

Study on the Development Status, Inheritance, and Protection of Twelve Muqam in Shache County, Xinjiang

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Abstract:

The Twelve Muqam is one of the world's intangible cultural heritages and a cultural treasure inherited by the Uyghurs. Setting the field site in the inheritance center of Twelve Muqam - Shache County, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, this article carries out an in-depth investigation and observation of the inheritors of Twelve Muqam, folk artists and ordinary people in Shache County through independent personal channels. This study found that the Twelve Muqam is well popularized among the Uyghurs in Shache County. However, the difficulty in cultivating Twelve Muqam artists makes it challenging to pass down Twelve Muqam. In addition, the inheritors of Twelve Muqam and folk artists take it as a personal belief rather than just a form of art, making them advocate strict preservation of the original state of this intangible cultural heritage. To some extent, this study engages in dialog and comparison with previous research conducted from the perspective of "the others". It provides some enlightening insights for the subsequent inheritance and protection of Twelve Muqam.

Keywords: Twelve Muqam, Xinjiang, Uyghurs, intangible cultural heritage, inheritance and protection

1. Introduction

Since 1949, China has gradually focused on protecting and inheriting culture while continuously developing in terms of economy and politics. Culture, as a country's soft power, is not only an important indicator of composite national strength but also represents the diversity of national culture and the prosperity of spiritual life. In contrast, ethnic culture represents a nation's perception of the world. In China, which is characterized by its multi-ethnicity, more attention is required from the country to protect the diversity of ethnic culture. As a cultural treasure of the Uyghurs, the Twelve Muqam originated from the 1300s to 1500s and has been passed down by generations of Uyghurs ever since. In 2003, China initiated the declaration to include the "Art of Chinese Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam" in the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO. In 2005, the "Art of Chinese Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam" was included in the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO. In September 2008, the Twelve Muqam Cultural Inheritance Center of Shache County was officially completed, becoming the center and guarantee for the inheritance and protection of the Twelve Muqam.¹ Although

the inheritance and protection work is still in progress, the development of Twelve Muqam is not as well-known and optimistic in terms of inheritance prospects as the other two intangible cultural heritages independently declared by China - Guqin (Chinese zither) and Kunqu Opera.

Domestic scholars' research on the Twelve Muqam mainly focuses on its ontology. In 1959, Mr. Wan Tongshu published an article titled "An Excellent Kind of Classical Ethnic Music: Twelve Muqam," which introduces the Twelve Muqam from genre, lyrics, rhythm, accompaniment instruments, compilation work, etc.² Adilijiang Alimujiang published an article titled "Study on the Lyrics of Twelve Muqam Performed by Tuerdi Ahong," which mainly analyzes the individual Twelve Muqam performances.³ In their narratives, the Uyghurs' Twelve Muqam is a large-scale integrated form of art that com-

Mariyemuguli Zunong. Inheritance and Achievements: Twelve Muqam Cultural Inheritance Center [J]. *Modern Business Trade Industry*, 2019, 40(10): 163-164. DOI: 10.19311/j.cnki.1672-3198.2019.10.076.

² Mariyemuguli Zunong. Anthropological Study on Twelve Muqam [D]. Xinjiang Normal University, 2019. DOI: 10.27432/d.cnki.gxsfu.2019.000131.

³ Adilijiang Alimujiang. Study on the Lyrics of Twelve Muqam Performed by Tuerdi Ahong [J]. *Youth Literator*, 2019, (14): 62.

¹ http://news.cnhubei.com/content/2020-10/20/content_13398700.html2024.1.26 https://baike.baidu.com/item/十二木卡姆/2187147?fr=ge_ala2024.1.26 [1]

bines singing, dancing, and music, mainly popularized in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, and typically represents the Uyghur traditional music culture. After the People's Republic of China was founded, governments at all levels conducted cultural salvage of the Twelve Muqam for the first time and compiled scores and lyrics based on its performance videos. Some scholars have also studied the current situation and inheritance status of Twelve Muqam. Wang Jianchao (2013/2022) studied the cultural identity changes of Twelve Muqam by exploring its performance changes in the original context and contemporary social context.⁴ The performance form of Twelve Muqam has expanded from being recognized by the Uyghurs to being recognized by the country, from performance occasions in the original context, such as festivals and religious events, to performance occasions in the current social context, such as government- or national-level events. As for the protection of the Twelve Muqam, Reyihanguli Kadi'er (2021) studied the legal protection system for the Twelve Muqam. Special laws are formulated due to the particularity of its intangible cultural heritage while legal compulsion is exerted.⁵ In addition, scholars such as Mariyemuguli Zunong (2019) and Wang Haixia (2012) conducted comprehensive studies on Twelve Muqam, analyzing its inheritance status at specific points of inheritance.⁶ Song Haibo (2023) and others conducted a case study on the inheritor of the Twelve Muqam - Yilihamu Reyimu, deeply researching the "carrier" of intangible cultural heritage to gain experience in cultural inheritance and provide insights for future generations.⁷

The studies above have researched and expounded on the forms and inheritance of the Twelve Muqam from the perspectives of the national government, legal policies, etc. However, these studies are usually limited in length and depth, lacking sufficient in-depth exploration. The

4 Wang Jianchao. The Transition of the Music Culture Identity of Twelve Muqam in Hetian Region [J]. *Explorations in Music*, 2022, (03): 67-75. DOI: 10.15929/j.cnki.1004-2172.2022.03.008

Wang Jianchao. Exploration and Analysis of and Reasons for the Modern Transition of Twelve Muqam in the Hetian Region [J]. *Journal of Nanjing Arts Institute (Music & Performance)*, 2013, (02): 111-120.

5 Reyihanguli Kadi'er. New Study on Legal Protection of Twelve Muqam [J]. *Legal and Economy*, 2021, 29(01): 60-63.

6 Wang Haixia. Study on Folk Inheritance of Twelve Muqam in Kashi [D]. Xinjiang Normal University, 2012.

7 Song Haibo. Cruising in the Twelve Muqam River [N]. *Xinjiang Daily (Chinese)*, 2023-12-06 (004). DOI: 10.28887/n.cnki.nxjrb.2023.004942

most crucial point is that most studies tend to view the protection and inheritance of Twelve Muqam from the perspective of others and more or less overlook the true attitudes and thoughts of the actual carriers of this intangible cultural heritage - the inheritors, as well as relevant personnel and enthusiasts, towards the inheritance and protection of Twelve Muqam. This article, taking Shache County, Kashi, Xinjiang as the site for fieldwork, intends to verify the conclusions drawn by previous studies on the views of intangible cultural heritage inheritors regarding the inheritance and protection of the Twelve Muqam and explore whether their positions are the same, similar, or even possibly opposite to those of the national government and scholars, using interviewing the national-level inheritors of Twelve Muqam in depth, observing and participating the real inheritance of Twelve Muqam to deeply understand the position of Twelve Muqam in the life of local people. Viewing the inheritance and innovation of intangible cultural heritages from the perspective of the inheritor can not only help the local area find more suitable methods of inheritance that are in line with cultural forms and the current status of inheritance but also provide suggestions for the country and government when formulating laws and policies for intangible cultural heritages, thus better carrying the inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritages forward.

2. Methods

2.1 Fieldwork

Fieldwork, also known as field research, is commonly used in humanity domains. Scholars collect first-hand materials from fieldwork to understand the essence of their studies. It advocates an objective and exploratory spirit, with the ultimate goal of uncovering the truth and discovering the patterns. By observing "others," scholars gain insights into "themselves" and establish humanistic thoughts, thus achieving a dialectical unification of scientificity, value, generality, and individuality.⁸

8 Li Chan. Development and Application of Fieldwork in Chinese Humanities [J]. *Art Science and Technology*, 2015, 28 (01): 256.

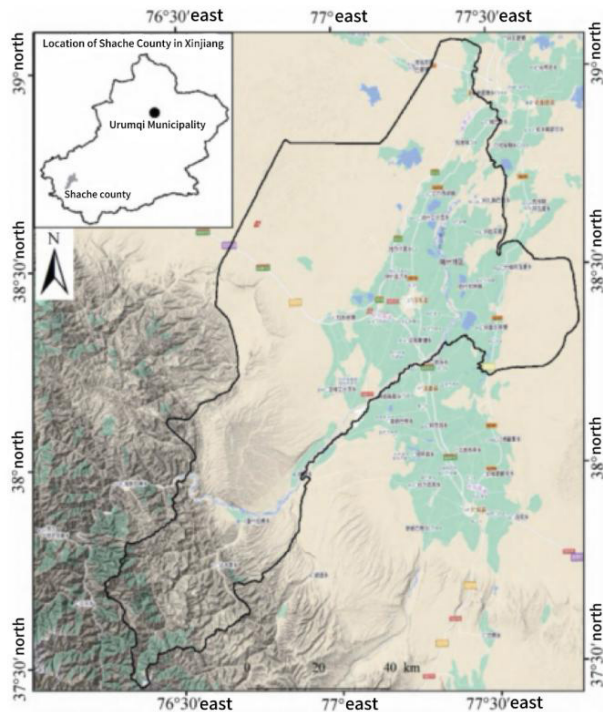


Figure 1: Location Shache County in Xinjiang⁹

The fieldwork this time is conducted in Shache County, Kashi, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Situated at the northern foot of the Kunlun Mountains and to the south of the Pamir Plateau, Shache County is located at the alluvial fan plain of the middle and upper reaches of the Yarkand River, which is right between the Taklimakan Desert and the Bugur Desert. The terrain slopes from southwest to northeast, covering a total area of 9,037 km² and geographical coordinates ranging from 76°18' to 77°47' E and 37°27' to 39°5' N. It has a drought desert climate with distinct seasons, dry climate, long sunshine hours, and high evaporation. Shache County is rich in agricultural resources. In addition to almonds, cotton, wheat, corn, melons, and fruits are the main agricultural products in this area. At the same time, animal husbandry is also developing to a certain extent. The administrative divisions of Shache County have undergone several changes and now consist of 34 townships (districts, streets) and 485 administrative villages.¹⁰

Shache County, closely related to the Twelve Muqam, is an important birthplace of the Uyghur Twelve Muqam.

⁹ Source of Figure 1: Jia Xiang, Yan Zhiming, Liang Ting, etc. Evolution of Rural Settlement Spatial Pattern in Shache County during the Past 50 Years [J]. Ecological Science, 2023, 42 (01): 146-154. DOI: 10.14108/j.cnki.1008-8873.2023.01.017

¹⁰ The same as above.

Therefore, it is honored as the “Capital of Twelve Muqam”. As early as the 1500s, Amannisa Khan married Abdurashid Khan (the second Khan of the Yarkent Khanate) and became the queen at 14. Amannisa Khan gathered musicians, singers, and poets who had scattered to various places in the palace, collected the folk songs of the “Muqam,” and then organized and compiled them into an Uyghur Twelve Muqam divertimento, which has been well preserved and passed down to this day. Moreover, the capital of the Yarkent Khanate was located in present-day Shache County.¹¹

Secondly, Shache County, known as the hometown of the Twelve Muqam, is a must-visit place for many scholars studying the Twelve Muqam. For example, Mariyemuguli Zunong conducted an anthropological study on Twelve Muqam in Shache County, interviewing folk artists and inheritors of Twelve Muqam in Shache County and studying the inheritance patterns and current status of Twelve Muqam there.¹² Similarly, Tong Xinyu and Fan Wen conducted studies on the music culture of Twelve Muqam in Shache County and its historical and current cultural functions.¹³ In addition, the Twelve Muqam Film and Drama Theater, the Shache Twelve Muqam Cultural Art Center, and the Hometown Garden of Twelve Muqam are all located in Shache County.

2.2 In-depth interviews

Adopting semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews are characterized by not being bound by the order of questions and the wording of questions for the interview. It is possible to adjust the order of questions in time based on the context of the interview, thus grasping the content of the interview and maintaining the rhythm of communication. The key is that the researcher can guide the interviewees to elaborate on their thoughts regarding the interview topic at appropriate moments.¹⁴

¹¹ Abudukelimu Rehman. Art of Uyghur Muqam in the Period of Yarkand Khanate [J]. Journal of Northwest University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Science), 2012, (05): 55-59.

¹² Mariyemuguli Zunong. Anthropological Study on Twelve Muqam [D]. Xinjiang Normal University, 2019. DOI: 10.27432/d.cnki.gxsfu.2019.000131.

¹³ Tong Xinyu. Collision of Multiculturalism: A Study of the "Twelve Muqam" Music Culture in Kashi - Case Study on Shache County [J]. Popular Literature and Art, 2020, (05): 44-45. [1] Fan Wen. Perspective on Cultural Function of Twelve Muqam from its Formation in Shache County[J]. Xinjiang Art (Chinese), 2020, (02): 117-122.

¹⁴ Jin-Ding Lin, Chia-Feng Yen, Mei-Hua Chen. Qualitative Research Method: Models and Steps of

This study selected Yilihamu Reyimu, a national inheritor of Twelve Muqam, as well as his apprentices and disciples of his apprentices and people of Uyghur and Han ethnic groups. First, we contacted the inheritor on the Internet and, after obtaining permission, went to the field for an in-depth interview with Yilihamu Reyimu. Then, accompanied by the inheritor, we went to the homes of his apprentices and interviewed them and their own apprentices. In addition, we randomly interviewed ordinary people of Han and Uyghur ethnic groups in Shache County. The interviewees are engaged in different professions, but all come from Shache County. The interviewees were divided into performers and non-performers, including 7 performers (D1-D7) and 8 non-performers (W1-W8).

Interviewing [J]. *Journal of Disability Research*, 2005, 3 (2): 122-136.

In summary, 15 people were interviewed in this study. The interviews were conducted in January 2023, lasting between 30 and 120 minutes at an average of 60. The interviews aim to understand how much ordinary people know about and love the Twelve Muqam, as well as the opinions and learning experiences of the Twelve Muqam actors. The interviewees scheduled the interviews, and we hoped to conduct one-on-one interviews with them in the most comfortable state. In advance, the researcher informed the interviewees of the theme, required time, and relevant interview matters. Recording was avoided during the interview, and all conversations were documented through note-taking. Once the personal identity information of the interviewees was involved, it would be anonymized, and such information of some interviewees could be made public with their consent.

Table 1 Profile of Interviewees

	Case	Age	Profession	Ethnic Group
Performers	D1	60	National-level inheritor of Twelve Muqam	Uyghur
	D2	38	Farmer	Uyghur
	D3	70	Farmer	Tajik
	D4	11	Primary school student	Uyghur
	D5	11	Primary school student	Uyghur
	D6	10	Primary school student	Uyghur
	D7	5	Preschooler	Uyghur
Non-performers	W1	25	Museum docent	Uyghur
	W2	23	Expo park docent	Uyghur
	W3	28	Driver	Uyghur
	W4	23	Primary school PE teacher	Uyghur
	W5	27	Electrical engineer	Uyghur
	W6	50	Salesperson	Han
	W7	35	Store owner	Uyghur
	W8	30	Serviceman	Han

2.3 Participant observation

Participant observation, one of the most basic methods of anthropological fieldwork, refers to the process where anthropologists participate in the daily life of local people at the research site for a long period to obtain first-hand materials. Researchers observe everything about the life of the studied subjects as bystanders and participate to a considerable extent in their activities for detailed observation. By participating in the life and various activities of local people, materials that cannot be obtained by other means can be collected, and researchers can also personal-

ly experience the culture of the local people, thus gaining a deep understanding and grasping the nature, function, and symbolic meaning of the culture.¹⁵

The author mainly conducted participant observation by visiting local cultural parks, learning and participating in performances with the inheritor, participating in a Uyghur wedding, and visiting the homes of disciples of the inheritor. Within a week, the author visited the local intangible cultural heritage exhibition hall (Shache Intangible

15 He Xingliang. Cultural Anthropology Fieldwork - Participant Observation and In-depth Interview [J]. Religionary Faith and Ethnic Culture, 2016 (00): 274-289.

Cultural Heritage Park), Shache Museum, Kashi Museum, Amannisa Khan Memorial Mausoleum, and Shache Twelve Muqam Cultural Art Center. The author attended a local wedding and performed twice with the inheritor and his team. The author visited the home of a disciple and experienced the traditional-style teaching and learning process of Twelve Muqam. The author fully observed the routine performances of Twelve Muqam in the life of Uyghurs and the life of Uyghur Twelve Muqam learners. By deeply observing the collected materials, the author provided a third-party perspective and first-hand data to support historical archives and interview texts.



Figure 2. Joint performance by the Researcher and Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors (anonymous processed with the consent of the interviewees)

3. Results

3.1 High popularity among Uyghurs

After reaching Shache County, Kashi, the author interviewed a dozen Uyghur and Han compatriots successively, asking them if they like listening to the Twelve Muqam and if they listen to it in their daily lives. The interviewees, who are from both Uyghur and Han ethnic groups, include a museum docent, a docent of the intangible cultural heritage park (Shache Intangible Cultural Heritage Park), a serviceman, a store owner in the ancient city, a salesperson, a driver, and a primary school PE teacher. For Uyghur interviewees, all of their answers were that they loved listening to the Twelve Muqam and often listened to it daily. Some female interviewees said they would play Twelve Muqam while cooking or doing laundry at home. Some interviewees said they could feel no rhythm when listening to popular songs, so they usually store the Twelve Muqam in their smartphones. When they needed to play music, they would play Twelve Muqam. Most people said they could not when asked if they could play and sing Twelve Muqam. Four interviewees said they could sing along with the melodies, but only for self-entertainment and not to the extent of performing on stage. Besides, over

half of the Uyghur interviewees learned about the Twelve Muqam from their families. Usually, they had been influenced by their elders playing the Twelve Muqam music since childhood. The docent of the intangible cultural heritage park (Shache Intangible Cultural Heritage Park) said:

“I’ve been working at the park for nearly two years. In summer, there are Twelve Muqam performances. I would enjoy the performances when working as a docent from morning to night every day, even when free. I would also listen to it while doing laundry and cooking at home. Well, how should I describe it? I just love it. For example, when I listen to modern songs, I get tired of them after listening once or twice. But the Twelve Muqam is different; I love it a lot.”

For interviewees from the Han ethnic group, Twelve Muqam is commonly known, but they don’t often listen to it. A Han serviceman who had been living here for almost seven years said that he watched Muqam performances only when there were yearly cultural performances in the army. Still, people of the Han ethnic group had less understanding about Twelve Muqam than Uyghur interviewees did.

Twelve Muqam music appears in many people’s daily lives in Shache County. In Shache County, restaurants and breakfast shops selling baked naan and samsa along the streets can be seen everywhere. Twelve Muqam is usually not played as background music for some larger restaurants. However, a large portion of smaller breakfast shops or restaurants play Twelve Muqam as background music. In the rural areas of Shache County, Twelve Muqam performances are essential for Uyghur weddings, banquets, and gatherings. When a wedding is held in the rural areas of Shache County, the Uyghurs usually go to a dedicated wedding venue and invite many relatives and friends. Friends of friends can also attend the wedding. After the wedding starts, guests are served noodles and pilaf, and some snacks such as naan, sangza, rock candy, and rice candy are placed on the table for guests. After the dinner, the Twelve Muqam performances played with instruments such as satar, dutar, gijak, and dap (a kind of tambourine) will begin. The wedding ceremony will officially begin after the Twelve Muqam performances are over.

Surprisingly, children are also very interested in Twelve Muqam. Twelve Muqam is often seen as an intangible cultural heritage as “antiques,” and folk artists and inheritors are generally old. Therefore, the audience is mostly middle-aged and elderly people from the public’s point of view. However, in Shache County, the author observed that many children were also interested in Twelve Muqam and spontaneously learned about it. In the inheritance team of Twelve Muqam inheritor Yilihamu Reyimu, there

is a five-year-old dancer named Gulinazi. She started learning the dance part of Twelve Muqam with her mother at four. Young as she was, she was quite engaged and professional in her performance, showing no stage fright.

When visiting Tu'ersunguli, the disciple of the inheritor of Twelve Muqam, the researcher noticed three boys of primary school age. After understanding the situation, the Researcher found out that only one of the boys was the youngest son of her own, from whom the other two came to learn Twelve Muqam. Although they were the same age, Tu'ersunguli's son is the master of the other two boys. During the interview, one of the boys said that they heard the master (Tu'ersunguli's youngest son) could play the dutar, and they were very interested in Twelve Muqam, so they worshipped him as their teacher and learned how to play the dutar.

Based on the results from interviews, the Twelve Muqam music played in restaurants of Shache County, the Twelve Muqam performances at a Uyghur wedding, and children's interest in Twelve Muqam, it can be inferred that Twelve Muqam is highly popularized among local Uyghurs in Shache County.

3.2 Great difficulty in inheritance due to complex performance form

According to the investigation in Shache County, the Twelve Muqam consists of twelve movements, namely Rak, Chebbiyat, Mushawrek, Chahargah, Penjigah, Özhal, Ejem, Oshaq, Bayat, Nawa, Sëgah, and Iraq. Each movement is divided into three parts: "naghma," "dastan," and "mashup." Each movement lasts about two hours, and it takes 24 hours to finish performing a whole set of Twelve Muqam. Hence, the Twelve Muqam is characterized by its long duration and rich content.

There are a total of 19 instruments for the Twelve Muqam performances, including the main ones such as satar, dutar, dap, khushtar, tanbur, gijak, and ney. In collective performances of Twelve Muqam, there are no strict rules for accompanying instruments, which, in general, can be chosen freely based on the performers' situation. Generally, the performance form involves singers sitting together and singing without scores while dancers dance in front of the singers. As the singers need to memorize all the scores, and the dancers are required to memorize all the movements, the Twelve Muqam performers are highly demanded.

The Twelve Muqam is mostly inherited in its traditional form, which means oral and spiritual communication. After Amannisa Khan finished organizing and compiling the whole album of Twelve Muqam in the 16th century, and before Mr. Wan Tongshu started making Twelve Muqam into music scores in the 20th century, the melodies and

lyrics of Twelve Muqam had always been inherited orally, instead of in a written manner. No melodies or lyrics of Twelve Muqam were recorded in writing until the group of music experts led by Mr. Wan Tongshu compiled them into musical scores after the founding of the People's Republic of China. However, even now, with written musical scores for the Twelve Muqam, the masters still teach their apprentices by traditional means.

"There are mainly two ways of transmission," said Yilihamu Reyimu, "One is to learn on the spot and perform with us. You can easily understand if you have been listening to it with your parents since childhood. The other is to learn them together in the traditional way, that is, the master teaches the students sentence by sentence after memorizing the scores, but the students do not have the scores to refer to."

As a national inheritor, Yilihamu Reyimu said in the interview that Twelve Muqam was too difficult, and even for part of it, that very few people could learn and master it. He recruits 50 to 100 learners every year, and now there are about 500. Among these people, he has been mentoring 50 to 60 apprentices, but only about ten can be called real Muqam artists. Yilihamu also said talent was essential for learning Twelve Muqam, and not everyone was suitable for learning it as it was too difficult.

Due to the long duration, rich content, comprehensive skills required for actors, and the reliance on oral teaching, the performance of Twelve Muqam imposes high demands on learners, thus making the inheritance relatively difficult.

3.3 Adhering to maintaining the original state of intangible cultural heritage

Many studies advocate innovative development or dynamic inheritance to protect and inherit intangible cultural heritages. The official policy issued by the State Council of China states the 16-Chinese-character guideline for the protection of intangible cultural heritages as "giving priority to protection, putting rescue at the first place, rational utilization, and inheritance and development." In this regard, "inheritance and development" refers to promoting the advancement and innovative development of excellent traditional culture of ethnic minorities while respecting and inheriting it. Song Junhua proposed that innovation in protecting intangible cultural heritage was the fundamental driving force for its creation and inheritance and is based on the subjectivity and dynamism of culture.¹⁶ Xie Shicheng proposed that the inheritance, protection,

¹⁶ Song Junhua, Wang Hui. Standardization and Innovation for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritages [J]. *Ethnic Art Studies*, 2023, 36 (05): 90-98. DOI: 10.14003/j.cnki.mzsyj.2023.05.09.

and innovation of intangible cultural heritage were related not only to the Continuity of individual craftsmanship and the development of a specific industrial economy but also to the protection and inheritance of the national culture gene.¹⁷ Some other scholars have proposed innovative ideas about Twelve Muqam. Mariyemuguli Zunong proposed to adapt and refine the lyrics or performance style of Muqam, making it a contemporary work loved by the people and in line with the development trend of the times.¹⁸

In the author's study and interview, however, Yilihamu Reyimu, as the national inheritor of the intangible cultural heritage - Twelve Muqam, holds an entirely different attitude toward "innovation" from the public. In his opinion, only the melodies and lyrics organized by Amannisa Khan can be called Twelve Muqam, while any other form of adaptation should not be accepted. When the author mentions "adapting Twelve Muqam performance into a Chinese version," Yilihamu even resists this and says, "Don't think about it, and don't even talk about it." The 2024 CCTV Spring Festival Gala would set up a sub-venue in Kashi, where Twelve Muqam was planned to be performed. To the public, this may be a good opportunity to showcase Twelve Muqam to the audience of other ethnic groups and make it more famous and popularized. However, Yilihamu declined the opportunity due to the requirement to adapt the Twelve Muqam performance into a Chinese version for the Spring Festival Gala. "This is not my job," said Yilihamu.

From Yilihamu's verbal and behavioral responses to the innovative development of Twelve Muqam, it can be seen that the inheritors hold a negative attitude towards the innovation of changing the traditional form of Twelve Muqam.

3.4 Taking intangible cultural heritage as a kind of ethnic belief rather than a simple kind of performing arts

Many people take Twelve Muqam as an artwork of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang; however, to the real inheritors of this intangible cultural heritage, it is a kind of ethnic belief. Born in a family of folk artists, Yilihamu Reyimu learned the Twelve Muqam from his elders when he was a child. "My grandfather and father were both song and dance ensemble members. At home, my father taught 17 Xie Shicheng. Current Status and Innovative Ideas for the Protection and Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritages [J]. Journal of Putian University, 2022, 29 (06): 61-66.

18 Mariyemuguli Zunong. Anthropological Study on Twelve Muqam [D]. Xinjiang Normal University, 2019. DOI: 10.27432/d.cnki.gxsfu.2019.000131.

boys to play musical instruments and girls to dance. My grandfather would take us to the countryside during winter and summer vacations to learn," said Yilihamu. The nurturing, artistic, and educational environment made Yilihamu interested in Twelve Muqam at an early age. In 1978, Yilihamu was recruited by the Shache Art Troupe at 16. In 2003, China initiated the declaration to include the "Art of Chinese Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam" in the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO. As the director of the Office of the Bureau of Culture and Tourism and head of the Shache Art Troupe, Yilihamu gathered the only four people who had mastered part of the Twelve Muqam and began to prepare for the inheritance and protection of it. He learned the entire set of Twelve Muqam himself and taught it to other inheritors and apprentices. He learned how to play all the stringed instruments, plucked instruments, hand drums, and the lyrics and dancing movements of the Twelve Muqam. In addition, he had established a heritage center at home long before the Government of Shache County set up the Twelve Muqam Heritage Center. He has been devoting his whole life to the inheritance and protection of Twelve Muqam.

Yilihamu Reyimu believes that the difficulty in passing down Twelve Muqam lies not only in its long duration, extensive content, and great difficulty but also in the fact that not everyone can build an emotional connection to Twelve Muqam and is willing to regard it as a kind of belief.

"Twelve Muqam is a kind of discipline. Out of a hundred trainees, less than ten can be considered Twelve Muqam artists," said Yilihamu. "This is because many people can only learn part of it and cannot accept it from the bottom of their hearts. They lack the specific emotions and beliefs in their hearts. Twelve Muqam artists express their beliefs through lyrics and music. As the rhythm of Twelve Muqam is strong and rich, whoever feels like dancing can go dancing, but they cannot appreciate or even understand the belief behind Twelve Muqam."

"Each movement of Twelve Muqam has a long story of its own: past and present, heaven and hell, how people came to the earth, every story has its content. Without a certain level, no one can understand this content. It is necessary to have this belief to appreciate it; this is a result of belief."

After in-depth communication with the inheritors and folk artists, the author also heard many religious stories about Twelve Muqam.

In a legend, Allah created a human statue and let the soul reside inside. "The inside of the human body is particularly terrifying and dark. I cannot stay there and don't want to," said the soul. "I will let you listen to the music played by a star (a type of musical instrument for the

Twelve Muqam),” said Allah. Hence, beautiful music was arranged for the soul. “Now it is fine,” said the soul. (D2) A practitioner had been practicing for forty years and had hundreds of disciples. Once, he visited another city and fell in love with a girl. From then on, he abandoned all his beliefs. “This girl’s city means Mecca to me. I won’t do anything else but stay with her. She is my Allah, and I don’t want anything else,” he said. His disciples said, “Master, you have practiced for 40 years. What you are doing is a betrayal of Allah.” He said, “I don’t care. I’ll devote my whole life to this girl.” After a few years, he realized something and repented, saying, “I was confused. This is my sin. What should I do?” At this moment, Allah told him to become a player of Twelve Muqam, sing the Twelve Muqam songs, and use them to wash away his sin. (D3)

When the inheritors and folk artists of Twelve Muqam talked about it, they showed rich and profound emotions and devout beliefs towards it, demonstrating that the significance of the Twelve Muqam to them goes far beyond a kind of performing arts, but belongs to the unique cultural belief of their ethnic group.

3.5 Differences between personal visits and official surveys

In anthropological studies, fieldwork is designed to collect first-hand materials and know the real situation. When scholars conduct fieldwork on the Twelve Muqam, they usually use official channels; that is, they communicate with the local cultural and tourism bureau or local government in advance, and after obtaining permission, they are led by officials from the local cultural and tourism bureau or government, as well as local guides, to carry out studies. Through these procedures, the conclusions drawn by scholars are usually that the inheritors of the Twelve Muqam generally believe that the inheritance of the intangible cultural heritage of Twelve Muqam should not adhere to the old ways but to the principles of innovation and tradition.¹⁹

In this study, however, out of love and curiosity for the Twelve Muqam, the author, on a family basis, arrived in the hometown of Twelve Muqam - Shache County. There was no practical motive, no funding from relevant institutions for the study, and no official guide. Despite no contact with the inheritors and artists of Twelve Muqam through official channels, the author deeply felt the enthusiasm of the inheritors and artists of Twelve Muqam. The following content is presented in the first-person narrative: In the evening, when we just reached Shache County, Yili-

hamu Reyimu, the national inheritor of Twelve Muqam, prepared a banquet for us with his troupe of performers, showcasing five intangible cultural heritages, including the Twelve Muqam. Yilihamu declined other performance invitations to welcome us, saying, “Because we made this appointment a month ago.” Additionally, Yilihamu arranged our itinerary for Shache County. When I expressed my desire to learn to play a musical instrument of Twelve Muqam, Yilihamu immediately selected a dutar suitable for me. As the duties available in the market are getting larger and larger, there are very few small duties suitable for girls to play with, so Yilihamu took out a guqin from his collection for me. During these few days, Yilihamu invited us to his friend’s wedding. At the wedding, we were treated as honored guests from afar: tableware was prepared particularly for the three of us when we had pilaf (also known as Xinjiang Hand Pilaf, a special dish eaten with hands). Yilihamu performed the Twelve Muqam at the wedding. At the last performance - mashup, Yilihamu nodded to me, signed me to the stage, and handed me a dutar to play along with them.

In this case, when the author mentions the innovation of Twelve Muqam, Yilihamu expresses his opinion, saying, “The rescue work is not yet completed, let alone innovation. You and we should not think about it; even your future generations should not.” This result is significantly different from the findings of previous studies.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This investigation has provided a comprehensive understanding of the inheritance and protection of Twelve Muqam in Shache County. The good popularity of Twelve Muqam among the Uyghurs in Shache County is reflected not only in their daily life but also in the enthusiasm of Uyghurs of all ages towards it. Considering the performance form and duration of Twelve Muqam. The difficulty of inheritance is greater than commonly believed, and few people can meet the requirements. The Twelve Muqam means something different to inheritors and folk artists: it is a form of art and a belief. Therefore, the inheritors and folk artists strongly oppose the adaptation and innovation of Twelve Muqam, which is different from previous studies and advocacy. In addition, as the author used unofficial channels for fieldwork and experienced the enthusiasm and recognition of the inheritors and folk artists towards channels different from official ones, much personalized information and ideas were obtained. Therefore, based on these first-hand materials and results from the investigation, the author believes that the future inheritance and protection of Twelve Muqam should focus on the following aspects:

19 [1] Mariyemuguli Zunong. Anthropological Study on Twelve Muqam [D]. Xinjiang Normal University, 2019. DOI: 10.27432/d.cnki.gxsfu.2019.000131.

First, it is necessary to fully respect the opinions of residents and inheritors. The Twelve Muqam is a cultural treasure deeply rooted in the life of the Uyghurs and has been passed down from generation to generation in the history of the Uyghurs. Therefore, top priority should be given to the opinions of the Uyghurs. Inheritors, representatives from local communities, and relevant experts should be invited to participate in formulating protection and inheritance plans, ensuring that their opinions and needs are fully considered. This participatory decision-making process shows respect for the Uyghur and makes the project more acceptable and successful.

Second, it is necessary to enhance education and training. There are essential differences between the preservation and protection of intangible cultural heritages. Currently, most measures taken for the Twelve Muqam focus on preservation, such as preserving it in the form of musical scores. To truly protect Twelve Muqam, it is urgent to cultivate the interest of young people in Twelve Muqam and expand its audience among the younger generation. Therefore, offering specialized courses and workshops in primary and secondary schools and music colleges can cultivate the younger generation's interest in and understanding of Twelve Muqam. This requires incorporating the theory and practice of Twelve Muqam into music education and providing professional training for young artists with potential.

At the same time, keep up with the times by using digitalization and modern media. After applying the world's intangible cultural heritage, Twelve Muqam is no longer limited to the learning and appreciation of Uyghurs in Xinjiang but can be digitally preserved and promoted on the Internet, e.g., through social media, online video platforms, etc. By producing high-quality audio and videos, people from all over the country, even the world, can access and understand this form of music.

In addition, it is also important to promote community participation and activities. Existing resources should be vigorously utilized in the protection and inheritance of Twelve Muqam. The older generation of folk artists in the community should be encouraged to participate actively in teaching and performance activities. Through community workshops and performances, more people can be involved in the learning and protection of Twelve Muqam. In conclusion, this study regarding the Twelve Muqam delved into the Uyghurs within the internal community of Shache County. The author not only had in-depth communication with the inheritors and actively participated in the Twelve Muqam performances but also learned to play and sing it to some extent. By establishing contact with the Twelve Muqam inheritors and artists through unofficial channels, their concerns about the opinions of superiors

and the public were alleviated to a certain extent, thus gaining insight into their true thoughts on certain issues and engaging in dialog and comparison with previous studies. However, due to limited time and sample size during the fieldwork, there may still be deviations in the results of this study. Future studies can continue to track the status of Twelve Muqam inheritance in Shache County for the long term, further expand the scope of the investigation to gain a more comprehensive understanding of Twelve Muqam, and compare its inheritance status with those of other intangible cultural heritages.

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