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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

**The Growth of the Cultural Sector for the Oroqen People in the Context of Urbanization and Modernization**

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**| ABSTRACT**

As one of the ethnic minorities in the north-east of China, the Oroqen people have been living on safari for generations, and their cultural production is closely integrated with the natural environment. However, with the continuous development of urbanisation and modernisation, the Oroqen have started to experience cultural maladjustment, and their traditional culture is unable to communicate and integrate well with modern culture and is even at the risk of disappearing. Therefore, how to achieve the preservation and development of Oroqen culture in modern society is particularly important, as achieving the continuous development of the radiant culture of Oroqen. In addition, Chinese culture is also extending beyond the country and into the world as a whole. This paper will analyse the challenges and opportunities faced by the Oroqen people in the context of urbanisation and modernisation from the perspective of the historical development of Oroqen culture and provide some ideas for the development of Oroqen culture.

**| KEYWORDS**

Oroqen, cultural crisis, urbanization, modernization

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**1. Introduction**

As a traditional nomadic minority in northern China, Oroqen people have more and more frequent contact with Chinese Han people in the process of communicating with other ethnic groups. The influence of Chinese culture and traditional Chinese Confucianism has exerted a certain influence on this ethnic group. In a Chinese scholar's view, in 2018, the new generation of Oroqens does not believe in traditional shamans because many of them are influenced by Buddhism and Christianity, or by Han culture, or have joined communist organizations. Shamanism, as a traditional and iconic belief, is only regarded as part of the culture by the new generation. Its importance has been greatly diminished. In the past, the Oroqen people's longing for the Shaman god has become history (Zhao, 2018). This led to changes in their original lifestyle. The reality is that the number of Oroqen speakers is gradually decreasing along with the migrant workers into the city and the socialist market economy under the rapid development of China's urbanization. The cultural products and arts of the traditional Oroqen are at risk of extinction. According to the Post Magazine, Through the reporter's description, he shows us the disappearance of hunting, one of the traditional skills of the Oroqen people. According to the 2010 census data, there are about 8,000 Oroqen people. Just a few generations ago, less than 30% of them could skillfully use hunting skills (Gibson, 2019).

This will lead the Oroqen migrant workers in cities to learn new skills. Their skills in hunting and leather weaving, which served the primary industry, have gradually developed into professionals with knowledge in the ecological environment and business fields so as to better contribute to the tertiary industry in China's new first-tier cities. Under the efforts of the new Oroqen ethnic group,

the township has implemented the village green area of 11.5 mu, 1,300 square meters of flowers planted in the village, 8,254 square meters of flowers planted along the river, more than 400 birch trees planted, and the living environment has been continuously improved. Meanwhile, a total of 25 old houses with 50 households were renovated (Liu & Zhu, 2022). In the process of urbanization, they also learned the dialects and living habits of different regions. New mechanized fishing and weaving techniques also facilitated the traditional Oroqen way of life.

## **2. The impact on Traditional Culture in the Process of Urbanization and Modernization**

As one of the ethnic minorities in the north-east of China, the Oroqen people have been living as nomads for generations, and their cultural production is closely integrated with the natural environment. However, with the continuous development of urbanization and modernisation, Oroqen people have transformed directly from the typical nomadic civilisation to the urban civilisation and are unable to integrate well with the modern culture, thus experiencing cultural maladjustment.

The first phenomenon is the rapid change in lifestyle. Before the founding of New China, the Oroqen people had maintained a migratory lifestyle with pasture and animals as the target. Wood, birch bark, and animal skins were commonly used to make "fairy pillars" (Xiang, 2011), which were portable, easy to build and dismantle, and had a certain degree of warmth to protect them from the cold. The Oroqen people in the north-east of the country have long winters because of their northerly geographical position, and they use animal skins as the main material for their clothing while hunting, as they have a strong resistance to the cold. The Oroqen people use animals as their main source of food because the protein provided by meat can provide them with nutrition, and the fat contained in meat can also allow the eaters to produce calories, thus satisfying the fat consumed by daily activities such as hunting. In addition, the country's north-east is quite rich in forestry resources. As a result, birch has become the main source of heating for the Oroqen people as well as a raw material for transport. Birch bark boats and skis made from birch trees meet the needs of Oroqen people for efficient hunting in the summer and east seasons.

However, the urbanisation reform has made Oroqen people gradually change from the original nomadic production method to the agricultural production method, and the change in production method also means a change in community culture. The original mobile dwelling of the Oroqen people has become a fixed dwelling with a brick structure. In terms of diet, the original meat-based diet has gradually shifted to processed agricultural products. The production of agricultural products, the spread of textile technology, and the influence of modern aesthetics have contributed to the diversification of Oroqen clothing but have also reduced the space for the development of traditional clothing. However, the strong presence of modern transport has disruptively changed the traditional way of travelling for the Oroqen, with horses, birch boats, and skis being replaced by modern steel cars along with the transformation of production methods. In fact, the development of urbanisation and modernisation has not only changed the cultural characteristics visible in the production and lifestyle of the Oroqen people but has also affected the soft cultural heritage of the Oroqen people to a certain extent.

First of all, the nomadic community traditionally built by the Oroqen people is closed, and the marriage choice is mainly made by the union of people within the community. In modern society, influenced by the concept of free marriage, many young Oroqen people tend to choose their own marriage partner, and inter-ethnic marriages are becoming more and more common. Such intermarriage has promoted ethnic integration, but with intergenerational reproduction, the Oroqen culture is also at risk of being diluted and disappearing. At the same time, many young people are choosing to leave their communities to find more employment elsewhere. The cultural shock brought by the collision of traditional and modern culture may also make some Oroqen people unilaterally believe that the traditional culture they have acquired is backward compared with the modern culture, thus creating a sense of abandonment of their own culture, which is not conducive to the inheritance and development of traditional culture. Meanwhile, the lack of identification with their own culture also reduces the unity of the traditional nomadic community. The Oroqen people have lived nomadically for generations, living in harmony with nature and supporting each other within the community, and have a simple sense of community. However, urbanisation has accelerated the dispersal of communities, and the relationship between people has become less close, which has to a certain extent, dismantled the tribal community concept that the Oroqen people have always respected and affected the community unity. In addition, the large scale industrialisation brought about by modern society has resulted in a massive seizure of natural resources, which is also contrary to Oroqen's ideology of the unity of man and nature.

As the wheels of urbanisation and modernisation roll forward, the traditional culture of the Oroqen people is facing many crises, but alongside the crises are often opportunities. The key task for the development of Oroqen culture is to understand the incompatible parts of traditional culture in the modernisation process and to find opportunities for adaptive changes.

### **3. The Opportunities of Oroqen in Terms of Current Technology Under Modernization**

#### **3.1 Threat**

With the increasing number of national intangible cultural heritage applications and the acceleration of China's modernization process, more and more hidden Oroqen people and traditional cultural customs have been changed or even disappeared, especially the language. In the fast pace of modernization, the Oroqen people have few opportunities to transmit their native language to more people through traditional oral transmission. However, this language, which has no habit of writing, is at risk of disappearing in the present era. The local Oroqen language is one of the most prominent national characteristics of the Oroqen people. Make the intangible cultural heritage in the Oroqen ethnic and cultural environment of important embodiment. The process of modernization has both advantages and disadvantages for the development of traditional ancient languages. Modern technology provides the ability to save voice messages. But at the same time, the modern way of production and life is bound to replace the traditional way. The ancient fishing and hunting culture is gradually vanishing, the Oroqen people's history has been lost, and their folktales are growing increasingly alien to them. That will become a threat (Xu, 2021).

#### **3.2 Necessity and Possibility within the Protection of Cultural Heritage**

This is very noteworthy that in the process of rapid urbanization in China today, the traditional Oroqen culture and design ideas have been preserved and developed with the help of new technologies. Yan and Wang (2019) examine the best way to incorporate the traditional Oroqen pattern into ceramic design. The Oroqen Nationality's birch bark culture in Heilongjiang Province is vanishing as a result of the new media era's impact on the living environment of intangible cultural heritage, but technological advancement also presents new opportunities for the communication techniques of this culture. This also benefited from the support of the Heihe municipal government. Since the announcement of the website of the Heihe Municipal People's Government (2022), the leading group of the local municipal government often went to the places where the Oroqen people lived for ethnographic investigation and personal visits and investigation. There are 121 searches on the Heihe government website about support and training for the Oroqen. The exchange of visits was mentioned more than 70 times. The government protects and propagandizes the Oroqen people's traditional music, culture and other special folk art forms through physical courses. In the process of urban modernization, more and more local Oroqen people can conveniently apply the media technology of the Internet period to the protection of traditional culture. Xue (2020) discusses how folk art has evolved both domestically and internationally, as well as the relevance of establishing a folk art course for master's students at Inner Mongolia Agricultural University. Oroqen singers and dancers are among the few young people who are able to perform Oroqen songs and dances. In Oroqen, youths can sing "Qinghai-Tibet Plateau," but their own traditional songs are not available. This is the weakness of lacking protection and using own Oroqen ethnic culture.

Zhang (2016) discusses the origin of Oroqen birch bark art in Heilongjiang Province, the manufacturing technique for Oroqen birch bark art, and the inheritance of Oroqen birch bark art. This author uses a real question about Oroqen birch bark art as its starting point. In a similar way, scholar Zhang expressed that the birch-bark art of Oroqen got the development opportunity of industrial transformation under the efforts of the new generation of Oroqen people.

Although Oroqen people themselves have irreplaceable excellent traditional national culture and customs, in the process of urbanization and modernization, more and more people yearn for the world outside the village, but they rarely return home. The new generation of Oroqen people gave up their own culture. Therefore, the education of young people and the preservation of cultural heritage products after rendering are very worthy means in respect of culture.

### **4. How to Seek Cultural Development while Adapting to Social Changes**

#### **4.1 The Conflict Between Intangible Cultural Heritage Preservation and Modern Cultural Development**

As human civilization has grown and changed, the intangible culture that has been "abandoned" as human civilization has grown, and how to deal with the conflict between conservation and development. It is something that needs careful thought. It is a question of how to deal with the conflict between preserving intangible cultures that have been "abandoned" and developing them.

This is a question that needs careful thought. Modernization and urbanization are what the times call for, and they are also a trend that can't be stopped. People like the Oroqen and others with smaller populations will be swept away by the flood of change, and the life of horses and forests will be over. People from Oroqen have to follow the rules of modern society if they want to live and grow. Since they are at a disadvantage, they can only passively adapt to these rules to take part in the competition for survival. If communication between different ethnic groups is limited, slow, and not very deep, then the traditional culture or ethnicity of the culture of ethnic minorities may play a leading role in the social and cultural progress of each ethnic group (Zhang & Dang, 2019). But because science and technology are getting better and better so quickly, space and time are getting smaller in modern societies, and modern culture, or cultural cosmopolitanism, is starting to play a big role in how ethnic groups form. The traditional culture of ethnic minorities is now being sold and turned into art, and social life has changed from relying on informal controls like

ethnic customary law, ethnic religion, and ethical customs to strengthening formal controls like village politics and building a legal system.

#### **4.2 How to Better Protect Cultural Heritage**

The heritage of national culture is the protection of cultural items that can't be seen or touched. To promote Heilongjiang's traditional culture, help the province's culture grow and develop, and do more to protect intangible cultural heritage in Heilongjiang Province. According to the Heilongjiang Province Department of Culture, "Heilongjiang Provincial People's Government on Strengthening the Protection of Cultural Heritage by Heilongjiang Provincial People's Government. According to the rules, the Department of Culture of Heilongjiang Province "The thoughts of the Heilongjiang Provincial People's Government on how to protect cultural heritage better. The majority of Oroqen's intangible cultural heritage is in the first and second batches of provincial intangible cultural heritage. This is because the national level is automatically included in the provincial list. Most of the seven categories and seventeen items that make up Oroqen's intangible cultural heritage are in the first and second groups (Dang, 2017).

Develop education to make the whole country better and push for the right national policies. Based on how the Oroqen people really live, it is very important and urgent to improve education. Because the growth of the whole nation is directly linked to the quality of its people, the government can set up and improve the mechanism for investing in education. The Oroqen people aren't very far along in terms of economic development, and their education isn't getting any better. In the spirit of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China's "Decision on Education System Reform," schools should be set up in Oroqen areas where there are a lot of Oroqen people (Li & Geng, 2017). It is possible to do more to promote cultural heritage in schools and to include more intangible cultural heritage in art and music classes. It is also possible to hire heritage practitioners as extracurricular tutors, etc., to give intangible cultural heritage more chances to be shown. That will become opportunities (Sun & Xu, 2017).

For strengths, to strengthen the protection of cultural heritage, it's important to give the government's role in protecting intangible and tangible cultural heritage its full due. It's also important to get the public involved in the protection work. At the same time, the government should pay attention to how ethnic cadres are trained and who they are chosen to be (Xiang, 2010). To make sure that the ways Oroqen cadres are trained and chosen match the real world. Raise awareness about how Oroqen cadres are chosen and pay close attention to the work. Each year, put more money into education and improve school conditions. Intangible cultural heritage will deteriorate if it is not treated as an antique.

There is no need to choose between abandoning the old and preserving the new as long as we provide more space for intangible cultural heritage to thrive and fully realize its potential. People can unify protection and development, and develop and protect in the process of protection, as long as we give intangible cultural heritage more space to survive, fully exploit its unique advantages and charms, and allow it to become a resource in and of itself.

#### **5. Conclusion**

As one of the less-populous ethnic groups in China, the Oroqen have a traditional culture that may be a little different from other groups. But the loss and disappearance of traditional cultures in modern society is not only a problem that the smaller ethnic groups can't avoid but also a problem that more ethnic groups will have to deal with in the future. So, keeping minority cultures alive is an important and urgent task. How to make them survive and grow in a modern society that is changing quickly and how to show their unique charm in the inheritance will be a broad research topic.

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