Educational Cooperation between China and ASEAN by the View of Cultural Soft Power

LI Tao

Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
Yunnan University
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- Current Situation and Traits of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN
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I. Concept and Traits of Cultural Soft Power

- The concept Soft Power is originally proposed by American scholar Joseph Nye, he thinks “A country’ comprehensive power includes Hard Power which consist of economy, technology, and military force, as well as Soft Power reflected in culture, values, social system, developmental pattern, life styles and ideology.

- As for the form and trait of soft power, some scholars put forward that soft power includes appeal of political regime, values, culture, persuasion of diplomacy, and charm of leaders and citizens.

- Generally, soft power indicates culture’s appeal to one country or region, which is an important part of national soft power, permeating into the society, and become better weapons among the national competition.

- One country’s cultural soft power embodies its core of values, moral principles, philosophic thinking, ideology, political ideas and system design’s appeal, as well as national whole image’ easy charm.
Ⅱ. Current Situation and Traits of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN(1)

➢ As an important actor in SEA, ASEAN has all kinds of connections with China through culture from ancient times to the present, influenced by Chinese civilization, and is the key area of Chinese circumjacent diplomatic policy and practice. Vigorously launching external culture exchanges activities in southeast Asia, strengthening China’s ability of assimilation, influence, appeal and appetency is one of the main path to promote Chinese cultural soft power.
Main ways of exchanges and cooperation

Education on students abroad from Southeast countries

- In order to attract students from SEA to study in China, Chinese government provides steady and successive policy, as well as special funding.

- The system of Chinese international students has trained a lot of talents of technology, education, diplomacy and management for SEA countries. Some of the graduates return to their countries to become government officials and some work as foreign diplomatic envoys to China.
Main ways of exchanges and cooperation

Expand and spread of Chinese and its culture in ASEAN

- Establishing College of Confucius in SEA is one of significant steps to promote and spread Chinese and its culture.

- According to the Confucius Institute Headquarters, by the year 2013, the Headquarters has established 27 Colleges of Confucius, 14 Confucius Classes in SEA with 50,000 students enrolling and 10 million people taking part in the cultural activities.
Main ways of exchanges and cooperation

Expand and spread of Chinese and its culture in ASEAN

- Sending volunteers of Chinese to SEA is also one of significant steps to promote and spread Chinese and its culture.

- On April 15th, 2004, China officially started the plan “China’s Volunteers as international Chinese teachers”.

- In the region of SEA, take Thailand as an example, in a smooth cooperative effort between China and Thailand, there has been a new popularization platform in Thailand, which is initiated by almost 20 Classes of Confucius, 1005 elementary and secondary schools lead by 900 volunteers of Chinese, which is also a newly emerging force to promote the friendship between China and Thailand.
Main ways of exchanges and cooperation

Setting up foreign culture center in ASEAN

• After preparation for 5 years, Center of Chinese Culture in Bangkok, Thailand was set up on November 21st, 2012, this is the 10th center of culture China has established overseas and the first center of Chinese culture in SEA.

• Center of Chinese Culture in Bangkok will carry out all sorts of cultural activities, teaching and training, information services, which will be another key platform to strengthen the friendship of China and Thailand.
II. Current Situation and Traits of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN(6)

- Main characters of exchanges and cooperation

- Diversified ways of exchanges and cooperation

- Except for rapidly developed Colleges and Classes of Confucius in SEA above, in recent years, Yunnan, Guangxi, Guizhou, Guangdong, Fujian that close to Southeast Asia had began joint operation of schools by ways of awarding degrees together, admitting credits and exchanging undergraduates, conferring certificate of a refresher course, project cooperation and training.
Ⅱ. Current Situation and Traits of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN

➢ Main characters of exchanges and cooperation

■ Expanding fields of exchanges and cooperation

• As the basic education, both sides are exploring suitable forms and systems of cooperation, for example, on the 2nd educational exchanges week of China and ASEAN, both sides came to an agreement that will expand the mutual students communication, quicken the process of conferring mutual educational background and academic degree, open courses of languages, culture and history in both sides, in order to get the local youngsters better understanding of every country’s situation.

• As for the training of talents, trainings people of government and professional and technical industry have been conducted by China and SEA, the emphasis is reinforcing training talents of agriculture, transportation, energy resources, trade, law, tourism, finance, and language culture.
II. Current Situation and Traits of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN

➢ Main characters of exchanges and cooperation

■ Strengthening mutual flowability of exchanges and cooperation

• **On one hand**, the demand for Chinese education from countries of ASEAN is amplifying, as well as similar cultural background and lower tuition fee and cost of living, all of which will attract more students from countries of ASEAN to study in China.

• **On the other hand**, the educational systems of most of countries of ASEAN are greatly influenced by western countries, closely linked with British and American colleges and universities, these countries have better educational structure and English teaching level, which also attract more Chinese students to study there, such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia.
Ⅱ. Current Situation and Traits of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN(9)

➢ Main characters of exchanges and cooperation

■ Abundant content of exchanges and cooperation

• Since the new century, the dialogue mechanism of cultural exchanges and cooperation in education between China and ASEAN has been improved.

• Educational Exchanges Week of China and ASEAN is so far highest-ranking, most extensive, most influential activity.

• With the help of Ministry of Education and Diplomacy, Educational Exchanges Week of China and ASEAN has been held 5 times in Guizhou since 2008.

• The Educational Exchanges Week includes forums of university President, cooperative conferences of colleges and universities, national educational exhibition, Art Festival of youngsters between China and ASEAN.
Ⅲ. Dilemmas of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN(1)

- Unbalance development of exchanges and cooperation

- As for the exchanges and cooperation of education and culture, unbalanced development appears obviously.

- For example, the distribution of Colleges and Classes of Confucius in SEA, Thailand and Indonesia have the most, 23 and 7 respectively, even Laos and Cambodia have each, but in Vietnam and Brunei, so far, there are not any colleges or classes of Confucius, which is an awkward situation of Chinese cultural exchanges for ASEAN.
Ⅲ. Dilemmas of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN(2)

- Immature join forces of exchanges and cooperation

- At present, cultural exchanges and cooperation of education between China and ASEAN mainly focus on southwest region and coastal provinces.

- Cultural exchanges and cooperation of education between China and ASEAN mainly are confined to educational cooperation of international students and establishment of College of Confucius, so the scope is narrow, the scale and benefit are also limited.
Ⅲ. Dilemmas of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN(3)

- Culture clash resulting from culture diversity

- As for the international students studying in China from SEA, their cultural differences and clashes is very extensive, one of the most prominent is differences and clashes in thinking, morality, values, right of privacy, social customs and habits.
Ⅲ. Dilemmas of Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN(4)

➢ Barriers from ideology and political bulwark

Although there’s deep origins of culture between China and SEA, because of barriers of ideology and political bulwark, countries of SEA have a grudge against China throughout history, worrying about the threat of economy and military affairs China has posed.

➢ To be great extent, the barriers of ideology and political bulwark will affect the exchanges and cooperation in education and culture between China and ASEAN.
Ⅳ. Recommendations on Promoting the Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation in Education between China and ASEAN

➢ Making comprehensive plans for exchanges and cooperation in the field of education in ASEAN

➢ Vigorously expanding international students education from southeast countries

➢ Struggling developing cooperative high education between China and ASEAN

➢ Opening up and innovating new forms and mechanism of exchanges and cooperation
THANK YOU!

Email: litaody@vip.qq.com