

# Research on the Transformation and Innovative Development of Folk Culture

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**Abstract:** *China has a wide range of folk cultural resources, including art, music, literature, art, quyi, acrobatics, opera, dance, life customs, folk beliefs, and so on, which of them has its own characteristics. It is an inevitable measure that to inherit the excellent Chinese traditional cultures needs protect folk culture. The key hotspots of folk research is how to transform and innovatively develop folk culture. This paper analyzes the impact of folk culture in the current urbanization development process, summarizes two principles of ethnic culture transformation and innovative development, and explores the path of folk culture transformation and innovative development.*

**Keywords:** *folk culture; transformation; development; way; innovation*

## 1. Introduction

In the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, it was clearly stated that "we must adhere to the position of Chinese culture, refine and showcase the spiritual symbols and cultural essence of Chinese civilization." Folk culture, as an important component of excellent traditional Chinese culture, is originated from different cultures in different regions and is closely related to regional lifestyles, natural environment, political systems, and social structures. It has both the commonalities of traditional folk customs and unique regional individuality<sup>[1]</sup>. In the new historical era, the development of folk culture has gotten a new opportunities, and how to achieve the transformation and innovative development of folk culture has attracted much attention.

## 2. The Impact on Folk Culture in the Process of Urbanization Development

The development of urbanization has damaged the natural environment on which folk culture relies for survival. The pattern of traditional villages has changed, and people's living environment is constantly changing, which make the existence of folk culture unstable.

### 2.1. The effect on the ecology of folk culture

For thousands of years, various regions have nurtured distinctive local folk cultures with their unique cultural soil, and the foundation of folk culture is the complex of nature, economy, and society in each region, while each of folk cultures remains stable. With the advancement of urbanization, the humanities environment and the natural environment on which folk culture relies has changed, which has tipped the original balance of folk culture ecology, led to the simplification and disappearance of some valuable folk cultures, and also derive some new forms of folk culture.

### 2.2. The gradual disappearance of some folk cultures

In the development of urbanization, the scale of land has become concentrated, and the number of farmers engaged in agricultural production is also decreasing. Many folk cultures have emerged in agricultural societies. Due to the decrease in the number of farmers engaged in agricultural production, some folk cultures related to agricultural production are gradually disappearing. In addition, changes in the living environment can also led to the disappearance of some traditional customs. Nowadays, buildings in cities have become popular, and people's living habits have undergone significant changes. The traditional custom of building houses in rural areas has almost disappeared. After entering the community, people rarely place furniture according to traditional cultures, and instead adopt a uniform

style of buildings and residential areas.

### ***2.3. The increasing simplification of some folk cultures***

In order to adapt to the development of urbanization, folk customs in various regions have also been simplified. On the one hand, in many areas, people's engagement and marriage customs have been simplified, only hosting banquets at the time of marriage, with a large number of customs omitted. On the another hand, during the Spring Festival in the past, every family would prepare a large amount of New Year's goods, such as delivering stoves on the 23rd and 24th of the twelfth lunar month, receiving stoves on New Year's Eve, having New Year's Eve dinner, stay up late on the New Year' eve, pasting Spring Festival couplets and peach symbols. With the changes in people's living environment, this process has gradually simplified, and the atmosphere of the New Year is no longer as strong as before.

## **3. Principles of Ethnic Culture Transformation and Innovative Development**

Due to the current dilemma of inheriting folk culture, it is imperative to promote the transformation and innovative development of folk culture, and several specific principles need to be followed:

### ***3.1. Balancing protection and development***

Due to insufficient attention to the development of traditional folk culture in the early days, some valuable folk cultures were damaged, and the speed of overall development in folk cultures was also relatively slow Throughout the situation in many parts of the country, the development and innovation of folk culture still remain superficial. With the gradual awakening of people's cultural awareness, the importance of folk culture has become increasingly prominent. For the transformation and innovation of folk culture, it is necessary to first adhere to the principle of balancing protection and development, formulate corresponding protection strategies based on the particularity of folk culture, increase development efforts on the basis of protecting the original folk culture, so that folk culture resources can be effectively utilized, create true cultural masterpieces, and allow more audiences to have access to excellent folk culture.<sup>[2]</sup>

### ***3.2. Synchronizing government management and market operation***

The transformation and innovation of folk culture need to be led by the government, but relying solely on the power of the government cannot meet the requirements. Therefore, it is necessary for the government to formulate clear development directions, encourage market forces to participate together, promote the coordinated development of folk culture, and truly develop folk culture products that meet market development needs with the cooperation of all parties, so that related industries can achieve stable and orderly development.

### ***3.3. Combining economic and social benefits***

In the process of transformation and innovative development of folk culture, it is necessary to adhere to the unity between economic and social benefits. In the process of adhering to market-oriented operation, it is necessary to change the traditional single development model, introduce new elements based on the special characteristics of folk culture, continuously innovate related industries, change market consumption patterns, and balance economic and social benefits. In this way, the sustainable development of folk culture can be achieved.

## **4. The Path of Folk Culture Transformation and Innovative Development**

### ***4.1. Studying the essence of folk culture deeply***

Folk culture is closely related to people's daily lives, agricultural culture, etc. In the process of transformation and innovative development of folk culture in the new era, the first step is to deeply studying the essence of folk culture, and combine it with the needs of the era to give folk culture new missions and responsibilities:

#### ***4.1.1. Exploring the Contemporary Connotation of Folk Culture***

To achieve innovative development of folk culture, it is necessary to adhere to the principle of making the past serve the present, base on the current national conditions, and combine the development of folk culture with the needs of building a socialist cultural power. Folk culture is rich in content, involving various aspects such as food, clothing, weddings, funerals, agriculture, architecture, etc., and is closely related to people's lives. In this new era, it is necessary to maintain enriching the connotation and extension of folk culture, exploring the function and value of folk culture in revitalizing the excellent culture of the Chinese nation, and enhancing the cultural confidence of the Chinese people. Specifically, it is necessary to grasp the integration point between folk culture and the construction of a strong cultural country, systematize and practice the profound theories in folk culture, excavate the national integrity, spirit, quality, and sentiment contained in folk culture, implement important ideas such as "valuing the people and emphasizing benevolence and righteousness" in the innovative development process of folk culture, and actively combine folk culture with the cultural industry, enable folk culture to become an economic development advantage and assist in the construction of a cultural power.

#### ***4.1.2. Innovating the discourse system of folk culture***

Folk culture has a long history, and some folk cultures have become disconnected from the new social environment and practice in the long-term development process. Due to the needs of the new era, it is necessary to seek ideological breakthroughs in the inheritance and development of folk culture, establish a new discourse system that is connected with contemporary social development, and condense a folk culture discourse expression system that is in line with China's national conditions from the current social practice. Using modern discourse styles, standards, and forms to elaborate on folk culture is the only way to achieve innovative development of traditional folk culture<sup>[3]</sup>. At the same time, it is necessary to explore the popular expression of folk cultural discourse, presenting it in a simple and lively way, so that more audiences are willing to actively understand and inherit folk culture. In addition, it is also necessary to explore the international discourse expression of folk culture, so that more excellent folk culture can go abroad and go globally.

### ***4.2. Taking the path of creative development***

#### ***4.2.1. Exploring new forms of cultural creativity***

The thousands of years of cultural development have nurtured a variety of folk cultures, with distinct cultural characteristics in different regions, reflecting unique local customs and traditions. Currently, various creative industries are flourishing, while folk culture is very suitable for taking a creative development path. For example, folk culture can be integrated into cultural and creative products. In 2023, Zhejiang Natural Museum launched the "Fu Lu Shou Xi, Better Life" series of cultural and creative products, integrating local folk culture into metal bookmarks, agate coasters, quicksand coasters, refrigerator stickers, square sticky notes, keychains, tattoo stickers, and other cultural and creative products, which had been unanimously welcomed by consumers. These distinctive cultural and creative products are an important way to showcase folk culture. Currently, whether it is scenic spots, libraries, or museums, combining folk culture to develop cultural and creative products has become a popular trend with great potential for development.

In addition, various high-tech can also be used to innovate the presentation forms of folk culture. With the development of artificial intelligence, big data, 5G, and blockchain technology, the distance between culture and technology is also getting closer. Digital technology can explore new ways of expressing folk culture, presenting rich and colorful folk culture in a three-dimensional form, bringing audiences a feast of audio-visual experience<sup>[4]</sup>. For example, in 2022, Guangxi launched the "Along the River during the Qingming Festival" technology and art immersion special exhibition, which used VR technology to allow audiences to observe the life of Suzhou people 500 years ago from zero distance. This huge holographic AI dynamic scroll integrated intangible cultural heritage experience, cultural performance, character travel, VR experience, etc., allowing audiences to intuitively experience the charm of folk culture and sincerely feel proud. In the VR virtual environment, audiences could also participate in school archery. Various folk projects such as weddings and weddings are perceived and experienced from a unique perspective.

#### ***4.2.2. Promoting the cross-border integration of folk culture***

In the current era of pan entertainment, cross-border integration has become an inevitable trend in

industrial development, providing a new path for the transformation and innovative development of folk culture. In the development process, folk culture can be combined with modern aesthetics, creative design, tourism, etc., forming a "folk culture+" development model. For example, "folk culture+tourism" is a popular form of tourism. Developing "folk culture+tourism" can improve the comprehensive competitiveness of the tourism industry, and also allow tourists to reflect the unique local folk culture in the tourism process. After integrating the myths and legends of celebrities related to folk customs into the tourism industry, it can complete a diversified and cross-border restructuring, giving new connotations and charm to both folk culture and the tourism industry.

#### ***4.2.3. Realizing the popularity development of folk culture***

Developing folk culture in a popular direction can attract more young audiences to participate. Contemporary young people are not interested in ancient folk culture. Therefore, in the creative development process of folk culture, it is also necessary to focus on the needs of this group and combine it with popular culture that young audiences enjoy while accurately exploring the connotation of folk culture. For example, at the closing ceremonies of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics, folk elements such as "Twelve Hours", "Farewell with Willow", and "Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches" appeared. The director used digital technology to innovate them, giving people a refreshing feeling and quickly becoming a hot topic on the internet. This vivid, intuitive, novel and vivid way of interpretation brings new elements to folk culture, enabling it to achieve creative sublimation from ancient times to the present.

### ***4.3. Integrating Folk Culture into Modern Life***

#### ***4.3.1. Promoting the Industrial Development of Folk Culture***

Folk culture is a symbolic symbol in ideology, and each region's folk culture is different, representing unique historical connotations and cultural customs. Folk culture, whether integrated into industrial development in a spiritual or material way, can generate unexpected value. The folk culture industry will also become a key focus of the development of the tertiary industry in the future. Each region needs to have a precise understanding of the intersection between folk culture and industrial development, and activate and innovate folk culture from a full industry perspective. In addition to the "folk culture+tourism" mentioned earlier, industrial development forms such as "folk culture+anime games", "folk culture+libraries", "folk culture+movies", and "folk culture+museums" can also be developed. These methods can further extend folk culture, integrate it into different industrial development fields, achieve industrial correlation and cross-border integration, break down development barriers between industries, and also give folk culture more opportunities to "go out".<sup>[5]</sup>

#### ***4.3.2. Realizing the deep integration of folk culture and life***

In addition to transforming and innovating between industrial development, it is also necessary to make folk culture permeate into the daily lives of the people, play the role of folk culture in serving life, and enable folk culture to take root and sprout in daily life. On the one hand, to enable folk culture to enter the daily lives of the people, China has a long history and has passed down countless folk customs and traditions from ancient times to the present. Some customs have gradually simplified or even disappeared under the development of urbanization. At the meantime, others continue to do that. While the disappearance of these customs is influenced by objective factors, it is mostly due to human factors. Behind it is a reflection of people's indifference towards culture. Therefore, various regions need to make good use of educational channels to allow folk culture to enter primary and higher education, explore the educational concepts and functions of folk culture, and enable more groups to recognize folk culture. At the same time, with the educational role of the media, traditional stories and legends, festival celebrations, and folk proverbs are brought into the daily lives of the people, striving to form a civilized, healthy, and positive social trend through the influence of folk culture.

### ***4.4. Bringing Folk Culture Abroad***

In the background of global economic integration, allowing folk culture to go abroad and enter the world is an objective requirement for establishing a community with a shared future for mankind. The transformation and innovative development of folk culture should also establish an international perspective and be treated with an inclusive and open attitude.

#### **4.4.1. Utilizing Folk Culture to Spread Chinese Culture**

Using storytelling to bring folk culture abroad requires various regions to deeply explore the essence and spiritual symbols of folk culture, innovate the international expression of folk culture, and achieve an organic combination between local and international, traditional and modern. For example, although "China on the Tongue" produced by CCTV has been released for more than 10 years, it still has a significant impact so far. This program brings different life scenes and customs from different regions to various parts of the world, showcasing the long and profound history of Chinese culinary culture. This dissemination method also transcends language barriers and arouses emotional resonance among foreign friends.

#### **4.4.2. Innovating folk culture dissemination path**

The dissemination of folk culture needs to give play to the dissemination value of mainstream media and new media, make folk culture visible and perceptible by using webcast, virtual reality, etc., actively occupy the commanding heights of mainstream public opinion dissemination, and promote the all-round and three-dimensional dissemination of folk culture in the "Internet plus" era. Researchers need to construct a discourse system of folk culture that can be understood by the international community, showcasing the unique mysteries of China's folk culture, reflecting its values and concepts, and allowing folk culture with Chinese characteristics to enter the international stage.

### **5. Conclusion**

Folk culture is a high-level cultural resource, and the transformation and innovative development of folk culture need to pay attention to its unique characteristics, adhere to the balance of protection and development, take into account the economic and social benefits of folk culture, innovate communication channels, deeply explore the essence and connotation of folk culture, actively create a cultural environment conducive to the dissemination of folk culture, perfect the industrial chain, and promote the "going out" of folk culture.

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