

Construction and Analysis of "The Belt and Road" International Discourse Power

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ABSTRACT. *This work first analyzed several key links in the process of promoting "The Belt and Road" strategy based on the goal of expanding influence of China's international discourse power. Besides, it tried to demonstrate and coordinate the interests of relevant parties and excavate the dilemma of China's international discourse power. On this basis, it proposed targeted strategies and explored the construction of international discourse power from the aspects of language mutual assistance, government participation, social co-construction and friendship deepening, hoping to offer corresponding reference for the development of China's globalization.*

KEYWORDS: *The Belt and Road; International discourse power; Construction path; Identity*

1. Introduction

China has put forward the diplomatic concept of "building a community with a shared future for mankind" through the "The Belt and Road" strategy, which not only brings the turn of China's overall diplomatic strategy, but also promotes the profound adjustment of the international order, forming new international operational rules. Therefore, advocating a spirit of embracing a diverse and inclusive culture and constructing an international discourse system that conforms to the "spirit of the Silk Road" can gain universal recognition from the international community and avoid misunderstandings. This is a deeper and more complex problem than infrastructure construction and economic and trade cooperation, which is worthy of deep thinking and inquiry.

2. Importance of Constructing "The Belt and Road" International Discourse Power

Identity is the key to building an international discourse power. "Power of discourse" refers to the power contained or embodied in "discourse", that is,

discourse is a kind of carrier and expression of power. In layman's terms, power is the goal of "discourse," and "discourse" is the means to acquire, display, and use power. The essence of international discourse power is to change the thoughts and behaviors of others in a non-violent and non-mandatory manner, and to make a country's local ideas and propositions a universal concept and proposition. Today's international politics has become a "discourse power politics" to a certain extent. Former US President Nixon wrote in *1999: Victory without War*, "Our call for power is not from our (economic) wealth or (military) power, but from our thoughts". To gain the right to speak, it is necessary to let our own words be recognized in the international community.

"The Belt and Road" strategy combines a geopolitical-based space view with a historical dimension-based time view. It is not only a response to the deep adjustment of today's global geopolitical economic order, but also a conception of the historical civilization inheritance and the future international order. No matter from the means of realization or the ultimate goal, it is inseparable from the construction of the international discourse power, which is a kind of soft power. The concept and positioning of "The Belt and Road" strategy is not only a new model for exploring cooperation between countries, but also a new model for exploring global governance and shaping another international order. Therefore, the construction of the international discourse system in the above context involves two levels, one is the accurate interpretation of the connotation of concept; the other is the deep-level goal of discourse competition - the competition of the rule-dominant power. It is to spread China's idea and proposition of world order to the world through carrying forward the "Silk Road spirit", so as to build recognition and form a more reasonable international discourse system and international order. The strategy not only needs to drive a group of physical projects to "go out", but also makes China's new diplomatic ideas and diplomatic philosophy be recognized by the international community. By carrying forward the "Silk Road spirit", China will build a "community with a shared future for mankind" featuring "equality, win-win development, common security and mutual learning among civilizations", and build a new international discourse system, which is of vital significance to China's international status and development.

In fact, for China moving to the center of the international arena, the outside world is still quite strange and there are many misunderstandings. For a long time, developing countries such as China have passively joined the rules and discourse systems formulated by western developed countries such as Europe and the United States, and thus falling into the trap of western discourse logic and cannot effectively safeguard national interests. The "Belt and Road Initiative" is an important exploration for China to establish a fairer and more just international political and economic order. All parties will always adhere to the principle of cooperation, mutual construction and sharing based on the spirit of respecting each other and treating each other as equals. As the initiator of the "Belt and Road Initiative", China has voluntarily abandoned the veto power in the "Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank", which is an important support of "The Belt and Road". These measures are all efforts to build a new type of state relationship. China can strengthen the image,

spread the voice of China, clarify the truth and eliminate misunderstandings by promoting the construction of "The Belt and Road", so as to let other countries understand the real China, and lay a good foundation for China's international development and construction.

3. Main Construction Path of "The Belt and Road" International Discourse Power

3.1 Strengthening language communication and promoting mutual cooperation, construction and sharing

While advancing the construction of "The Belt and Road", it is necessary to pay attention to language communication besides "Five-pronged Approach", so as to promote mutual cooperation, construction and sharing. Language communication is the premise and basis for realizing the "Five-pronged Approach". Since many countries and nations along "The Belt and Road" speak a variety of different languages, and the culture is diverse and the difference is huge, so language communication should be strengthened and the national language ability of China should be improved, paving the way of language service for the construction of "The Belt and Road". Strengthening language communication will also remove barriers to communicate with countries along the route and lay the foundation for enhancing the right to speak internationally.

3.2 The government should actively participate and grasp the dominance of international discourse power

At present, China has become the second largest economy in the world. With the improvement of China's international status, more and more international affairs require China to participate. As China's role in international affairs has changed from "general participant" to "key builder" and then to "responsible major country", its voice has also changed from "aphasia" to "missing discourse" and to "seeking a voice". The Chinese government should quickly seize the opportunity of international public opinion in the event of major international events and promptly issue its own voice on some major international issues.

Although the "Belt and Road Initiative", as a new engine for the future development of the world economy, is still controversial in the international public opinion dominated by the West, as long as China focuses on making its own voices in international public opinion, actively promoting the connotation, purpose and significance of the "Belt and Road Initiative", and implementing with practical actions, it will certainly be widely recognized and supported by the international community. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping has frequently displayed the "China Program" on the major issues of world peace and development in different international public opinion fields. "China's attitude" has been expressed in the face of difficulties in

world economic recovery, global Internet governance system, global climate governance and regional development and cooperation, which has not only laid a good foundation for China to enhance its international voice, but also received positive responses from the world public opinion.

3.3 Enterprises should fulfill their responsibilities and enhance China's international reputation

The enterprise is a business card of the country, and its development can reflect the national policy concept. Especially in today's economic globalization, the embodiment of the national decision-making is more obvious in the process of internationalization. With the rapid development of China's economy, the speed, breadth and intensity of Chinese companies' internationalization have attracted worldwide attention, but compared with western developed countries, the degree of internationalization is still relatively low. In the context of the "Belt and Road Initiative", China is supposed to actively guide enterprises to "go out", encourage them to respect and integrate into local customs, strictly abide by the laws and regulations of the host country and the principle of good faith management, ensure the quality of engineering projects, and earnestly fulfill their social responsibilities in production safety, employment, and environmental protection. They should closely combine the advantages of enterprise technology and capital with the market, resources and labor costs of the host country. While realizing the development of the enterprise itself, it can live in harmony with the local residents and serve the local economic and social development, creating a vivid situation of cooperation and win-win and enhancing the good international reputation of Chinese enterprises.

3.4 Non-governmental organizations should play an important role as "friendship ambassadors"

The stability of the political, economic and security situation along the line is the basis and premise for the smooth development of "The Belt and Road". To consolidate this foundation, it is necessary to give full play to the important role of the "friendship ambassadors" of the non-governmental organizations. They should guide the public opinion of the countries along the route to build "The Belt and Road" into a "road for the people". The countries along the "Silk Road Economic Belt" have different national, cultural and religious backgrounds. The countries along the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" are also different in national conditions and customs. In addition, the bilateral relations and regional issues of the countries along the line are quite prominent. All of these have made it difficult for countries to participate in the construction of "The Belt and Road". To enable countries along the route to break through their own vision and interest framework and integrate into the construction of "The Belt and Road", it is necessary to play the role of non-governmental organizations to enhance relations and resolve conflicts.

Non-governmental organizations have the characteristics of non-profit, public welfare, volunteerism and affinity, which are easy for local residents to accept and

recognize. In the fields of education, poverty alleviation, medical care, humanitarianism and environmental protection, non-governmental organizations play an important role in providing public services and public goods for local residents and complementing the role of the government. China's non-governmental organizations should actively play the role as "friendship ambassadors", carry out various public diplomacy activities and private diplomatic activities, and hold rich and colorful cultural exchange activities, so as to enhance the friendship between the countries along the line, create conditions and set off atmosphere for the "Silk Road spirit", and pave the way for the smooth development of the "Belt and Road Initiative".

3.5 Actively advocating and participating in the formulation of international rules

Since the launch of the "Belt and Road Initiative", there has been a strong response both at home and abroad, both supportive and questionable. In the process of orderly promoting China's "Belt and Road Initiative", China is in a weak position in the international discourse power due to its immature experience in participating in global governance. Therefore, China must actively advocate and participate in the formulation of international rules. After the international financial crisis in 2008, developed and emerging economies have diverged in the recovery process, and the global political, economic pattern and international rules are in the process of continuous evolution and reconstruction. As an important force in the world political and economic arena, China must actively participate in the reconstruction of global international rules.

China's participation in the formulation of international rules is still in its infancy. With the further enhancement of comprehensive strength, China will provide more public goods and services for the development of the world as a responsible big country. General Secretary Xi Jinping points out that in the formulation of international rules, China must be participants and leaders instead of bystanders and followers. China must be good at issuing more Chinese voices, injecting more Chinese elements, safeguarding and expanding China's development interests. In the economic globalization, China should seize the opportunity and win the initiative to establish a position of international discourse commensurate with China's responsibility as a major country, so as to promote the smooth implementation of the "Belt and Road Initiative", "tell China's stories and spread China's voice", and get real recognition from the international community.

4. Summary

Under the constraints of the long-term "keeping a low profile" thought and the international discourse dilemma, how China should act as an advocate of cooperation ideas and a leader in rule-making has become a deeper and more complex strategic issue beyond the implementation of economic and trade exchanges and infrastructure construction. Although China has proposed the construction path of infrastructure interconnection and the establishment of the

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, it will take time to come up with global rules that apply globally and benefit China. How to gain the recognition of the international community and form a discourse environment conducive to China's foreign exchanges needs more efforts.

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