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**АЧЫКТЫК ЖАНА БӨГӨӨЧҮЛҮК: МАТЕРИАЛДЫК ЭМЕС МАДАНИЯТ  
МУРАСЫНЫН МЕЙКИНДИК ДИСКУРСЫНЫН БИР ЭТНОГРАФИЯЛЫК  
ИЗИЛДЕНИШИ ЖӨНҮНДӨ**

**ОТКРЫТОЕ И ЗАКРЫТОЕ: ЭТНОГРАФИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ  
ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННОГО ДИСКУРСА НЕМАТЕРИАЛЬНОГО КУЛЬТУРНОГО  
НАСЛЕДИЯ**

**OPEN AND CLOSURE: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY ON THE SPATIAL DISCOURSE  
OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Кыскача мүнөздөмө:** Материалдык эмес маданияттык мурас заттарындагы "мейкиндикти" изилдөө жана талдоо практикалык көз караштан туруп материалдык эмес маданияттык мурас заттарын жакшыраак коргой алат. Бул макалада Кытайдын түндүк-батышындагы бир түрдүү ыр искусствосунун үйрөтүлүү жана үйрөнүү мейкиндиги, адамдын субъективдүү иш-аракеттери ошондой эле сезинүүсү сыяктуу жактардагы изилдөөлөр аркылуу мейкиндик менен адамдардын ортосундагы маданияттык өз ара аракеттенүү феномени түшүндүрүлгөн. Адамдар мейкиндикти субъективдүү куруу өзгөчөлүктөрүнө ээ, ал эми мейкиндик адамдардын аң-сезимине жана дененин реакциясына айкын өзгөртүү таасирин тийгизет. Мейкиндиктин маанилүү өзгөчөлүктөрү катары ачыктык жана бөгөөчүлүк экилик карама-каршылыктардагы диалектикалык мамилелерге жана чоюлуу күчүнө ээ. Материалдык эмес маданият мурасынын мейкиндигине көңүл буруу мейкиндик менен адамдардын өз ара аракеттенүүсүнө, ошондой эле маданият темаларынын жашоо практикасын камтыган маданияттык экологиялык мейкиндигине көңүл бурууну талап кылат.

**Аннотация:** Исследование и анализ «пространства» в объектах нематериального культурного наследия могут лучше защитить объекты нематериального культурного наследия с практической точки зрения. В данной работе объясняется феномен культурного взаимодействия между пространством и людьми через изучение пространства, субъективной деятельности человека и восприятия программы музыкального искусства в Северо-Западном Китае. Люди обладают характеристиками субъективного построения пространства, а пространство оказывает очевидное изменяющееся влияние на сознание людей и реакцию организма. В качестве важных характеристик пространства, открытости и замкнутости представлены диалектические отношения и напряженность в бинарных противоречиях. Изучение пространства нематериального культурного наследия требует внимания к взаимодействию пространства и людей, а также культурно-экологическому пространству, содержащему жизненные практики субъектов культуры.

**Abstract:** The study and analysis of “space” in intangible cultural heritage can better safeguard intangible cultural heritage from a practical perspective. This paper explains the cultural interaction between space and people through a study of space material, people’s main activities and perception in an intangible cultural heritage in Northwest China. Humans have the characteristics of subjective construction of space and space has obvious changing effects on human consciousness and physical response. As an important feature of space, opening and closing have the dialectical relationship and tension in the binary contradiction. To pay attention to the space of intangible cultural heritage, it is necessary to pay attention to the interaction between space and people, as well as the cultural ecological space that includes the life practice of cultural subjects.

**Негизги сөздөр:** мейкиндик, материалдык эмес маданият мурас, элдик музыка, ланчжоу барабан өнөрү, этнография.

**Ключевые слова:** пространство, нематериальное культурное наследие, народная музыка, ланчжоуские барабаны, этнография.

**Keywords:** space, intangible cultural heritage, folk music, Lanzhou Guzi, ethnography.

“Space” is an indispensable and important concept in the research of Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereinafter referred to as ICH). Intangible Cultural Heritage is defined in the Convention adopted by UNESCO in 2003 as: “The intangible cultural heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.”<sup>1</sup> The definition emphasizes the connection between cultural forms and spaces, communities, and groups. Space is not only a physical entity, but the result of human subjectivity construction and cultural practice. Human activities, consciousness, and reactions are also affected by space. The inheritance and safeguarding of ICH shall give full consideration to the design, arrangement and protection of cultural spaces.

The word “space” has rich and complex meanings. The theory and thought about space have also shown great differences in different periods. Philosophy, geography, sociology, psychology, aesthetics and other disciplines have different understandings and interpretations based on disciplinary research, such as abstract space, concrete space, cultural space, social space, organic space, and virtual cyberspace. The meaning of space varies according to the specific context, and similar expressions include “location”, “place” etc., but the meaning of “space” is more comprehensive. This paper taking Lanzhou Guzi as an example, a national ICH of folk music in Northwest China, the author investigated three different forms of space over a year, the Chuanxisuo,<sup>2</sup> compares its establishment, location, internal furnishings and human activities, and combines material space and human activities to reveal the relationship between human and space and the influence of space on cultural forms. Lanzhou Guzi is a speak and sing performance art that originated in the early Qing Dynasty, spread from Beijing to Lanzhou,<sup>3</sup> and was gradually loved by locals after being adapted in combination with local dialects and ditties, and often sung in rural homes and tea houses. Rural people often sing in various families when they are not busy, today is

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO. Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. – URL: <https://ich.unesco.org>.

<sup>2</sup> The training and perform centers for the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, there are different forms such as studios, exhibition halls, and the scale is different. The state and the government provide the necessary funds for teaching, inheritance, display, exchange and dissemination activities.

<sup>3</sup> A city in northwest China.

your home, tomorrow is his home. The singers are not professional actors, but mostly ordinary people who are illiterate or less literate, and one person sings during the performance, and the others each play the musical instrument -Sanxian,<sup>4</sup> Erhu<sup>5</sup> and dulcimer, most listeners are the villagers in the same village or frequent guests visiting the teahouse, everyone takes turns to sing, others drinking, drinking tea, chatting, more similar to a kind of people's self-entertainment activities. All the audiences will also sing together in part of the singing, the singing reaches a climax. The repertoire varies in length, from 10 minutes to 50 minutes, mainly telling the stories of heroes in Chinese history and the love stories in novels. The quaint and elegant lyrics of Lanzhou Guzi are written by literati from different periods from the Qing Dynasty to modern times, it is learned and spread by the elite figures in the people, singing and playing for generations of oral transmission. Many of them are illiterate, they do not know words or music score, they continue to learn just by "listening" year after year. Nowadays, fewer and fewer people can perform, the average age of singers is around 60 years old, many young people do not like it, and it is in danger.

In 2006, after the Lanzhou Guzi became a national ICH in China, the Lanzhou municipal government set up six Chuanxisuo. Due to changes in social development, people pay attention to the privacy of their families and no longer visit the door as they used to do, at the same time, people rarely go to tea houses to sing, The Chuanxisuo is the current performance space. After investigating these places, the author believes that the same is called Chuanxisuo which shows different spatial representations and discourse structures due to different factors such as management organization, level, location, and participants. Different spaces regulate and integrate people's normative and anti-normative behaviors, defining and limiting people's cultural behaviors. "Open" and "closed" as spatial discourse are relative, and there is a paradox and convertibility between its representation and its interior. To some extent, openness to the masses is closure to the internal holders of culture; On the contrary, it is only a space for insiders to share knowledge, solidifying the function of "transmission" and the organizational structure of insiders, and is closed and exclusive for others. Many speak and sing ICH, similar to this research project, how to better establish and inherit cultural spaces that are closely related to people and their lives is the common goal of researchers.

### **I. Platform for performance: Exhibition Hall**

The exhibition hall is located in the center of Lanzhou, adjacent to the bustling and lively tourist attractions, it is directly managed by the Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism. The exhibition hall is a rectangular hall with both performance and exhibition functions, covering an area of about 140 square meters, and has been carefully designed from furnishings, stage design, furniture and decoration. The stage faces south, is about half a meter high, and is flanked by crimson gold velvet curtains. There are more than 20 archaize circle chairs neatly arranged under the stage, five in each row, a total of five rows, and each chair is separated by traditional teapoy with wooden high legs. The wall opposite the stage displays the history of Lanzhou Guzi and the life stories of well-known entertainers, accompanied by numerous photographs. On the east wall, several musical instruments needed for the performance are displayed in the form of glass vitrines, and labels are used to describe the origin and history of the instruments. There are performances two days a week here, lasting all day from morning to night, tourists passing by step into the exhibition hall from time to time, stop to watch the exhibition or sit down to listen to the music.

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<sup>4</sup> A traditional Chinese musical instrument with three strings, plucked with fingers.

<sup>5</sup> A traditional Chinese musical instrument with two strings, pulled with a bow.

This kind of display sets the performers (holders of culture) and tourists in the same spatial relationship, seemingly completely open and free to come and go, but tourists can only learn fragmented information from the graphic introduction, they do not understand the content of the singing, and there are boundaries between tourists with performers, and the information of the two is asymmetric.

The original form of an interactive activity for people to entertain and relax their spirits was changed by the space. This space for performance and display is a space with limits and layers. Tables, chairs, utensils and people, everything is arranged in a disciplined and orderly manner. The space changes and restricts individual behavior, and due to management regulations and the presence of tourists, performers break the original habit of singing in teahouses or parties. No one speaks, no one eats or drinks tea, which would seem disrespectful to the performance.

American scholar Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues that “Display is an interface that mediates and thereby transform what is shown into heritage.” [3] Through antique furniture, old photos, musical instruments, history and other materials and information, the designer conveys the information and concept of ICH to the audience, presenting a “staged authenticity”. It is a space where mainly for “seeing”, and the ICH is set up in the performance space, and this space is closed for both the watchers and the one who is be watched.

## **II. Interface in an intermediate form: Cultural Station**

Cultural stations are another type of Chuanxisuo, funded by the municipal government and managed by inheritors, usually located in towns and villages, scattered across three villages around the city. Unlike the exhibition hall mentioned above, this space is relatively casual and does not have many rules. The space of the cultural station is like an interface in an intermediate form: there is not only the presence of the power of national discourse, reflecting the “diffusion and coverage of the country’s mainstream cultural consciousness,” [7] but also the display of local culture and emotional participation.

The cultural station also has a fixed performance time, mostly for the surrounding villagers and performers to gather and entertain themselves, without the presence of “others”. Different types of filing cabinets, bookshelves, and chairs of different heights in the room constitute a relatively “disorderly” spatial structure, there is no stage, performers are concentrated in one area of the room, and others are scattered in various places in the room. They smoke, drink and chat, The chat also reveals a relational distance, “We alter our tone of voice from soft to loud, from intimate to public, in accordance with the perceived physical and social distances between ourselves and others. The volume and phrasing of our voice as well as what we try to say are constant reminders of proximity and distance.”[8]. The room is composed of sounds and smells that make up a perceptible living space. As Agnes Heller pointed out that “Everyday contact takes place in its own space. This space is anthropocentric. At its center, there is always s human being living an everyday life. It is his everyday life that articulates his space, in which experience of space and perception of space are indissolubly fused together”. [1] Here the performers are the villagers, and the villagers are the performers, they regard the cultural station as a place to exchange information and feelings, they can come and go whenever they want, ICH is just a means and way of communication, and people enjoy their own emotional communication and cultural memory. The material medium, sound medium and smell medium of space constitute and affect people’s behavior and interaction mode,

and the material, image and feeling in a space shape people's behavior, people and space form an interactive relationship.

The cultural station is located in the social space of acquaintances in the countryside, and the psychological and social distance of the villagers is shortened through singing. Zhang Shishan coined the term "village context"[13], and he believed that the form of performance was an expression of collective will through the carnival form of appearance, which strengthened the identity of internal members. On the one hand, the cultural station is still the representative of the national discourse. On the other hand, in the countryside where family privacy is increasingly valued, it has become a new space for sharing aesthetic values and cohesion of villagers' friendship. This kind of space is a knowable and perceptible experience space, which does not focus on outside eyes and concepts, thus creating a space close to cultural ontological attributes. The spatial experience here is mainly based on "listening", because in a society of acquaintances, music or sound weaves the individual's sense of the local cultural community.

### **III. Harmonious spaces: Teahouses and Nongjiale<sup>6</sup>**

Some performers and enthusiasts have set up their own teahouses and Nongjiale as Chuanxisuo. This type of training center is also licensed by the government management department, but due to the privacy of the space, the degree of management and control is obviously weak, showing characteristics that are obviously different from the above two spaces. Because of the privacy of the space, it becomes an unlimited space without hierarchy, where people can do whatever they want: they chat or move around freely, some lie on the recliner and close their eyes and present a variety of body postures without considering their performance and behavior patterns. Here is a living world, things are heterogeneous, people are heterogeneous, and each person is the subject of free will, the master of self. Space creates a meaningful living world and this performance without "performance" is a meaning extended from the perspective of people's lives, and it is a cultural space that is not separated from living space. It is a private, enclosed space, but city people and participants will bring their friends to appreciate, love and learn to sing, and more people like the art and spread it, from this point of view, the space is open. It is worth mentioning that more and more women have joined the learning and performance. Women's roles allow them to have more time and opportunities to spend with their grandchildren, they will pass on their behaviors, ideas and values to future generations. They also taught their grandchildren while learning on their own, we cannot ignore the role of women in family and intergenerational transmission. The addition of women has brought new opportunities for the development of this art.

Space is not only a physical structure, but also a connecting structure for members to exchange information and strengthen emotional relationships. In the living space, Lanzhou Guzi's performance and inheritance are unconscious, it's more like a kind of natural activity within the group to find the joy of life, which is the life of the inheritance group itself, and the performance is culture holders' life. For the outside world, it is an intimate enclosed space, but for the holders of culture, it is an open space. Therefore, openness and closure exist not only in the boundaries of spatial representation, but also in human experience and behavioral activities. Open and closed are not only on the boundaries of spatial representation, it is also present in human experience and behavioral activities. The functional value of space will be more perfect when space can generate communication and interaction with people's perception, experience and activities.

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<sup>6</sup> Nongjiale is the farmer's own house with a yard, because of the proximity to the city, the city people will go to play and relax on weekends and enjoy the rural scenery.

This kind of space is the best space for the inheritance and practice of intangible cultural heritage among various types, a dynamic and attractive space, it is a space that connects people, lives, cultures and places in real life and context, and puts traditional culture into practice. In fact, we should not only pay attention to cultural spaces such as Chuanxisuo, but also the communities. In order to better record and revive culture, ICH should be recognized, appreciated, supported, protected by governments, cultural elites, holders of culture scholars and ordinary people in the entire community. At the same time, it can also learn from the good practices of other countries and regions, carry out multi-project development and management from various aspects such as education, tourism and cultural exhibition.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

This official formal performance platform and folk Nongjiale reveal different rules of behavior and social order, while the latter provides an intimate experiences. Yi-fu Tuan, an American geographer, said that “Space, a biological necessity to all animals, is to human beings also a psychological need, a social perquisite, and even a spiritual attribute”. [11] He believes that space is not only an objective material carrier, but also an emotional attachment and memory symbol. By comparing the material characteristics of the space of three kinds of Chuanxisuo, reveals the perception and activities of the people in them and the influence of different behavioral rules and social order on space. Different spaces mean different levels of comfort and freedom, creating different atmospheres and perceptions, representing different spatiality and freedoms. Space is not homogeneous and self-contained, and the role of social and economic relations behind it on the “production” of space is obvious, and the nature of space affects the development of space and membership. Space has an obvious constraint and transformation effect on people, and people are also adapting and transforming space, people and space coordinate with each other.

Changes in society and lifestyles have changed people’s lifestyles and affected the spatial environment in which ICH are disseminated. The original living space culture is an important reason and driving force for inheritance, and the lack of living space lacks the cultural soil structure of its existence. This space should be visible, audible and felt. Therefore, the change of space means the change of discourse, and for ICH with “obvious characteristics of capital discipline”, [5] it cannot be separated from the people’s life or from the people’s living space.

Culture is changing, it cannot be stuck to its original form. In order to maintain Lanzhou Guzi’s inheritance and development, local music researchers and scholars are also arguing and creating new creations around local folk music, improving the style of performing, performance programs and the performance of musical instruments. Lanzhou Guzi’s singers are also collaborating with pop music bands, trying to blend traditional and pop music. Only by protecting the living space of intangible cultural heritage, paying attention to the protection of living forms, and making it to be widely disseminated can the development of intangible cultural heritage truly obtain the source of life.

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