in the country. According to Ningbo Customs statistics, in the first three quarters of 2023, Ningbo's imports and exports to countries co-building the «Belt and Road» were 421.34 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.4 %, accounting for 44.1 % of Ningbo's total foreign trade value during the same period [3].

The continued deepening of China-Belarus international cooperation in «Silk Road Tourism» will greatly promote the construction of cultural tourism-related fields in the «Belt and Road» countries. On the one hand, the «Silk Road Tourism» China-Belarus international cooperation will further guide the development of cultural tourism into economic clusters, expand the scope of China-Belarus cultural tourism regions, continue to optimize and upgrade the China-Belarus tourism ecological chain, promote the economic growth of China-Belarus cultural tourism, and help China-Belarus cultural tourism A hundred flowers bloom. On the other hand, China-Belarus international cooperation on «Silk Road Tourism» will drive the development of a series of industrial chain economies around China and Belarus, promote the upgrading of individual tourist destinations to urban belts and economic clusters, and produce the effect of «1 + 1 > 2».

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