

## Tu People's Preservation of Knowledge at the Nadun Festival in Minhe County, China

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### ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the Tu people's knowledge preservation at the Nadun Festival in Minhe County, China. As part of the study's qualitative research method, interviews and observations were done. The results of the study are as follows: The Tu Nadun Festival encourages openness and innovation in the preservation and transmission of its own musical culture, which is deeply rooted in Minhe County's historical and geographical location along the Silk Road Economic Belt. This centuries-old folk music tradition demonstrates the Tu people's deep love for life and artistic beauty. While newer Tu generations move for school and employment, the Tu harvest festival remains a beloved cultural monument, fostering family reunions and appreciating the crop. The legends of the Nadun Festival preserve Tu tradition and knowledge. The event, which was traditionally held in open rural regions, has been relocated to town stages and plazas while adhering to strict planning rules. Its many activities, ranging from the Kuai Shou Dance to the Wu Guan Dance, show the Tu people's transition from military to agrarian society, as well as their capacity to retain information. The ceremony is significant because it preserves cultural traditions and information, which strengthens Tu culture. Tu Nadun music culture in Minhe County combines tradition and creativity, maintaining its history over generations. Despite current trends, the Tu Nadun Festival is an important celebration of their agricultural heritage and cultural identity. With its distinct combination of tradition and change, it guarantees that the Tu people's history and knowledge will be passed down to future generations.

**Key words:** Tu People, Preservation, Knowledge, Nadun Festival, Minhe County

### INTRODUCTION

Due to its rich historical and cultural heritage, the Tu people's Nadun Festival has significant significance within the context of traditional Chinese culture. In accordance with customary practices and established protocols of the Nadun, a series of interrelated dances and musical compositions are observed while maintaining a certain degree of autonomy from each other. Nadun music is frequently sung in the language of the Tu people, incorporating lyrics that are characterized by their substantial substance, which encompasses the historical narratives, tales, and contemporary practices of the Tu community. The creative style of Chinese traditional music is showcased in its authentic form, distinguished by its inherent purity and naturalness. This renders it a remarkable treasure within the domain of Chinese traditional music culture (Li, 2015; Xu & Zhang, 2020).

The Tu people lack a written system for their language, which makes conserving their traditional culture, especially their old musical history, difficult. Their folk melodies, which reflect life on the grasslands and pastoralism, were customarily passed down orally. Some musical traditions altered or vanished as Tu civilization transitioned to agriculture, although vestiges lingered in joyful gatherings. Labor

songs evolved, providing essential work-related knowledge. In the 1950s, the China Ethnic Minority Survey Group recorded Tu traditional songs in Chinese characters with phonetic notation. Folk literati in Minhe County wrote about Tu culture. In the 1970s, professionals such as Ma Zhanshan and Li Youlou arranged and recorded Tu folk songs in sheet music, a crucial step toward preserving Tu music (Genga, 2007; Zhou & Chuangprakhon, 2023).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the form of Tu music entered into diversification. In the multi-ethnic fusion of the Tu, Han and Tibetan peoples, the Tu folk songs have retained the characteristics of the "mother song" by adding new factors and fusing them with the characteristics of other ethnic groups. From the singing language, the Tu folk songs can be categorized into three types: native, fusion and hybrid (Wu & Boonsrianun, 2023). In its continuous development, the music of the Tu people has formed a music form with both individuality and commonality. Nadun music is one of the products of the continuous change in Tu music in Minhe County. Nadun Festival is a unique festival of the Tu ethnic group in Minhe County, Haidong City, Qinghai Province. In 2006, the Nadun Festival was included in the first batch of the national intangible cultural heritage list of the State

Council. This laid the foundation for the inheritance and preservation of the music of the Tu people (Zhong, 2014).

As part of China's intangible cultural heritage, Nadun music has tremendous study significance. It is essential to the Tu people's culture, acting as a vehicle for them to transmit, develop, and promote their national history. However, as cultural variety grows, elderly artists die, leaving a substantial vacuum in the transmission of this cultural legacy. Many young individuals are also losing their knowledge and ability to play traditional Tu music as they leave the Tu language. Given these issues, there is an urgent need to document and research the present situation of Tu Nadun and Nadun songs in a systematic and complete manner. This research delves deeper into their distinct traits in order to aid in the preservation and maintenance of this old music tradition.

According to investigative information, ethnic Nadun songs have not been sufficiently safeguarded. In reality, they have diminished and in some cases, perished over the previous decades. There has been substantial examination and study of the cultural components of the Nadun festival, and in response to these observations, fieldwork has focused on the preservation of knowledge and the good culture of the Tu people ceremonial and folk songs at the Nadun Festival in Minhe County, China. This study combines ethnomusicology theory and methodology to investigate the preservation of the knowledge culture and distinctive folk music of the Nadun in Minhe County, China.

### Research Question

- How is the music knowledge preserved at the Nadun Festival by the Tu people of Minhe County, China?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### General Knowledge of Tu People

The question surrounding the origins of the Tu people in China has been a subject of continuous scholarly discourse, giving rise to three primary ideas that have been put forth. There are proponents who believe that the Tu ethnic group exhibits affiliations with both the Mongols and the enigmatic "Khors," drawing attention to language resemblances and historical documentation. Some scholars propose a potential association between the Tugukhun people and the subject under discussion, drawing upon evidence such as common toponyms and historical documentation. Furthermore, it has been postulated that the Tu people mostly exhibit a composite heritage derived from Mongols, Huihe, Xianbei, and several other ethnic groups. This amalgamation is believed to have arisen as a result of historical intermingling and the subsequent cultural exchanges between these populations. Although the Mongolian explanation is typically more frequently accepted, interactions with various tribes have influenced the intricate ethnic culture of the Tu people, adding to the ongoing ambiguity regarding their origins (Qi, 2003).

Language plays a crucial role in the development of folk songs within Tu culture, exerting a direct influence on the

rhythmic and melodic aspects of the music. The rhythmic and accentual attributes of the Tu language frequently result in the utilization of reverse fractal or iambic rhythms within their traditional musical compositions. Moreover, the lyrical content of Tu folk songs demonstrates the impact exerted by adjacent civilizations, including the Han Chinese and Tibetans. In locations where Tibetan culture holds prominence, Tibetan liner notes are integrated alongside Tu liner notes, whereas regions with a Han Chinese majority tend to have a greater prevalence of Chinese liner notes. This phenomenon demonstrates the process of language assimilation and the growing prevalence of inter-ethnic encounters. Moreover, the impact of Tibetan Buddhism may be observed in the utilization of the term "Mani" inside Tu ceremonial songs. In the context of interethnic cultural integration, both language and folk music play pivotal roles, serving as important components that facilitate contacts among diverse ethnic groups and contribute to the enhancement of ethnic cultural variety (Yang, 2008).

The Tu people do not have a conventional writing system and have always depended on oral transmission and folk art to preserve their culture. Attempts to establish a Tu script known as "Huzhu Tuwen" have been undertaken but have not been widely adopted, leaving the Tu people to rely mostly on Chinese characters for writing and communication. The Tu people have a rich and vivid culture in terms of clothes, particularly women's apparel, and are noted for their remarkable embroidery talents. Traditional costumes are changing, with some becoming obsolete while others adapting to new fashion trends. The Tu people's dress expertly blends tradition and contemporary, resulting in a distinct and vibrant costume culture. Earrings and collars are important parts of Tu culture, serving as necessary accessories for major events and festivals (Wang, 2009).

### General Knowledge about Tu People's Music

Tu music has a long history extending back over 1,700 years, with Tu ancestors flourishing in the Huanghe Valley on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Early songs like "Song of A Chien" circulated among the Tugu Hunn, reflecting historical events and migrations. The nomadic lifestyle of the Tu people, as well as their connections with the western areas, inspired their music, leading to its increase in scope and diversity. Their music takes several forms, including horse music, military music, and banquet music. Notably, the Tu tradition retains the narrative ballad "Larenbu and Jimensuo," which reflects the emotions and life experiences of the Tu people. The Tu people sang an old song in the Minhe area that relates legends such as the birth of Pangu and Nuwa, mixing aspects of numerous civilizations. This emphasizes the dynamic interaction of civilizations that contributes to China's greater cultural legacy (Huang, 2007).

Tu folk songs may be divided into two categories: "family songs" and "wild songs." Family songs are acceptable in traditional culture because they have established lyrics, organized compositions, and consistent rhythms. They come with rigorous rules governing who may and cannot sing them. In contrast, "wild songs," which are predominantly

love songs, are less constrained in terms of gender, age, and performance occasion. Young Tu men and women favor them despite the criticism and restrictions they face because they are associated with more freedom and growth opportunities. The conflict between the openness and restrictions of these song forms shapes the Tu folk music landscape (Wang, 2007; Hou & Seekhunlio 2023).

The language features observed in the lyrical content of Tu folk songs within the Minhe region have undergone a process of evolution over time. During the period spanning the 1970s and 1980s, while engaged in the compilation of Tu folk songs, researchers encountered lyrics that manifested in three distinct forms: those entirely composed in the Tu language, those exclusively composed in Chinese, and those that were bilingual, including both the Tu and Chinese languages. The practice of bilingual singing may exhibit variability contingent upon the specific occasion. The liner notes, an integral component of folk song lyrics, serve as a reflection of the distinctive attributes inherent in Tu folk tunes. It is noteworthy that several songs have incorporated liner notes, a characteristic typically observed in local Han Chinese folk songs, therefore emphasizing the regional influences on Tu folk music (Wang, 2007; Gao & Karin, 2023).

### General Knowledge about the Nadun Festival

The Tu people's Nadun Festival dates back 600 to 700 years, and its beginnings are shrouded in obscurity. According to Tu folklore, it all started with a skilled carpenter who was asked to build a palace for the emperor but found himself in a dangerous predicament. To honor his knowledge and valor, the Tu people began organizing yearly celebrations, which grew into the Nadun Festival. The event is held in Minhe County, which has a long history of tight links to the central court, military traditions, and agriculture activities. The Nadun Festival preserves traditional military and tribal rites that may date back to Genghis Khan's time. The Tu people acquired a yearning to connect with higher forces as they transitioned from nomadic to agricultural life, seeking supernatural blessings for abundant harvests and support during tough times. The Nadun Festival allows the Tu people to show appreciation to the gods and connect with them, eventually becoming a community expression of adoration and reverence (Cai, 2005).

The Tu Nadun Festival, whose roots are up to debate but are widely thought to have sprung from ancient farming practices, has undergone a gradual transformation over the years, resulting in a distinctive and culturally significant celebration. Originating from the tradition of offering prayers for bountiful harvests and safeguarding against hardships, the current manifestation of this celebration has elaborate ceremonial protocols, incorporating rituals, musical performances, dances, and recreational activities. The transfer of information is predominantly dependent on oral traditions, wherein older individuals impart knowledge to younger individuals. In addition, the Nadun Festival disseminates through a range of traditional practices, cultural contexts, and modern communication platforms, enhancing its

broader acknowledgement and safeguarding. The institution in question holds a significant position within the Tu culture since it plays a crucial role in promoting community cohesion, nurturing interpersonal relationships, and embodying deep cultural meaning via its carefully orchestrated ceremonial practices (Ma, 2019).

### Research Theory

The study uses aesthetics theory, delving into the processes involved in music creation, performance, and enjoyment, while a larger sociological perspective investigates music's social role, value standards, class influences, and cultural preservation. Analyzing the aesthetic features of musical compositions helps us understand the essence of music and how we perceive it (Adorno, 1997; Zhao, 2004). Furthermore, ethnomusicology theory, which looks into the cultural connections between people and music, is crucial for understanding the Nadun Festival and the Tu People, which demonstrates how it supports the preservation of traditional knowledge and traditions (Nettl, 1983; Wang, 2022).

### METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes qualitative research methodologies and integrates the discipline of ethnomusicology since it involves the gathering of field data through interviews and observations. In addition to conducting preliminary research, it is essential to collect scholarly resources, including academic materials, textbooks, papers, conceptual frameworks, theories, and articles from diverse and pertinent publications. The research has the following steps:

Step 1: Literature review to gather existing knowledge on the topics of music aesthetics, ethnomusicology, preservation of music knowledge, the Nadun Festival, and the Tu People. This review served as the foundation for research.

Step 2: Data collection by conducting interviews with experts in music aesthetics, ethnomusicology, and individuals with knowledge about the Nadun Festival and the Tu People. Their insights and perspectives were collected on the topics.

Step 3: The qualitative data from interviews were analyzed for themes, patterns, and insights related to music aesthetics, ethnomusicology and preservation.

Step 4: The findings from the different data sources were compared to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topics under investigation.

Step 5: The findings from the literature review and the data analysis were synthesized to answer research questions and develop a comprehensive overview of music aesthetics, ethnomusicology, preservation, and the significance of the Nadun Festival for the Tu People.

Step 6: Conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made based on the research findings. The implications of the findings were discussed for the preservation of music knowledge and the significance of cultural Nadun festivals.



## RESULTS

### **The Preservation and Transmission of Tu Nadun Music Culture**

The Tu Nadun music culture, which has strong historical and geographical ties to Minhe County in the Silk Road Economic Belt, has a noteworthy combination of openness and innovation in its efforts to preserve and transmit music expertise. Throughout successive generations, the folk music culture has assimilated external musical influences, all the while maintaining a genuine representation of the experiences and lifestyles of the laboring populace. The musical compositions have undergone adaptations in response to changing temporal and ecological circumstances, hence giving rise to distinctive melodic structures, rhythmic arrangements, and lyrical themes. The songs have been transmitted by oral traditions, imparted through direct instruction, and presented in collective renditions, with certain instances being preserved through the use of sheet music and recordings. The aforementioned songs serve as a genuine embodiment of traditional Chinese folk music, as they effectively capture the Tu people's profound appreciation for life and their relentless quest for aesthetic excellence.

The Minhe County Cultural Center provides intangible cultural heritage lessons to Tu persons who are interested, as part of a broader national initiative to conserve traditional culture. These classes facilitate the ongoing transmission of this rich ethnic folk art. Through the unwavering commitment of its successors, Tu Nadun music has emerged as a prominent medium for the Tu community to exhibit their cultural heritage on a global scale.

The Tu ethnic group has traditionally inhabited agricultural and pastoral regions for several generations, and their cultural customs are intricately linked with their surrounding natural environment. The younger generations of Tu people have been compelled to migrate for the sake of education and employment due to the influence of economic development and enhanced mobility. However, the Tu ethnic group places great importance on their festivals, and the Tu Nadun Festival holds a particularly notable significance among their cultural traditions. During the festival's eve, individuals who have relocated from their hometowns, namely the offspring of Tu, reunite with their families to orchestrate and engage in the celebratory events. This entails expressing appreciation towards the deities, requesting divine favor for their households, and commemorating the successful culmination of the year's agricultural endeavors.

The name "Nadun" in the Tu language may be interpreted as "entertainment" or "play," and it serves as a significant cultural practice within the Tu community residing in Minhe County, located in the province of Qinghai. The aforementioned customary folk festival extends from the twelfth day of the seventh lunar month to the fifteenth day of the ninth lunar month, encompassing a diverse range of events that incorporate religious practices, folk beliefs, magic, and the preservation of ethnic culture. The event in question is a significant commemoration that is specifically dedicated to the veneration of deities, the pursuit of divine favor, and the

expression of joy in relation to the agricultural yield. The Nadun Festival is a significant cultural event that holds great importance for the local Tu community. It has gained recognition as "the world's longest carnival" because of its wide magnitude and cultural significance. The festival is characterized by its vibrancy and deep connection to the lives of the Tu people.

### **Legends and Preservation of the Nadun Festival**

The Tu Nadun Festival, which is deeply rooted in Tu culture, has a mysterious origin shrouded in legends. According to mythology, the emperor commissioned a highly talented carpenter to build a beautiful palace. After completing the palace, the emperor wanted to retain the carpenter's services but was turned down. While fleeing to Minhe at night, the carpenter witnessed the peasants' plight and rallied them in resistance, assisting in the preservation and transmission of old wisdom. To avoid disaster, the smart carpenter instructed the rebels to disguise their weapons as props, waving colorful flags and performing a "meeting hands" dance, which baffled the emperor's spies, who were told they were seeing a pleasant Nadun Festival celebration. Despite the absence of violence, this insurrection contributed to the continuation of the Nadun Festival.

Another story claims that the celebration originated with Genghis Khan's army traveling through Minhe during the Yuan Dynasty. Tired after the long battle, the army ordered an immediate march, leaving numerous men and animals behind. They started farming in the region and eventually settled after being left without food or shelter. This agrarian-military way of life evolved throughout time, culminating in harvest festivals with singing and dancing to preserve agricultural expertise.

A third tradition links the current occurrence to a previous drought that neither lama chanting nor rain prayers were able to end. However, when a Sichuan Erlang temple statue was transported to the local temples and worshiped, followed by temple rebuilding, rain fell, blessing an abundant crop. People were overjoyed when the Erlang deity was conveyed in a sedan chair, drumming and dancing to express their gratitude, ushering in the Nadun Festival, which became a symbol of the Tu people's profound connection to their land and natural knowledge.

Despite the fact that these stories contain elements of fiction, they are useful tools for safeguarding traditional culture, ensuring its transmission through generations, and helping to preserve and disseminate critical knowledge about the Tu people's history, culture, and way of life. The origins of the Nadun Festival are intricately related to the Tu people's transition from nomadic herding to agriculture, with its rites built on their respect for nature and belief in supernatural harvest blessings. The festival has included several elements as it has evolved, both internally via cultural changes and outside through interactions with different civilizations. This dynamic blend of tradition and development characterizes the Nadun Festival's longevity and influence in Tu culture.

### Locations of the Tu People's Nadun Festival

The Tu people's Nadun Festival has traditionally been held on open grounds near village temples, ensuring accessibility for the festival's performances and ceremonies. However, the festival's setting has steadily changed from village streets and fields to town stages and plazas throughout time. The layout of the Nadun Festival site is governed by strict norms and regulations, regardless of the chosen location. This involves the creation and placement of holy tents and palanquins, the layout of the Kuai Shou Dance performance area, the positioning of money and grain poles, and the arrangement of commerce trading locations. The gods are largely ensconced inside the holy tent in the sculptures of the gods associated with the Nadun Festival and venerated by the locals. Village elders and guest teams are seated according to a rigid procedure based on hierarchical ties, representing the customary preservation of cultural traditions and expertise.

### Contents of the Tu People's Nadun Festival Activities

A prominent performance at the Nadun Festival is the Kuai Shou Dance, which consists of a series of "three, three, nine" rounds of choreographed movements involving numerous performers. The resonating sounds of gongs and drums frequently accompany the act of symbolizing devotion to deities and invoking good fortune. The performers don attire in green coats and bowler hats while simultaneously bearing a diverse array of objects, such as blades and flags, each symbolizing a distinct job. The dance performance showcases the dynamic movements and intricate forms that serve as a commemoration of the Tu people's historical shift from a military society to an agrarian one. Additionally, it serves as an expression of the jubilation associated with the bountiful harvest while simultaneously acting as a means of preserving their cultural heritage and accumulated knowledge (Figure 1).

The Zhuang Jia Qi performance is a comic artistic expression that combines elements of ritual and dance. It revolves around the endeavors of an elderly couple as they endeavor to convince their son to choose an agricultural lifestyle. The aforementioned statement elucidates the transition of the Tu people from a nomadic lifestyle to an agricultural culture, as well as the resultant conflict arising from differing ideals across generations. The aforementioned performance serves as a testament to the Tu people's inclination towards agriculture and their adeptness in adjusting to evolving conditions while concurrently preserving their agricultural knowledge (Figure 2).

The Three Kingdoms Theater production centers on the historical period known as the Three Kingdoms, showcasing notable figures such as Liu Bei, Guan Yu, Zhang Fei, Cao Cao, and Lu Bu. In this Nuo opera-inspired dance, dancers utilize masks to depict various characters while employing the Taiji Bagua Formation as a defining characteristic. The narrative starts by depicting rituals dedicated to the veneration of deities, diplomatic interactions characterized by respect and deference, as well as instances of fervent conflict. The theatrical production functions as an homage to the



**Figure 1.** Kuai Shou Dance

Source. Yujuan Qin



**Figure 2.** Zhuang Jia Qi

Source. Yujuan Qin

unwavering commitment and moral uprightness exhibited by Guan Yu while also placing significant emphasis on the principles and teachings of Confucianism. Furthermore, this phenomenon serves as a testament to the extensive cultural connections that took place between the Han Chinese and the Tu people. It provides valuable insights into the historical dynamics and relationships among many ethnic groups in the region, therefore playing a significant role in the conservation and transmission of cultural knowledge.

The Wu Guan dance is a traditional Nuo dance performed at the Nadun Festival. Five performers are clad in black robes and Qing Dynasty-style official headgear with scarlet tassels. Each dancer wears a unique mask and forms the Taiji Bagua Formation, which depicts acts of worship and mutual regard. This dance is strongly related to the ancient Tu Shi system and depicts the creative portrayal of that era in the local Tu culture. The Wu Guan dance was created as a result of the Tu elite's active participation in their society and their purposeful incorporation of aspects of Han culture, stressing the function of these elites as intermediaries between the local community and state authority. This dance helps with the Tu ethnic area's cultural preservation and transmission.

The tiger killer is the magnificent high point of the Nadun Festival. The performer wears a bull's head mask and a warrior's cloak and holds a sword in both hands. The Tiger

Killer is led onto the stage by two ecstatic women wearing masks and holding a shield and a fan. The Tu people's historic link between humans, nature, and heavenly energies is shown in this performance, which embodies their adoration and deification of nature. It demonstrates a deep belief system that combines nature worship, religious devotion, and superstitious beliefs, as well as their yearning for a better life despite adversity.

The five ethnic dances are a culturally rich performance that includes ethnic groups from the Hui, Uyghur, Tibetan, Han, and Tu. Originally a Hui dance, it represents the complex interaction of religious ideas, notably the difficulty of reconciling Islam with the polytheistic traditions of other nationalities. The development of the dance, spurred by the desire for national harmony, kept the Hui imam's image, with various ethnic groups dancing around the imam, indicating religious allegiance and cultural cohabitation for national unity.

The Nadun Festival is extremely important to the Tu people of Minhe, serving as their most important yearly event. It is not only a time for celebration but also a deep embodiment of cultural preservation and the transmission of traditional knowledge. During this event, individuals of all ages and genders visit friends and family, building relationships and seeking blessings. The event also provides a unique chance for young individuals to explore future marriages, with matchmakers organizing connections. This social gathering is crucial in building community ties and developing relationships among family and friends, thus helping to preserve their common cultural history and knowledge. Finally, the Nadun Festival blends into the Tu people's daily lives, improving their social interactions and changing their reality while preserving their traditional wisdom.

### The Organizational Process of the Tu Nadun Festival

Typically, two or three temples in charge of event planning organize the Nadun Festival. Alternatively, adjacent villages work together to organize the festival, with many communities creating host and guest teams to partake in the festivities. When two villages join forces, this collaborative arrangement is referred to as "two temples and one meeting" and "three temples and one meeting" when three villages collaborate. In certain areas, communities arrange their own Nadun Festival with their own village temple as the center, a practice known as the "One Temple, One Meeting" style. For the event, villages with temples devoted to the same god inside the same village joined forces with adjacent villages. However, the major rites are performed only at the local temple.

Each village takes turns directing the festival's coordination in the first two organizational forms, bearing responsibility for all elements from preparation to implementation. They serve as event organizers and leaders. The "One Temple, One Meeting" structure, on the other hand, includes inhabitants from the same village assembling to perform rites and festivals only at their local temple, without collaborating with adjacent villages. This organizational strategy is more typical in locations with a diverse ethnic population.

The Nadun Festival, regardless of its organizational structure, follows an annual rotation, with each village taking turns leading the festival's preparations and events. The event is critical in promoting contact between people and deities, altering the spiritual and material elements of life in Minhe, and preserving and sustaining social relationships between villages and their larger social networks. This cultural legacy preserves and transmits ancestral knowledge and traditions, guaranteeing their continuance throughout generations.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Nadun Festival, which is an integral part of Tu culture, contains features of astronomy, geography, battle, religion, production, and daily life while also functioning as a cultural storehouse of communal memory and tradition.

This cultural relevance is addressed further in Pei Lili's (2007) research on the Tu Nation's cultural inheritance and transformations. The research looks at the growth of traditional Tu culture from the early twentieth century to the present day, with a special focus on the period after 1949. It investigates natural villages such as Qingyi Village in Minhe County and nearby locations such as Heer County in order to shed light on the persistence and flexibility of Tu cultural dynamics. Material culture, language, marital practices, family structures, funeral rites, religious beliefs, festivals, and leisure activities are all covered in the study. It also dives into less-explored issues such as Tu familial relationships, the Mani Association of Tu cultural groupings, and regional differences in Tu beliefs, particularly their veneration for the deity Erlang. The research finishes by detailing the key elements of Tu cultural legacy and change, the mechanisms driving these shifts, the Tu people's active engagement in cultural development, the obstacles they confront, and potential remedies.

Furthermore, the County Nadun Festival develops as an important part of traditional Chinese culture, combining religious, cultural, social, and harvest celebration components. Haidong City and County's effort to preserve and transmit this festival displays their desire to hand down significant cultural values and ways of life to future generations while also inviting people to experience this one-of-a-kind cultural spectacle. This festival, according to Zhong Jingjing's (2014) study, "Between the Sacred and Secular: An Ethnographic Examination of the Contemporary Changes of the Nadun of the Tu People in the Sanchuan Region," exemplifies the harmonious coexistence of tradition and modernity, celebrating China's rich cultural heritage. The significance of Nadun, a folk tradition among the Tu people of Minhe County, Qinghai Province, in venerating deities and honoring bountiful harvests, is highlighted in the article. The paper explores modern Nadun transitions, using the Qijia Nadun of Minhe County as a case study. It contends that by making these changes, the tradition's particular spiritual and cultural character may be preserved while fulfilling modern expectations. Furthermore, it demonstrates how Tu Nadun's history reflects the impact of national discourse on the local community's commitment to protect and preserve their unique cultural assets.



In conclusion, the Tu Nadun Festival serves as a significant cultural event that actively contributes to the preservation of ancestral knowledge and traditions within the Tu community. The object in question functions as a potent emblem of the individuals' profound affiliation with their historical origins, cultural legacy, and manner of existence. Over the course of history, the Tu people have diligently preserved their cultural heritage by employing a blend of customary practices, adjustments, and collective celebrations.

The Tu Nadun music culture in Minhe County serves as a prime example of a vibrant tradition that adeptly incorporates elements from both the past and the present, ensuring its longevity for future generations. Notwithstanding the impact of contemporary influences, the Tu Nadun Festival continues to have substantial importance as a commemorative event that pays tribute to its agricultural legacy and cultural distinctiveness. The distinctive amalgamation of tradition and innovation ensures the safeguarding of Tu heritage and knowledge for posterity.

The celebration serves as a manifestation of the Tu community's dedication to the preservation, maintenance, and flexibility of their cultural heritage and sense of self. The phenomenon under consideration effectively reconciles the principles of tradition and modernity while fostering social cohesion and facilitating the intergenerational transmission of knowledge. The Tu Nadun Festival is a culturally significant event that encapsulates the lively and ever-evolving essence of the Tu community.

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