

## **2. Content of Sessions**

### **(1) Keynote Speech**

#### **“Urumqi: The Cultural Dimension Of City Development”**

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#### **Introduction of the speaker**

**Zhong Gao, Research Fellow, Deputy Director of Xinjiang Cultural Development Research Center of Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences, Deputy Director of Xinjiang Society of Qiuci. More than ten works with Zhong Gao as author or co-author have been published, such as Survey Of Western Regions Art, Xinjiang Cultures, Xinjiang Marching Towards 21st Century-Volume Of Culture, Short History Khotan and History and Cultures Of Ili. More than 100 academic papers of his were published. Research areas: the Western Region cultures, development of cultural industry in Xinjiang. His works and papers won awards on many occasions. Urumqi: The Cultural Dimension Of City Development**

To promote city development through multi-culture was established as the theme of the Working-level Conference of Asian-Pacific City Summit. Undoubtedly, this theme brought an opportunity for Urumqi, a multi-ethnic and multi-culture capital city of an autonomous region in border area of China, to review city development in the cultural perspective, and will surely advance development level of the city as a whole. Here, I would like to make a speech entitled “Urumqi: The Cultural Dimension Of City Development” for comments and instructions from experts, scholars and leaders present.

Urumqi is a typical multi-ethnic and multi-cultural city whose culture is a compound of diverse-origin cultures with diverse ways of development. In terms of people of ethnic groups, there are 13 native ethnic groups and people of other over 30 ethnic groups living here. These ethnic groups believe in different religions including Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Taoism. As far as language is concerned, these ethnic groups have different spoken and written languages. Languages of these groups fall into different language families or groups, such as Sino-Tibetan language family, Turki

language group, Tungusic language group and Mongolian language group of Altaic language family, and Indo-European language family as well. People living in the city are of different origins, they are from different parts across China. Therefore, urban cultures of Urumqi are not unitary but diverse. This kind of urban culture, if is not the only in China, but is a rather unique one in the country.

How did this kind of multi-cultural situation come into being in Urumqi? And what significance does it bear on development of a modern city? To answer the two questions, we have to make a study of the basic types and characteristics of local diversified cultures in Xinjiang.

### **I. From Regional Multiculturalism To Urban Multiculturalism**

When it comes to multiculturalism of Urumqi, we cannot but touch local multiculturalism of Xinjiang. Xinjiang was called Western Regions in ancient times, in 1884 when a province was established in the Western Regions, the area was renamed as Xinjiang. So ancient culture of Xinjiang is called Western Regions culture, modern culture of Xinjiang is called Xinjiang culture. Both the Western Regions culture and Xinjiang culture are one of Chinese regional cultures. Since this culture is a multi-ethnic, multi-religion, multi-lingual, multi-original regional culture developing in multiple ways, it is also called compound Chinese regional culture. Basic characteristics of the Western Regions culture can be summed up as the following. One, the "Silk Road" was in good operation for more than 1, 000 years, the Western Region has become the hub for exchanges of oriental and occidental cultures, where cultures from several cradles of civilization met together, different religions such as Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Manichean and Nestorianism, converged and various forms of oriental and occidental cultures and arts came together. In the course of clashing, absorption and integration, new cultures were given birth. Two, different types of cultures were formed due to differing ecological environment, production and life styles and patriarchal clan systems. These different types of cultures mainly include oasis farming culture, grassland nomadic culture and the culture of wasteland cultivation by garrison troops and peasants. These cultures determine the basic situation and trend of the Western Regions culture. Three, different types of Western Regions culture present themselves in the form of multi-ethnic cultures. Cultures of different ethnic groups tried to take one another as the fringes of their own. Clashes among cultures are short lived, but inter-absorption of cultures is long lived. The said characteristics of the Western Regions culture determined its diversified urban cultures.

According to archaeological study findings and historical literatures, at least during the Western and Eastern Dynasties, the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, a large number of oasis city states formed in oases in Southern Xinjiang, and these city states flourished in the Sui and Tang Dynasties. Larger oases shaped oasis city cultures with local characteristics for they held controlling sections of the Silk Road, and had advanced mode of production and larger populations. Yutian, Qiuci Roulan and Gaochang along the Silk Road are typical oasis city states. Cultures of these city states are coessential but have different types. They are coessential, because peoples of these city-states had

basically the same modes of production and life, and the same dominant religious beliefs; but they have different types, because different ethnic groups believed in different religions and had different folkways, and as a result, different regional cultures were formed. Residents of these oases fell within different ethnic groups, for example, residents in Yutian were the Sai and spoke the Sai language, Qiuci people were Tokharika and they used Tokhar language, while residents in Gaochang mainly consisted of Han people from Gansu, and later chiefly consisted of Uighur people having moved westward, and they spoke Chinese and Turki. Yutian people believed in Gostana(earth's breasts), the word "Khotan" in itself means earth's breasts. Residents in Qiuci worshiped Dragon-Horse God, so Qiuci people were also called "dragon tribe". The Han people in Gaochang believed in Fu Hsi and Nuwa, primogenitor god and goddess of Han people. During the period from the tenth to sixteenth century, rulers and residents in Kashgar, Yutian, Turpan and Hami successively converted to Islam, so cultures in oases of Southern and Eastern Xinjiang began to gradually convert into Islamic culture.

In the Western Regions there successively lived some nomadic pastoral peoples such as Sai, Wusun, Rouzhi, Hum, Rouran, Turks and Mongolians, languages spoken by these peoples were classified into different language families. In the course of moving and warring, some of these peoples entered oases in Southern Xinjiang and settled there for farming cultivation. Some formerly nomadic pastoralists of the Sai, Rouzhi, Turks and Mongolians converted to settled residents for farming cultivation in oases. As a result, grassland nomadic cultures were brought into oasis farming cultures, and equally, grassland nomadic cultures were integrated into oasis city cultures. Uygur, originally nomadic tribes roaming about in Mobei Grassland, moved westward to the areas of Gaochang and Beiting and there they gradually adapted by themselves to environment, changed their mode of production and life and became settled residents in oases. The existing ruins of the Ancient City of Gaochang and Jiaohe once were the major cities successively under the rule of regime established by the Hun and the Uygur Khanate.

Culture of wasteland cultivation by garrison troops and peasants came into being when the Western Han Dynasty unified the Western Regions. In 60 B.C. the Western Dynasty established the Western regions Frontiers Command, and the Han Empire began to station garrison troops to open up wasteland for cultivation of farm crops in the Western Regions, so the culture of wasteland cultivation by garrison troops and peasants was born. During the Tang Dynasty the culture of wasteland cultivation by garrison troops and peasants developed to a great high, and after the Qing Dynasty reunified the Western Regions, the garrison wasteland-cultivation culture flourished to its peak. During the Han and Tang Dynasties, culture of the Central Plain Han people began to spread, integrate with local cultures and take roots in the Western Regions, thus giving birth to the culture of wasteland cultivation by garrison troops and peasants. The promotion of official upper-class cultures and the spreading of material and spiritual cultures played a significant role in advancing the Western Regions culture. During the Qing Dynasty, particularly in the reign of Qianlong Emperor, multiple forms of wasteland opening-up activities were conducted, such as wasteland cultivation by stationed troops, wasteland cultivation by stationed civilians, wasteland cultivation by stationed prisoners and

by stationed Hui people. Large numbers of army soldiers and civilians of the Han, Manchu, Xibe and Hui moved to the Western Regions. Huiyuan, the then seat of the military government, and Urumqi that grew up due to wasteland cultivation were major cities in areas north of the Tianshan Mountains, two cities different in style and features from the city of Kashgar south of the Tianshan Mountains.

In ancient times, Urumqi once was a place nomadized by the Sai, Wujie, Hun, Rouran, Turks and Wirat Mongolians. After the Tang Dynasty unified the Western Regions, a city was built here. In 1758, the Qing Dynasty stationed garrison troops in Urumqi to open up wasteland for cultivation of farm crops, thus forming the embryonic city of Urumqi. In 1773, the Barkol Dao (circuit) was moved to Urumqi, shaping a city here. In 1884, the Qing Dynasty established Xinjiang Province and took Urumqi as the capital of Xinjiang Province, which laid the foundation of status of Urumqi as a capital city. It can be said that Urumqi is the product of reunification of Xinjiang by the Qing Dynasty and the culture of wasteland cultivation by garrison troops and peasants.

## **II. Multicultural Structure Of Multi-ethnic Community Of Urumqi and Its Functions**

Calculated from 1758, the city of Urumqi has lived less than 250 years. However, it has been a carrier of too many histories and cultures of the Western Regions, and an evidence of the garrison wasteland-cultivation culture having developed since the Qing Dynasty. Now that it is a multi-ethnic and multicultural city, and a new type of immigrant city, the structure of urban culture of Urumqi relates to people of all ethnic groups living here. Residents in Urumqi fall into different ethnic groups, which have different origins and can be divided into different classes and subclasses, accordingly, different cultures were produced. Since the years of the Qianlong Emperor of the Qing Dynasty, Urumqi has been inhabited by more than ten ethnic groups such as the Han, Hui, Uygur, Kazakh and Manchu. These ethnic groups believe in different religions, with the Han, Manchu and Xibe following Buddhism (divided into Tibetan Buddhism and Han Buddhism), the Uygur, Kazakh and Hui being believers of Islam, and the Russians having faith in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Their languages are classified into the Sino-Tibetan language family, Altaic language family and Indo-European language family.

The urban community in which multiple ethnic groups, religions and languages coexist necessarily has multiple cultures. In addition, in modern times occidental cultures forcefully joined the cultures of Urumqi, the structure of cultures become increasingly complicated. The cultural structure of Urumqi can be summed up as the following. One, coexistence of unified political system cultures. In this cultural structure, the sub-traditions of different urban ethnic groups tend to be uniform to the grand traditions of Chinese nation as a whole, and sub-traditions develop to conform to the grand traditions, and the uniformity outweighs the differences. However, on the other hand, because of the differences in ethnic group, religion and language, sub-traditions of different ethnic groups are diverse and have their own features. This cultural structure restricted by the grand traditional

political cultures serves as a binding agent that guarantees the stability and development of urban community. Two, inorganic blend of Chinese and occidental cultures. This is evidenced by the fact that on the one hand Chinese-style architectures and occidental-style buildings were mixed inharmoniously, foreign style buildings and Chinese ancient city walls coexisted, and on the other, in folkway cultures represented by clothing and food, Chinese and occidental factors were comically mingled. However, since 1930s significant changes have taken place in international situation. As a result, urban culture of Urumqi has begun its process of localization and nationalization to initiatively assimilate foreign cultures instead of inharmoniously mingling with occidental cultures. Three, the cultural structure in which urban and rural civilizations coexist. As for the origins of modern residents in Urumqi, people of different strata were all from traditional rural and pastoral communities. In this situation, it is not that urban culture produced effect on rural culture but that rural culture had influence over urban culture. It is true that urban culture can assimilate elements of material and spiritual civilizations from traditional rural culture. However, conservative traditional ideas of small-scale peasant economy have been an obstacle to modernization of the city.

Since the late Qing Dynasty, because of forceful influence by occidental cultures, modern industries and modern facilities of media and culture have been built one after another in Urumqi. So urban culture of Urumqi has begun its difficult transformation from a traditional one to a modern one. Under such a circumstance, urban culture of Urumqi, a multi-ethnic border city, was endued new functions. In 1930s and 1940s, urban culture of Urumqi performed such functions as the following. One, the function of cohesiveness. So far as sub-traditions of an ethnic group is concerned, people of the ethnic group forge cohesiveness through their cultural characteristics such as folkways, custom, language and physical appearance. In a multi-ethnic and multi-culture community, when people identify themselves culturally, factors in the deep strata of cultural structure such as the same model of thinking, same moral standards and values can lead people to identify themselves with the same model of thinking, same moral standards and values can lead people to identify themselves with the same group with a grand tradition, thus forming strong cohesiveness, particularly when a nation is invaded by a foreign enemy.

### III. The Cultural Dimension Of City Development

It is a wise decision to have established the title Multiculturalism Promoting City Development as the theme of the conference. The adoption of the theme proved that in urban development, attention has been ultimately paid to the cultural dimension. However, viewing from the development trend of Urumqi City, we can find that some people had misconceptions about “development” and “culture”. First, the misconception of taking economic development as cultural development; second, the misconception of taking business culture as culture as a whole; third, the misconception that traditional cultures impede modernization; fourth, the misconception that cultural resources are driving force of development. Of course, there are some misconceptions other than the above said

four ones, but the above said ones are typical. Urumqi, a border city in underdeveloped western regions of China, is not national political and economic center, nor cultural center. At the most, it is a multicultural developing city. Twenty years has passed since the policy of reform and opening up was adopted by China. During the past twenty years, it is doubtlessly correct to have established "economic development" as the central task of the Party and governments at all levels. With no exception, the city of Urumqi was put under the program of development. GDP, probity, economic benefit and wealth have become objectives pursued by people. In this mode of development, cultures only were a "builder" of stage, while economy became the "player" on the stage. Consequently, cultures are increasingly marginalized, and the objectives in culture and order are neglected. If production goal is all what we pursue and there is no objective in culture and order other than it, then there will be no way out for city development. So we should work for the integrated development of economy and culture with culture being the center of urban development. Hence, I put forward some suggestions for your reference.

#### 1. New cultural framework should be set up for city development

In recent years, the government of our country has put forward new conceptions with Chinese characteristic for social development, such as the conception to build harmonious society and the Scientific Concept of Development. This proved that new conceptions of development are not limited to merely pursuing the growth of GDP, and that more and more attention is given to objective in culture and order. This objective contains three levels of content. First, the present concerns of people, such as environmental protection, the protection of scarce natural resources or seeking their substitutes, and population control. These problems all involve cultures, so they should be first standardized in the development of city. Second, when striving for increase of living standards of the whole population, we must pay regard to cultural values deeply cherished by people in their mind. For an urban community, material wealth alone is far from what it should have, for material wealth in itself is not an indicator of living quality and mere pursue of material wealth can easily lead to vulgar hedonism and cultural nihilism. Third, the development of mankind itself is based on culture. In urban development, consideration has to be given to the basic demands or needs of urban residents such as nutrition, education, health, housing, employment and rest. Equally, these problems are related to culture.

In the course of city development, a relationship exist between cultural and order objective and development: order is the prerequisite for development, and in a society of drastic transformation, cultures serve as a buffer and it can minimize impact and damage caused by transformation

#### 2. In city development, importance should be attached to the integration of traditions and modern values

The word "tradition" has two significations, one being traditional culture, the other being cultural tradition. Traditional culture means concrete or material or spiritual culture, one that has been forged

in the past. Cultural tradition, also called cultural spirit, is concept and force that dominate an ethnic group or a group of people. Therefore, it acts as a system of standards followed by people in their daily life, and people act in accordance with it but without awareness of its existence. The traditional culture and cultural tradition relate to other each in this way: a traditional culture may disappear in the course of history development, but cultural traditions such as spirit and values of it may be preserved in the cultures later of it. When we speak of modernization in terms of the world, it is historic, developing and comprehensive concept. Although the Western countries were modernize earlier than other countries, our modernization is not westernization. On the integration of traditions and modernization, two different views exist. One view is that in the course of modernization, traditions unavoidably clash with modernization, and they repel each other and cannot coexist, and that they will develop to different ends by different ways. The other view holds that traditions can be integrated with modernization, and that cultural traditions of a nation can be adapted to the development of modernization. Mr. Yu Yingshi holds: "On the whole, Chinese values system is able to meet and stand challenges posed by modernization and even post-modernization, and will not lose its basis of existence. Major cultures of course underwent many transitions and changes, but the core of their value system remains full of vitality." In the process of modernization of Urumqi, we may, according to needs of modernization, adopt different attitudes towards traditional cultures and cultural traditions: First, to discard backward and decadent elements of traditions; second, to inherit and carry forward what is useful and healthy in the traditions. For instance, healthy cultural spirit factors that have long existed in our cultural traditions can be inherited and developed rationally, such as being sedulous to improve ourselves, being upright and honest, seeking truth from facts and being pragmatic, being open-minded and optimistic; third, to transform or remold. Some elements in traditions are outdated in content, but useful in form. Such elements may be given new content by transforming or remolding.

### 3. Multi-ethnic cultural resources should be reorganized and reallocated

People are increasingly aware that multi-ethnic multiculturalism of our city is a spiritual wealth, and it is a renewable resource. The multi-ethnic multiculturalism of Urumqi has strong and firm cultural foundation, and new vitality was injected to it in the course of reform and opening up, and it has become an important pillar for the development of tourist and cultural industries. In developing cultural resources, what made us worried is the loss of multi-ethnic multicultural resources, and spontaneous emergence and perishing of them, and disorderly development of cultural resources for pursuit of profit seriously destroys cultural resources.

We have two kinds of meaning in saying that Xinjiang is a region rich in resource. One is that Xinjiang is abundant in natural resources and two in cultural resources. The development of Urumqi is dependant on the rational and orderly exploitation of the two kinds of resources, especially the latter, which should be reorganized and reallocated. To reorganize and reallocate cultural resources, we should act in the following ways:

- 1) We should formulate strategy for cultural development oriented towards both international and

domestic markets, and to propel the development of cultural industry by making use of advantages in cultural resources. To do so, we must, on a strategic plan, formulate policies, laws and regulations governing the development cultural industry, reform cultural management system and operation system, establish and improve mechanisms of management of cultural products, talents training, investment and financing, expand demand for cultural products, give guidance to cultural consumption and cultivate cultural market.

- 2) We should reorganize and reallocate cultural resources by creating and building our own cultural image, cultural taste and cultural name brands. What cultural image, cultural taste and cultural name brand should be created and built in the development of Urumqi city is a problem worthy of researching. I wish Urumqi be a culturally charming city. Cultural charms should constitute its unique advantage.
- 3) We should develop tourist and cultural industries with local and ethnic characteristics by making use of our advantages in geographic position and cultures. Urumqi is an unavoidable station on the new Silk Road, which is our advantage. So long as we seize opportunities and take proper measures, Urumqi can radiate its tourist cultures with characteristics to the entire Xinjiang, China, Central Asia and even the world.