

Characteristics and Trends of Grassland Culture Research in China

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Abstract: As one of the main birthplaces of grassland culture, China has made fruitful achievements in the study of grassland culture. The main manifestations are as follows: Firstly, the theoretical research of grassland culture has been continuously consolidated, and the core concept of grassland culture has been put forward, which enriches the research content of grassland culture. Secondly, it highlights the regional characteristics of grassland culture research, which mainly manifests that Chinese scholars pay attention to the study of the relationship between grassland culture and Chinese culture, and that the study of grassland culture in Chinese academia mainly focuses on two aspects: the Inner Mongolia region. Thirdly, we should pay attention to the interpretation of the value of grassland culture in the era. On the basis of the study of the history and current situation of grassland culture, we should pay attention to the excavation and elucidation of the contemporary value of grassland culture, and endow grassland culture with theoretical vitality and epochal significance.

1. Introduction

The study of grassland culture began in the mid-20th century. At that time, it was mainly about nomadic culture. Scholars paid attention to the life style and customs of nomadic peoples. In 1992, the “Silk Road” scientific expedition project initiated by UNESCO was launched in Mongolia. In 1993, at the 27th General Conference of UNESCO, the decision to establish the International Institute of Nomadic Civilization was formally adopted. In 1998, the International Institute of Nomadic Civilization was established in Mongolia. In 1999, an International Symposium on “Contemporary Nomadic Civilization and Utilization of Grassland” was held. More than 100 papers were submitted by scholars from all over the world. The current situation of nomadic economy, protection and utilization of grasslands were extensively discussed. In 2000 and 2001, more than 20 scholars from Mongolia, China, Russia and other countries participated in the scientific investigation of “the change of nomadic culture”. They conducted field investigations on the history and current situation of nomadic culture in Mongolia, China and Russia, obtained a lot of first-hand information and formed some valuable achievements [1].

As one of the important birthplaces of grassland culture, China has always attached great importance to the protection and excavation of grassland culture. Chinese scholars not only pay attention to the basic theory of grassland culture, but also pay great attention to the historical evolution, actual situation and contemporary value of grassland culture, and have formed a large number of research results. On the one hand, these achievements expand the perspective of grassland culture research in academic circles, on the other hand, they deepen the content of grassland culture research in academic circles. Therefore, combing and analyzing the achievements of grassland culture research in China, summarizing its characteristics and investigating its trend can provide theoretical basis for grassland culture research in the world, and provide ideas for the academic circles to discover new theoretical growth points in this field.

2. Foundation Theory Research is Constantly Consolidated

As a holistic concept, grassland culture is mainly put forward by Chinese scholars from grassland culture bearing areas and grassland culture creators. For example, in his book “An Introduction to the Original Culture”, Ige Bao put forward that “grassland culture is a kind of culture that adapts to the natural ecological environment of grassland created by the ancestors, tribes and nationalities living on the grassland for generations. This culture includes people’s mode of production, lifestyle, customs and habits, and politics. Institutions, ideas, religious beliefs, literature and art, etc. Here, Baolige mainly emphasizes the creation subject of grassland culture, that is, grassland culture is created by the ancestors, tribes and nationalities living on the grassland. Guiying Ma defines grassland culture as follows in his article “On the Characteristics of Grassland Culture”: “Grassland culture mainly refers to the unique culture created by Eurasian grassland nomads in grassland areas suitable for grazing livestock. It is the historical transmission of grassland geographical environment (natural factors), nomadic economic life and horseback nationality. Cultural phenomena and cultural complexes emerged from the multi-faceted role of Tong et al. (humanistic factors)” [2]. The definition of Guiying Ma mainly elaborates the concept of grassland culture from the regional perspective of the emergence of grassland culture. However, no matter from the creation subject of grassland culture, or from the region where grassland culture came into being, the content of grassland culture should include nomadic culture, hunting culture and farming culture. Consensus has been reached in the industry.

On the basis of studying the concept of grassland culture, Chinese scholars put forward the concept of the core concept of grassland culture, and further stipulated the basic content, spiritual essence and value orientation of grassland culture. On August 29, 2008, the Fifth Grassland Culture Seminar of China Inner Mongolia and the Third International Summit Forum of Red Mountain Culture of Chifeng City were held in Chifeng. At this meeting, the grassland culture research group of Inner Mongolia Academy of Social Sciences first put forward the concept of “core concept of grassland culture”, and submitted four papers to systematically discuss the main content of the core concept of grassland culture. The core idea of grassland culture is summarized as “advocating nature, practicing openness and abiding by faith”. Since then, the research group has written articles on three aspects of grassland culture core idea: advocating nature, practicing openness and abiding by faith from a historical point of view. At present, the research on the core concept of grassland culture is mainly discussed from the aspects of cultural soft power. The representative is Shumei Zhang’s article “The Core Concept of Grassland Culture and the Creation of Cultural Brand” [3]. It analyses how to practice the core concept of grassland culture, build the brand of grassland culture, and enhance the competitiveness of grassland culture in order to benefit grassland. National development and social progress.

From the in-depth discussion of the concept of grassland culture to the interpretation of the core concept of grassland culture, Chinese academia has continuously expanded and deepened the basic theoretical research of grassland culture, providing theoretical basis and practical possibility for grassland culture research.

3. The Regional Characteristics of Grassland Culture Research are Distinct

The regional characteristics of grassland culture research in China are mainly reflected in two aspects: one is that Chinese scholars pay attention to the study of the relationship between grassland culture and Chinese culture; the other is that the study of grassland culture in Chinese academia mainly focuses on the study of Inner Mongolia.

Scholars have demonstrated the relationship between grassland culture and Chinese culture from different perspectives. In Tuanying Wu’s article “Viewing the Composition and Evolution Model of Chinese Culture from the Perspective of Grassland Culture”, he holds that “Grassland Culture is a kind of compound culture, the unity of regional culture and national culture, the unity of nomadic culture and farming culture, the unity of traditional culture and modern culture, and its essence is a

kind of regional culture. Chemicals” [4]. As a kind of community culture, grassland culture plays an important role in its formation and development. It also points out that “grassland culture, Yellow River culture and Yangtze River culture are the three main sources of Chinese culture, and elaborates that grassland culture, the main source of Chinese culture, was in the “first step” in the period of the origin of Chinese civilization. Leading position.” In his article *On the Position and Role of Grassland Culture in the History of Chinese Cultural Development*, Ke Xiao holds that “in the prehistoric period, the ancestors of the northern grasslands created primitive cultures of their own sequence, and the origin of many cultural inheritance of the Chinese nation can be traced back to here. Compared with the Yellow River culture, the grassland culture is even in the leading position in some aspects. After entering the era of civilization, for thousands of years, the grassland culture has continuously exchanged, merged and converged with the Yellow River culture and the Yangtze River culture through peaceful exchanges between the northern grassland nationalities and the people of the Central Plains as well as various forms of warfare. Together, it has created a broad, profound and long-standing Chinese culture, and formed a pluralistic and integrated pattern and abundance. The connotation of color.” In his article “The Historical Contribution of the Grassland Nationality to the Formation of the Diversity and Integration of the Chinese Nation”,^[5] En Wu discussed the position and role of the Grassland Culture in the formation and development of the Chinese Culture from the aspects of cultural origin, cultural development and prosperity.

From the current Chinese scholars engaged in grassland culture research, and their research results, mainly concentrated in Inner Mongolia. The main reasons include the following two aspects: one is that the grassland culture of China originated mainly in Inner Mongolia; the other is that Mongolia, as the main ethnic group in the inheritance and development of grassland culture of China, mainly live in Inner Mongolia. At present, the influential institutions of grassland culture research in China are mainly concentrated in Inner Mongolia, including Inner Mongolia Academy of Social Sciences, Inner Mongolia University, Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities, Chifeng College and so on. Influential research results, including 11 volumes of Grassland Culture Research Series and 9 monographs such as *Grassland Eco-culture Research*, which totaled more than 4 million words, formed by the research group of “Grassland Culture Research Project” after nearly three years of intensive research, totaled 2 million words. In addition, “History of Grassland Culture”, “Introduction to Grassland Culture”, “Research on Grassland Archaeological Culture”, “Research on Grassland Culture and Modern Civilization”, “Research on Grassland Material Culture”, “Research on Grassland Spiritual Culture”, “Research on the History and Culture of Northern Nomadic Nationalities”, “Research on Mongolian Culture”, “Grassland Culture” Studies on the regional distribution of culture, tracing the origin of Mongolian nomadic culture and Selection and Edition of Grassland Culture Research Materials are all written by institutions and scholars in Inner Mongolia.

The study of grassland culture by Chinese scholars is based on the region and has distinct regional characteristics. It not only deeply excavates regional resources and deepens the content of grassland culture research, but also expands the perspective of grassland culture research in the light of regional characteristics, providing ideas and reference for promoting grassland culture research.

4. Emphasizing the Exploration and Interpretation of Contemporary Value

Grassland culture is the product of certain social and historical conditions. Its content has both its rational factors and its historical limitations. Therefore, the study of grassland culture should not only focus on its historical origin and investigation, but also explore its practical significance through the study of its historical conditions, basic connotation and realistic logic. And contemporary value. To excavate and explain the contemporary value of grassland culture, we must face two problems, one is how to excavate, the other is what to excavate. Different scholars have different opinions on the answers to these two questions.

How to excavate the contemporary value of grassland culture is the way and method of grassland culture research and inheritance. Fuge Wang pointed out in his paper “Several Issues Needing Attention in the Study of the “Core Ideas” of Grassland Culture” that to excavate the contemporary

value of the core ideas of Grassland Culture, “an objective and rational understanding of history and culture itself is the first step. Only in this way can we provide continuous ideological support for the contemporary era.” Ulan pointed out that in order to give full play to the contemporary significance of grassland culture, we must link grassland culture with regional socio-economic development and make grassland culture a cultural brand. Jizhou Ren and others in his article “Maintenance and inheritance of grassland culture”, proposed that “to preserve and inherit grassland culture, we should take grazing as the core and establish a modern rotational grazing system”, because “grazing is a necessary cultural element of grassland culture”.^[6] It provides the most primitive and core motive force for the emergence and development of grassland culture. Tuanying Wu holds that “innovation is the need of economic and social development, as well as the need of advancing culture itself with the times and prosperous development”. Grassland culture has “deep innovation endowment”. In order to realize grassland culture innovation in the new historical period, we must first inherit it, secondly, innovation should focus on the future, and finally, we should pay attention to it. The development of science and technology brings opportunities and challenges to grassland cultural innovation.

What valuable and meaningful aspects of grassland culture are worthy of our study, inheritance and innovation, which is the significance and purpose of grassland culture research. Fuge Wang believes that the purpose of studying grassland culture is to make the past serve the present. “First of all, it can provide an important historical basis and value resources for the construction of modern civilization.” Ulan believes that “grassland culture is the spiritual home shared by grassland children”. Ulanchaf believes that “grassland culture is an important symbol of the soft power of the region, and it plays an important role in enhancing the competitiveness and image of the region.” Moreover, as an important factor to promote economic development, cultural industry has the characteristics of green and sustainability. In his article “Deepening the Study of Grassland Culture”, Guanglin Chen believes that the significance of modern civilization of grassland culture lies in that it can provide important historical basis and value resources for the construction of modern civilization. Secondly, grassland culture has become an important part of modern civilization construction, which is very prominent in the field of economic and cultural construction. Finally, grassland culture provides an important form for the construction of modern civilization, such as the significance of ecological civilization implied and revealed by grassland culture.

5. Conclusion

China’s grassland culture research has made some achievements in basic theory and interpretation of contemporary values, highlighting the regional characteristics of grassland culture research. However, from the current research results, there are still basic theoretical research to be further deepened, regional limitations to be broken, and contemporary value research to be done further expansion. At present, the research results of grassland culture provide theoretical basis for further grassland culture research, and the shortcomings provide a new theoretical growth point for grassland culture research.

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