

The Current Situation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritance and Protection in Hami City

Asiguli Ahemula¹

¹ School of Chinese Ethnic Minority Languages and Literatures, Minzu University of China, Beijing, China

ABSTRACT

Hami is located along the Silk Road in China and is an important city with much intangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, there are still some problems in the region, such as insufficient understanding of intangible cultural heritage, lack of effective protection measures and financial support. This study will take the intangible cultural heritage in Hami City as a case study to analyze its status and role in cultural heritage protection, and explore the problems and challenges it faces in protection and inheritance. The research was conducted using methods such as literature review and field investigation to collect and organize relevant information, and conduct a detailed investigation and analysis of the intangible cultural heritage in Hami City, so as to gain a deeper understanding of its protection status and existing problems.

Keywords: Hami City, Intangible cultural heritage, Protection and inheritance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Hami City is an important city along the Silk Road and one of the important protected areas for China's intangible cultural heritage. However, due to economic development, urbanization, and tourism, the intangible cultural heritage of Hami City has also been affected to varying degrees. Hami City is located in the eastern part of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and is one of the important central cities in Xinjiang. Xinjiang, formerly known as the Western Regions, has officially become a part of China's territory since the Han Dynasty. In the long-term historical evolution of a unified multi-ethnic country in China, the people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang, together with the people of all ethnic groups, have jointly expanded China's vast territory and created a diverse and integrated family of the Chinese nation. Hami, the "East Gate" of Xinjiang, has been an important town on the Silk Road since ancient times, serving as a bridge and link between the mainland and the Western Regions. Since the Han Dynasty, the central government has stationed troops in areas such as Yiwu (now Hami) and Puleihai (now Balikun Kazakh Autonomous County) to cultivate farmland, build city walls, and assign officials to manage and protect the areas. In

the Ming Dynasty, the central government also established Hami Wei as an organization to manage Western affairs.

People of all ethnic groups have interacted, blended, and jointly developed in the hot land of Hami. They are economically interdependent, culturally inclusive, and emotionally close to each other, forming a national relationship of watching and helping each other, sharing weal and woe, and nurturing the Hami regional culture rooted in the fertile soil of Chinese civilization, Xinjiang characteristics, and diversity, which have created traditional music with long strings and orchestral melodies, traditional dance with singing and whirling, skillful craftsmanship, and diverse folk customs, leaving behind a rich and colorful, exquisite and profound intangible cultural heritage, and accumulating the common national sentiment and spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation. This study focuses on the intangible cultural heritage of Hami City, aiming to explore its status and role in cultural heritage protection, and analyze the problems and challenges it faces in protection and inheritance. In order to achieve the research objectives, the researchers use methods such as literature review and field investigation to collect and organize relevant information, and conduct a detailed investigation and analysis of the intangible

cultural heritage in Hami City, in order to gain a deeper understanding of its protection status and existing problems.

2. OVERVIEW OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Intangible cultural heritage is an important component of human cultural diversity and a crucial component of global cultural heritage. Therefore, understanding the concept of intangible cultural heritage can also help people better understand the importance of cultural diversity and the importance of protecting and inheriting cultural heritage.

2.1 The Concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) refers to cultural heritage created by humans that does not exist in material form, including oral traditions and performing arts, social practices, festival activities, knowledge and practice, handicrafts, and other cultural traditions. The intangible cultural heritage is the representation of human wisdom, creativity, and multiculturalism, representing the specific history, values, lifestyles, social organizations, and other aspects of human society. The inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage is not only an important manifestation of human cultural diversity, but also of great significance for maintaining the balance of human cultural ecology and promoting sustainable development of human society.

2.2 Characteristics of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible cultural heritage is an important component of traditional culture and must be passed down through oral and practical means. Intangible cultural heritage includes various aspects such as human lifestyles, religious beliefs, artistic expressions, and festival customs, presenting a rich and colorful diversity. It is the representative manifestation of cultural groups, reflecting their values, beliefs, and lifestyles. Intangible cultural heritage has vitality and vigour. It is not a fixed cultural heritage, but constantly develops and updates with the changes of time and social environment. Intangible cultural heritage is closely related to society and groups, and is an important component of social culture. [1]

2.3 Classification of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The classification of intangible cultural heritage is not only the foundation of practical work in the protection of intangible cultural heritage, but also an important content of theoretical research on intangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage is divided into ten categories: folk literature, traditional music, traditional dance, traditional drama, folk art, traditional sports and entertainment and acrobatics, traditional art, and traditional craftsmanship; Traditional medicine, folk customs, etc. [2]

According to UNESCO's classification, intangible cultural heritage can also be divided into the following five categories: [3]

- 1. Oral tradition and performing arts: including oral tradition, dance, music, drama, ceremonies, and festivals.
- 2. Social practices, ceremonies, and festivals: including social customs, ceremonies, and festivals, such as weddings, funerals, religious ceremonies, etc.
- 3. Knowledge and practice: including traditional medicine, handicrafts, agriculture, fishing and hunting, architecture and engineering, natural resource management, technology and applications, etc.
- 4. Knowledge of nature and the universe: including traditional astronomy, lunar calendar, religious beliefs, natural phenomena, and environmental protection.
- 5. Language: including language, dialects, and the use of dialects, oral literature, folk tales, legends, and traditional proverbs.

3. OVERVIEW OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN HAMI CITY

The sustainable development of civilization and culture requires not only passing down the tradition and protection from generation to generation, but also exchange and mutual learning, and innovation. With the support of the Chinese government and the autonomous region's intangible cultural heritage inheritance and protection work, the Hami Municipal Party Committee and government attach great importance to and promote the protection and inheritance of Hami's intangible cultural heritage. At present, more than 100 intangible cultural

heritage projects in Hami have been included in the list of intangible cultural heritage at all levels, and have received corresponding protection and inheritance, including 2 world level, 3 national level, 27 autonomous region level, and more than 100 Hami city and county level projects. In order to better protect, inherit, and showcase these precious intangible cultural heritages, the Hami Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center adheres to the concept of "home is the smallest country, and the country is a million", and places the focus of the exhibition on the theme of "home".

Through the clever combination of traditional static image display and modern high-tech optoelectronic technology, viewers can learn about the four major series of home music, home craftsmanship, home food customs, and home festivals, as well as 20 representative intangible cultural heritage projects during the process of watching, listening, and interacting. Other intangible cultural heritage projects are presented on electronic screens for viewers to view on their own. These precious intangible cultural heritages fully prove that Xinjiang has been an inseparable part of the motherland since ancient times. The intangible cultural heritage projects in Hami City are mainly distributed in three regions: Hami City, Balikun Kazakh Autonomous County, and Yiwu County.

The intangible cultural heritage in Hami City currently falls into the following categories:

Hami City has 18 traditional music and 11 traditional dance cultural heritages. Among them, "Hami Muqam" is an important component of "Uyghur Muqam Art", a traditional music and dance art with a long history and local characteristics, and is listed as a world-class intangible cultural heritage of Hami City. In addition, traditional dance cultural heritage includes 11 items such as "Uyghur cyneum" and "Kazakh animal simulation dance". Among them, "cyneum" is the most common traditional dance among Uyghur people, which has been passed down throughout Xinjiang and is listed as a national intangible cultural heritage of Hami City.

Hami has seven intangible cultural heritage of traditional arts, including "Uyghur embroidery", "Kazakh embroidery" and "Uyghur paper cuttings".

As a handmade embroidery technique, "Uyghur embroidery" is a national intangible cultural heritage of Hami City. Its decorative patterns are themed with flowers, insects, birds, and other animal images, as well as natural landscapes, and are widely used in clothing and other fabric products. For thousands of years, Hami Uyghurs have been using embroidery to decorate their lives, expressing their pursuit of beautiful things and love for life.[5] [6] [7] They have fully demonstrated the life, customs, and aesthetic concepts of their own ethnic group, and created a unique embroidery culture with national characteristics. In addition, there are 12 intangible cultural heritages related to traditional sports and acrobatics in Hami City, including "Hami Uyghur folk sports - wrestling", "Hami Kazakh folk children's games", "Barikun Kazakh camel racing", and "playing diablo". Among them, "playing diablo" is an autonomous region level intangible cultural heritage.

Hami City has 6 traditional medical cultures, including "Hami Han Folk bone setting medical culture - Xu's bone setting method", "Hami Uyghur folk medical culture", and "Yiwu County Uyghur traditional bone setting skills". In terms of traditional skills and culture, Hami has 41 items, including "Hami Uyghur gourd carving", "Hami Hui Fatu cold noodles", "Balikun Han Chinese wheat food making skills" and "Hami melon planting skills". In addition, there are 35 items of folk culture in Hami City, including "Maixirefu - Kuoke Maixirefu", "Balikun Han Festival Customs", and "beating melting iron". Among them, "Maixirefu - Kuoke Maixirefu" has been included in the UNESCO "Urgently Protected Intangible Cultural Heritage List" and is another world-class cultural heritage of Hami City. This festival is usually held on the occasion of the first winter snow, until the arrival of the traditional festival "Noruzi Festival" in the following spring [9].

There are four types of folk music arts, including "Kazakh Aytes", "Xinjiang opera", and "Hami Hui opera (Hua'er)". There are 10 categories of folk literature, including "Uyghur folk Dastan (narrative long poems)", "Balikun Han folk stories", and "Balikun Mongolian congratulations". There is one item of "Qin opera" in the traditional drama category, as shown in "Figure 1".

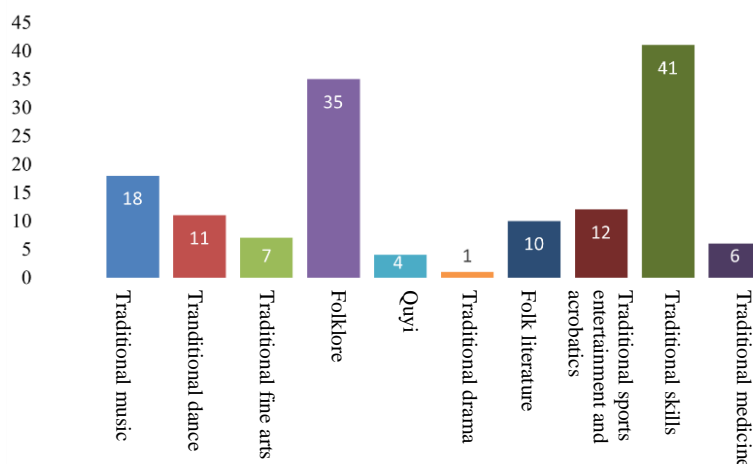


Figure 1 Classification and quantity of intangible cultural heritage projects in Hami City.

4. PROTECTION AND INHERITANCE OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN HAMI CITY

Hami City actively promotes the protection of intangible cultural heritage and has implemented multiple measures. With the comprehensive efforts of Hami City, the protection of intangible culture has taken initial successful steps. However, this is a long-term and lengthy task that requires more systematic and scientific measures to develop more effective protection and promotion. There are some suggestions in the following content.

4.1 Current Status of Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection in Hami City

Firstly, the distribution of intangible cultural heritage in Hami City is relatively scattered, and many projects lack appropriate venues and facilities, making it difficult to effectively protect them. Many inheritors of intangible cultural heritage face issues such as funding, venue, and equipment, leading to difficulties in protection and display work.

Secondly, the majority of intangible cultural heritage inheritors in Hami City are older, with fewer descendants to be passed down, making it difficult to effectively protect and inherit many skills. At the same time, there is a lack of effective inheritance mechanisms and training programs, and the younger generation has limited knowledge and understanding of intangible cultural heritage. They lack sufficient interest and enthusiasm for the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, resulting in difficulties in recruiting and cultivating inheritors.

Thirdly, the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage in Hami City require collaborative cooperation among the government, inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, and cultural institutions. However, the existing management mechanism is simple, lacking reasonable institutional and policy support, making it difficult to form a comprehensive and powerful protection, inheritance, and development system.

4.2 Planning for the Inheritance and Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Hami City

First, in order to better protect intangible cultural heritage, Hami City has formulated plans and policies for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, clarifying the protection scope, inheritance methods, and the cultivation of inheritors of intangible cultural heritage projects. These protection plans and policies will help ensure effective protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage projects.

Second, in order to maintain the traditional characteristics of intangible cultural heritage projects and make them more suitable for the development of modern society, Hami City has further strengthened the protection and restoration work of intangible cultural heritage projects. On the basis of maintaining traditional elements, it is necessary to introduce some modern elements to make intangible cultural heritage projects more modern and popular.

Third, in order to better understand and protect intangible cultural heritage projects, Hami City continues to carry out census and application work.

Through census and declaration, people can have a more comprehensive understanding of the situation of intangible cultural heritage projects, and timely discover and protect them.

Fourth, in order to inherit intangible cultural heritage, Hami City has strengthened the training and inheritance work of inheritors of intangible cultural heritage. Through training and inheritance, the skills and traditional knowledge of intangible cultural heritage will be passed down to ensure the inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage. These measures will help to better protect and inherit intangible cultural heritage.

4.3 Thoughts on the Future Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Hami City

The first is to strengthen knowledge popularization. It is a necessity to strengthen the promotion and promotion of intangible cultural heritage through various means, so that more people can understand and understand the intangible cultural heritage of Hami City, so as to enhance social awareness and sense of responsibility for the protection of intangible cultural heritage. At the same time, more people can also participate in the inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage through exhibitions, performances, experiential activities, and other forms.

The second is to enhance inheritance work. The inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is crucial, and it is necessary to strengthen the inheritance work, cultivate more inheritors and learners, inherit the skills and knowledge of intangible cultural heritage, and pass it on. At the same time, attention should also be paid to the cultivation of inheritors, improving their skills and cultural level, to ensure the smooth progress of the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

The fourth is to establish digital archives. There will be a must to establish digital archives of intangible cultural heritage, digitize and manage relevant information, images, videos, etc. of intangible cultural heritage to ensure its inheritance and protection. And through digital technology, more people can understand and understand intangible cultural heritage, promoting its inheritance and protection work.

5. CONCLUSION

Exploring the intangible cultural heritage of Hami is of great significance for protecting and inheriting the cultural heritage of countries along the Belt and Road. As one of the important nodes of the Silk Road, Hami has a long history and profound cultural heritage. Its rich intangible cultural heritage resources are not only an important part of local culture, but also an important part of cultural heritage protection and exchange between countries along the Belt and Road. Through the study of intangible cultural heritage in Hami City, it is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the historical origins, cultural connotations, and their impact on local residents' society, economy, and culture, in order to better protect and inherit these cultural heritages. In addition, the research on intangible cultural heritage in Hami can also promote the protection and exchange of cultural heritage among countries along the Belt and Road, and jointly promote the better protection and inheritance of these valuable historical and cultural heritages.

Studying the intangible cultural heritage of Hami provides a platform for cultural exchanges and cooperation between countries along the Belt and Road, promotes the discussion of cultural heritage protection experience and technology among different countries, and jointly promotes the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage. At the same time, the research on intangible cultural heritage in Hami City also has positive significance for promoting local economic development. The inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage resources is not only the responsibility of cultural undertakings, but also has a positive impact on local economic and social progress. Exploring and excavating the intangible cultural heritage resources in Hami City can inject new vitality into the local economy, promote employment, improve people's living standards, and achieve sustainable development. The inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage in Hami City is also an important manifestation of the Chinese national community consciousness. Hami intangible cultural heritage represents the intangible cultural heritage created by the Hami people in their production and life, and is an important component of ancient Chinese culture. Protecting and inheriting Hami intangible cultural heritage is of great significance for promoting traditional Chinese culture, enhancing national confidence and cultural consciousness.

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