

# **Cultural Protection and Development in Xinjiang**

The State Council Information Office of  
the People's Republic of China

November 2018

First Edition 2018

ISBN 978-7-119-11747-8

© Foreign Languages Press Co. Ltd, Beijing, China, 2018

Published by Foreign Languages Press Co. Ltd

24 Baiwanzhuang Road, Beijing 100037, China

Distributed by China International Book Trading Corporation

35 Chegongzhuang Xilu, Beijing 100044, China

P.O. Box 399, Beijing, China

*Printed in the People's Republic of China*

# Contents

Preamble	1
I. Xinjiang Ethnic Cultures Are Part of the Chinese Culture	2
II. The Spoken and Written Languages of Ethnic Groups Are Widely Used	5
III. Respecting and Protecting Religious Culture	9
IV. Protecting and Carrying Forward Cultural Heritage	12
V. Constant Development of Cultural Undertakings and the Cultural Industry	17
VI. Active Cultural Exchanges with Other Countries	21
Conclusion	24

## **Preamble**

China is a unified multi-ethnic country. In the course of a civilization that dates back more than 5,000 years, the various ethnic groups of China have created a long history and a splendid culture. Since ancient times many ethnic groups have made their way to Xinjiang, and it has become their home and a place for cultural integration. Various ethnic cultures of Xinjiang have their roots in the fertile soil of Chinese civilization, advancing their own cultural development while enriching the overall culture of China.

Since the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the Chinese government has attached great importance to documenting and protecting the excellent traditional ethnic cultures in Xinjiang, and ensuring that they are passed on to succeeding generations. It has promoted creative transformation and innovative development, encouraging these ethnic groups to learn spoken and written languages from each other, promoted communication and integration, respected their freedom of religious belief, and worked to develop their cultural undertakings and industries. The government has worked to modernize ethnic cultures, to strengthen cultural exchanges with foreign countries, and to enhance each group's cultural confidence while engaging in exchanges with and mutual learning from others.

# I. Xinjiang Ethnic Cultures Are Part of the Chinese Culture

Since ancient times, Xinjiang has been home to various ethnic groups, where different ethnic cultures coexist. Through many years of communication and integration, these cultures thrive in the fertile soil of China's civilization and are part of the Chinese culture.

**Ethnic cultures make up an inseparable part of the Chinese culture.** Since ancient times, China has been multicultural as a result of the diversity of its environment. Different ethnic cultures have communicated and integrated with each other, constituting a legacy shared by the Chinese nation that has brought into being a splendid Chinese culture.

As early as in the pre-Qin period (c. 2100-221 BC), Xinjiang was in close contact with the Central Plains. Archaeological excavations demonstrate that painted pottery-ware unearthed in Xinjiang shows the influence of the Yangshao Culture in the middle reaches of the Yellow River, while many articles made from Xinjiang's Hetian jade were unearthed in the Shang-dynasty (c.1600 BC-1046 BC) Tomb of Fu Hao in Anyang, Henan in central China. After the Western Han (206 BC-AD 25) united Xinjiang, Chinese became one of the official languages used in government documents of the Western Regions where Xinjiang is located. Agricultural production techniques, the system of etiquette, Chinese-language books, music, and dances of the Central Plains spread widely in the Western Regions. Musical instruments and music from the Western Regions were introduced to the Central Plains and exerted a great influence on local music. The treasure house of Chinese culture boasts elements of the Uygur Muqam, the Kazak Aytes art, the Kirgiz epic *Manas*, the *Jangar* epic of the Oirat Mongols, and many other great cultural works of various ethnic groups.

**Different cultures have long coexisted in Xinjiang.** China's historical evolution has determined that various ethnic groups live together. They are economically interdependent and embrace each other's cultures. The unique natural environment and geographical conditions in Xinjiang resulted in the development of refined oasis farming and grassland nomadism, and migrating ethnic groups with different lifestyles and working practices communicated with, complemented and integrated with each other, creating a dynamic coexistence of different cultures.

Around 20 different spoken and written languages have been identified in Xinjiang. The Sino-Tibetan, Altaic, and Indo-European languages still exist in Xinjiang today, and a traditional feature of Xinjiang culture is that different languages

are used in daily life. It was common for different ethnic groups to borrow from and use each other's languages. The Kizil Thousand-Buddha Caves, Bezkilik Grottoes, Beiting Ancient City Site, and some other Xinjiang sites that integrate multiple cultural factors from the Han, Huihu (an ancient name for modern Uygur), Tubo (an ancient name for modern Tibetan) and other ancient residents of Xinjiang are typical of the culture and art of ancient China.

Historically Xinjiang was the gateway and medium through which the Chinese civilization opened to the West. The Silk Road opened a new chapter in cultural exchanges and integration between East and West. China's papermaking, sericulture, silk weaving, and other advanced technologies spread to the West via Xinjiang during the glory days of the Silk Road, exerting a far-reaching impact on world civilizations. Buddhism, Manichaeism and Nestorianism were introduced into Xinjiang through the Silk Road, and practiced together with primitive local religions. During Xinjiang's long historical evolution, it has always been a place where many religions have coexisted. The cultural landscape of Xinjiang has long been characterized by coexistence and communication between different cultures.

**There is a long history of different ethnic cultures communicating and integrating with each other.** The Chinese culture is a bond that unites various ethnic groups, while in the course of daily life and work, the communication between and integration of different ethnic cultures has helped to form and develop the Chinese culture. Influenced by the culture of the Central Plains, Xinjiang learned and rapidly developed sericulture and silk weaving. The Huihu culture that originated in the Mobei (the area north of the vast deserts on the Mongolian Plateau) regime was deeply influenced by the nomadic culture of northern China, Central Plains culture, Buddhism and Manichaeism. In different stages of history, various ethnic groups learned from each other, resulting in the emergence of a number of statesmen, writers, artists, historians, agronomists, and translators who made further contribution to the development of the ethnic cultures of Xinjiang in the embrace of the Chinese culture. After the People's Republic was founded in 1949, and under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the ethnic cultures of Xinjiang entered a new period of prosperity and development. *Our Motherland Is a Garden, Xinjiang, a Good Place* and other classic songs are heard around the country; *Visitors on the Icy Mountain, Uncle Kurban Visits Beijing* and other quality films have become widely known. They are elements of a cultural wealth that has been created by and is shared by all ethnic groups.

The ethnic groups of Xinjiang live together, study together, work together, and share happiness. They influence, assimilate and integrate with each other in language,

diet, costume, music, dance, painting, architecture and other aspects of social life, culture and art. A common feature of these ethnic cultures is that all are interrelated.

## **II. The Spoken and Written Languages of Ethnic Groups Are Widely Used**

Language, in both spoken and written forms, is an important carrier and a distinct symbol of culture. Xinjiang is a multilingual region, and historical experience shows that learning and using the commonly used standard Chinese as a spoken and written language has helped develop Xinjiang's ethnic cultures. The Chinese government works hard to promote the use of the standard Chinese language, protects by law ethnic people's freedom to use and develop their own languages, and advocates and encourages ethnic groups to learn spoken and written languages from each other, so as to promote language communication and ethnic unity among all Chinese people.

**Promote standard Chinese by law.** Learning and using standard Chinese helps different ethnic groups to communicate, develop and progress. When the Constitution of the People's Republic of China was revised in 1982, the sentence "The state promotes the nationwide use of Putonghua (common speech based on Beijing pronunciation)" was added. On January 1, 2001, the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language took effect, clarifying the legitimate status of Putonghua and standardized Chinese characters as the standard Chinese language. The Educational Law of the People's Republic of China (Revised in 2015) provides: "The standard spoken and written Chinese language shall be the basic language used by schools and other educational institutions in education and teaching.... Schools and other educational institutions dominated by ethnic minority students in ethnic autonomous areas shall, according to the actual circumstances, use the standard spoken and written Chinese language and the spoken and written languages of their respective ethnicities or the spoken and written language commonly used by the local ethnicities to implement bilingual education." Regulations on the Work Concerning Spoken and Written Languages of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, revised in 2015, state the need to "promote the standard spoken and written Chinese language". Ethnic people are enthusiastic about learning and using standard Chinese to adapt to economic and social development and increased communication.

We should strengthen education and teaching of standard Chinese. In the 1950s, in response to the call of the state, Xinjiang began Chinese courses for ethnic minority students at elementary and secondary schools. In 1984, Xinjiang proposed to

strengthen Chinese teaching at ethnic minority schools to achieve the goal that students “master both standard Chinese and their own ethnic languages”. Currently, students at preschool institutions and elementary and secondary schools in Xinjiang have universal access to bilingual education, including teaching of standard Chinese and ethnic minority languages, ensuring that by 2020 all ethnic minority students will be able to master and use standard Chinese.

We should carry out various forms of training on the standard spoken and written Chinese language. In 2013, the “training program on the standard spoken and written Chinese language” was launched, a special program for ethnic minority youths participating in vocational or business training in counties or cities where people of ethnic minorities live in concentrated communities. In 2017, a program aimed to popularize standard Chinese by the year 2020 was launched.

**Protect spoken and written ethnic minority languages in a scientific way.** The Constitution of the People’s Republic of China and the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy both clearly prescribe that all ethnic groups have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages. Currently, 10 spoken and written languages are used among the various ethnic groups of Xinjiang. Ethnic minority languages are extensively used in such areas as judicature, administration, education, press and publishing, radio and television, internet, and public affairs. At important meetings such as those of the National People’s Congress and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference documentation and simultaneous interpretation in Uyгур, Kazak, Mongolian or other ethnic minority languages are provided. When performing official duties, Party and government organs of Xinjiang and lower-level autonomous prefectures and counties use at the same time standard Chinese and the languages of those ethnic minorities that exercise regional autonomy. All ethnic minorities have the right to use their own spoken and written languages in elections and judicial matters. Schools and other educational institutions where ethnic minority students are the majority highlight the study and use of ethnic minority languages in setting their curricula and in various entrance examinations. Xinjiang uses Chinese, Uyгур, Kazak, Kirgiz and Mongolian languages for the annual national higher education entrance examination.

In 2015 the Chinese government organized and launched a program to protect the rich language resources of China, collecting and recording physical forms of linguistic data such as Chinese dialects, spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities, and oral language cultures. The largest of its kind in the world, this program has covered the whole country. Field surveys have been conducted in Xinjiang, covering more than 30 survey locations of ethnic minority languages, 10 locations of Chinese dialects, six locations of endangered languages, and two locations of language

cultures. To date more than 80 percent of survey tasks in these locations have been completed, and some symbolic successes have been achieved.

Multilingual press and publication and radio and television are a major feature of Xinjiang. Xinjiang publishes newspapers, books, audio and video products, and e-publications in six spoken and written languages – Chinese, Uygur, Kazak, Kirgiz, Mongolian and Xibe. Xinjiang TV broadcasts in Chinese, Uygur, Kazak, and Kirgiz. Xinjiang People's Broadcasting Station broadcasts in Chinese, Uygur, Kazak, Kirgiz, and Mongolian. *Xinjiang Daily* is printed in Chinese, Uygur, Kazak and Mongolian.

To enable ethnic minorities to share the achievements of the information age, the Chinese government has set national specifications of coded character set, keyboard, and type matrix for Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazak, Kirgiz, and some other languages. It has studied and developed different typesetting systems and intelligent voice translation systems for several written ethnic minority languages. The government supports the orderly development of websites and emerging media in spoken and written ethnic minority languages, and works to improve information processing and application capabilities in ethnic minority languages. Xinjiang has set up the Ethnic Language Work Committee and ethnic minority language research institutes at different levels, which are responsible for scientific research into ethnic minority languages, and which work to make them more standardized and apply them in IT.

**Encourage ethnic groups to learn spoken and written languages from each other.** The Chinese government encourages different ethnic groups in ethnic autonomous areas to learn languages from each other, urging ethnic minorities to learn standard Chinese while encouraging Han residents to learn ethnic minority languages. It emphasizes that grassroots civil servants, newly recruited civil servants, and employees in the public service sector should know two or more languages and provides facilities for their learning. Xinjiang conducts special training courses for Han officials to learn ethnic minority languages. Since the 1950s, the state has offered majors in ethnic minority languages and literature (Uygur and Kazak) at colleges and universities in Xinjiang; most graduates of these majors work in the fields of administration, education, and research on ethnic minority languages. For many years, it has been a common practice that different ethnic groups of Xinjiang learn languages from each other. More and more people are becoming bilingual or multilingual, which promotes communication and integration among all the ethnic groups.



### III. Respecting and Protecting Religious Culture

Since antiquity Xinjiang has seen the coexistence of a variety of religions, whose rich cultures have become part of traditional Chinese culture. China's government is committed to protecting its citizens' freedom of religious belief while respecting and protecting religious cultures.

**Many religious cultures blend and coexist.** Xinjiang has long been a region where multiple religions are practiced and their cultures have met and blended. Primitive religion and Shamanism were practiced in Xinjiang before Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and other faiths were introduced into the region from the 4th century BC onward. Gradually there came into being a network of coexisting religions. This network further evolved with the introduction of Taoism, Manichaeism, Nestorianism, and Islam. A coexistence of multiple religions, with one or two predominant, was a basic characteristic of Xinjiang's religious history. During their lengthy coexistence and interaction, the religious cultures in the region learned from one another and adapted to China's social development. At present, the major religions in Xinjiang are Islam, Buddhism, Protestant and Catholic Christianity, and Taoism. Certain Shamanistic and Zoroastrian elements can still be observed in local customs today. The remains of Buddha niches, lotus patterns, and lotus seat sculptures in Kashgar, Hami, and Ili testify to the once widespread influence of Buddhism in the region.

**Religious texts are published and distributed in accordance with the law.** The state has translated, published and distributed Islamic, Buddhist, Protestant, and other religious texts to meet the diverse demand of religious believers. The Koran and *Irshad al-Sari li Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari* have been published in Chinese, Uygur, Kazak and Kirgiz languages. *The New Collection of al-Wa'z Speeches* series have been compiled and published in both Chinese and Uygur languages. A website ([www.xjmuslim.com](http://www.xjmuslim.com)) available in both Chinese and Uygur languages was set up for Xinjiang's Muslim community. Ancient religious books, including Volume II of the *Golden Light Sutra* (Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra) and *Maitrisimit Nom Bitig*, have been published. Important scriptures such as the Koran, Bible, and *Golden Light Sutra* are available at stores specializing in selling religious publications.

**Religious heritages are effectively protected.** A total of 109 religious sites in Xinjiang, including Id Kah Mosque in Kashgar, Shengyou Lamasery in Zhaosu, and the Kizil Thousand-Buddha Caves have been designated as major cultural heritage

sites under the protection of the autonomous region and the state. Among the 109 sites, 46 are key cultural heritage sites under the protection of the state and 63 are under the protection of the autonomous region. The central government has allocated special funds to renovate cultural heritage protection sites at the state and autonomous-region levels, including the Kizil Thousand-Buddha Caves, Bezkilik Grottoes, and Id Kah Mosque. Xinjiang has funded the repair of 28 religious venues, including the Emin Minaret in Turpan, Shengyou Lamasery in Zhaosu, and Red Temple (Taoist) in Urumqi. Elements of intangible cultural heritage relating to religion are also effectively protected and passed on.

**Religions adapt to China's realities.** Adapting to local society is essential for the survival and development of any religion. With influence from such Chinese cultural traditions as being inclusive, seeking common ground while reserving differences, and pursuing harmony without uniformity, Buddhism and other foreign religions have all directed their efforts to localization after entering China. After Buddhism was introduced into Xinjiang, it has exerted a far-reaching influence on Xinjiang's history and culture through proactive adaptation to local social norms and integration into the mainstream culture. Through extended fusion with local faiths and traditions, Islam gradually became part of Chinese culture and developed distinct regional and local ethnic features. The Catholic Church's principles of independence and self-management of its religious affairs, and Protestantism's compliance with the principles of self-propagation, self-governance, and self-support facilitated their adaptation to conditions in China. Xinjiang upholds the tradition of religious localization and provides guidance to religions on adaptation to China's socialist system. Religious circles in Xinjiang are encouraged to promote social harmony and development as well as cultural progress with the aid of religious doctrines and rules, and elaborate on the doctrines and rules that contribute to China's development and conform to China's traditions.

## **IV. Protecting and Carrying Forward Cultural Heritage**

Xinjiang is a region rich in cultural heritage. The central government and the local government of Xinjiang have made a continuous effort to strengthen the legal system for the protection of the region's cultural heritage. The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics and the Law of the People's Republic of China on Intangible Cultural Heritage provide important legal protection for the diverse cultural heritage of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang.

**Protection of cultural heritage yields results.** Xinjiang has formed a cultural heritage protection network comprising 189 institutions at all levels. The region has completed three surveys on fixed national cultural relics and one on movable national cultural relics, forming a comprehensive database. By the end of 2017 Xinjiang had 9,542 cultural heritage sites, of which six were World Heritage sites, 113 were key national sites, and 558 were at the autonomous-region level. Xinjiang's cultural heritage system contains 93 public museums, including two national first-grade museums – the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Museum and the Turpan Museum, with a collection of 450,000 items.

Xinjiang has made great headway in protecting its historical and cultural cities, towns, villages and localities. The region now has five cities, three towns, four villages, and two localities that have been recognized as state-level historical and cultural divisions, as well as 17 traditional Chinese villages and 22 ethnic-minority villages with cultural significance. Over the years, the Chinese government has supported the repair and conservation of many cultural heritage sites, such as the Gaochang Ancient City Ruins, Beiting Ancient City Ruins, and new and old Huiyuan Ancient City, while rescuing and restoring more than 3,000 rare cultural relics.

**Archeological findings attract wide attention.** By the end of 2017 eight archeological programs, including the Niya Ruins in Minfeng County, Yingpan Cemetery in Yuli County, Xiaohe Cemetery in Ruoqiang County, 3rd-4th century brick graves in Kucha County, Dongheigou Ruins in Barkol County, and the Tongtiandong Cave in Jeminay County, had been listed among the National Top 10 Archeological Discoveries of the Year. The arm protector with the inscriptions of “Five stars appear in the East, sign of Chinese victory over the Qiang” and the silk quilt with inscriptions of “Marriages between princes and dukes bring prosperity to their posterity” unearthed from the Niya Ruins are national treasures.

**Protection of ancient books has been strengthened.** Xinjiang has set up a leading group and office in charge of the classification and publishing of the autonomous region's ancient books, an ancient books preservation center, an ancient books restoration center, and a repository for ancient books and special collections of ethnic minorities. In 2011 the region's Ancient Books Preservation Center started its first survey of ancient books, registering important and rare volumes and recording their content, physical condition, and preservation requirements. This was the first of several such surveys. By the end the 2017 the center had examined 14,980 books. Ancient books in its collection are written in 19 languages and 28 scripts, and fall into three language families: the Chinese language family (Chinese, Tangut, and Khitan scripts), the Aramaic family (more than 10 scripts, including the Kharosthi, Pahlavi, Manichaeian, and Huihu scripts), and the Brahmi family (Sanskrit, Tocharian,

Khotanese, and Tubo scripts). These books cover a wide range of subjects, including politics, the economy, society, religions, astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and the arts. Digitalization of ancient books and related work are further strengthened.

The Chinese government has supported the translation, editing and publishing into Chinese and Uygur languages of *Kutadgu Bilig (Wisdom of Fortune and Joy)* and *A Comprehensive Turki Dictionary*, two works of the Karahan Kingdom period in the 11th century. The government has also organized experts in ancient books to carry out research and provide expertise in this field, and helped to arrange exchanges between Chinese and foreign professionals, researchers, and administrators engaged in the preservation of ancient books. In 2011 the Ministry of Culture and the local government of Xinjiang co-hosted an exhibition, titled “Recovered Treasures from the Western Regions: Progress in Preserving Xinjiang’s Historical Literature and Ancient Books”. More than half of the ancient books displayed at the exhibition were the only copies extant. This achievement was acclaimed by the widest range of interested parties.

**Intangible cultural heritage is effectively protected.** Under the guiding principle of giving priority to both preservation and restoration, and pursuing sound utilization and development, the policy and legislation for protecting intangible cultural heritage have been strengthened. In 2008 the Regulations of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage were enacted. In 2010 the Regulations of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on the Protection of Uygur Muqam Arts were promulgated and put into force. In addition, Xinjiang has introduced a number of rules for protecting its intangible cultural heritage, which provide institutional guarantees for rescuing and preserving this heritage in a coordinated and systematic manner.

In 1951 and 1954 the central government made recordings of the music of the Twelve Muqams to rescue the Muqam arts. Since the 1960s, firm funding and manpower support from the government has enabled the publication of works of folk literature, including the Kirgiz epic *Manas* and Mongolian epic *Jangar*. The *Collection of Chinese Ethnic and Folk Dances (Xinjiang Volume)*, *Collection of Chinese Folk Songs (Xinjiang Volume)*, and *Collection of Chinese Folk Tales (Xinjiang Volume)* have been compiled and published to introduce the folk music, dances, drama and other arts of the region.

The program for protecting and preserving Xinjiang’s intangible cultural heritage as part of the initiative to promote Chinese cultural traditions is well under way. By the end of 2017, to rescue and preserve its intangible cultural heritage, Xinjiang had completed the recording of intangible cultural items presented by 23 state-level representative trustees in the form of written texts, images, audios and videos.

Furthermore, the region had established three state-level demonstration bases that produce Uyghur musical instruments, carpets and Etles silk for the preservation of these intangible cultural items. In addition, the region had set up 91 autonomous-region level bases for preserving and handing down its intangible cultural heritage.

Uyghur Muqam of Xinjiang and the Kirgiz epic *Manas* were registered on the “UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity”, and Uyghur Meshrep on the “List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding”. Xinjiang has 83 items on the national representative list of intangible cultural heritage and 294 items on the autonomous-region list, as well as 112 state-level representative trustees and 403 autonomous-region representative trustees of its intangible cultural heritage.

**Folk cultures are respected and preserved.** Xinjiang embraces cultural diversity and inclusiveness, and upholds mutual learning among cultures. The region fully respects and protects folk cultures, thus realizing the harmonious coexistence of different cultures and enabling the effective protection and preservation of the best traditions of all ethnic groups. All people in Xinjiang have the right to observe their own statutory festivals such as the Spring Festival, Qingming Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, Ramadan, and Corban. They celebrate the festivals in many forms, such as playing music, dancing, and holding traditional sports events. Among popular folk festivals are the Han people’s Lantern Festival, the Uyghur’s Meshrep, the Kazak’s Aytes, the Kirgiz’s Kobuz Ballad Singing Fair, the Mongolian Nadam Fair, and the Hui people’s Hua’er Folk Song Festival. The local government promotes mutual respect for folkways among all ethnic groups while encouraging appropriate and healthy lifestyles, wedding and funeral practices, and customs and rituals.

## **V. Constant Development of Cultural Undertakings and the Cultural Industry**

The core of cultural development is to satisfy people’s cultural and intellectual needs. The Chinese government has given steady support to Xinjiang in its efforts to improve the quality of public cultural services, promote progress in literary and artistic creation and the press and publishing, strengthen the cultural industry, protect citizens’ cultural rights, and enrich the cultural life of all ethnic groups. The Law of the People’s Republic of China on Protection of Public Cultural Service, Law of the

People's Republic of China on Public Libraries, and Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of the Film Industry among others have served as important legal guarantee to protect the basic cultural needs of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang, provide them with public cultural services and promote the development of its cultural industry.

**The quality of public cultural services is improving.** In 1955, there were only 425 sports venues and one public library in Xinjiang. With the massive support of the central government, successive cultural projects have been launched in Xinjiang such as “conservation and renovation project of county-level cultural centers and libraries”, “cultural information sharing project” and “township cultural centers project”. By the end of 2017, Xinjiang had 112 public libraries, 173 museums and memorial halls, 57 art galleries, 119 cultural centers, 12,158 cultural stations, 302 radio and television stations (covering 97.1 percent and 97.4 percent of the population, respectively), and 29,600 sports venues, representing a comparatively complete public cultural service system at all levels.

Xinjiang has made efforts to ensure equal access to public cultural services for both urban and rural residents. Public cultural facilities such as cultural centers, libraries, museums and cultural stations are open to the public for free. The radio and television network covers almost every household. Movie projection is available in all administrative villages. Theatrical performances of various types are given in impoverished villages with the support of government funds. A reading campaign is encouraged by ensuring full coverage of rural libraries over all administrative villages. By the end of 2017, 13 sports meetings, eight traditional ethnic minority sports meetings, five games for senior citizens and six games for disabled people had been held in Xinjiang. Fitness projects for farmers and herdsman cover all villages. Gym equipment of all sorts is available even in remote villages. Rich and interesting sports events and fitness activities are popular with people of all ethnic groups.

**Literary, artistic creation, press and publishing are booming.** A variety of brilliant works of literature and art created in Xinjiang demonstrate the glamour of Chinese culture. The following have all won national prizes such as the Best Works Award, Lu Xun Literary Prize, China Movie Awards, and the first prize in International Acrobatic Festival:

- *Soldiers from the Snow Mountain* (novel),
- *Holy Mountain* (poetry anthology),
- *In Xinjiang* (collection of prose writings),
- *Western China: Literary Writing in Remote Provinces* (collection of literary review),
- *Praying on Plateau, Chinese Mourning Day on May 19th* (oil painting),

- *Braving the Storm* (photography),
- *Grand Bazaar* (drama),
- *Dance Steps in the Sun* and *Young Blood in Gobi Desert* (dance drama),
- *A Uygur Mother* and *Visitors on the Icy Mountain* (musical),
- *Hello, Advanti* (musical and acrobatic drama),
- *My Parents Stationing and Reclaiming Wasteland in Xinjiang* (song),
- *A Nuclear Scientist's Story in the Desert* (radio play),
- *The Great River, Flower, Genuine Love, Life and Death in Lop Nor, Taklimakan's Drumbeat* (movie).
- *Travel of Life* (acrobatic show),
- *Somersault on Balance Beam* (acrobatic show).

In 2006, Xinjiang Radio, Film and Television Translation and Production Center was set up, establishing branches in 11 prefectures, Yining City, Shache, Kucha and Yutian counties. Currently, about 6,200 episodes of translated ethnic film and television programs are being produced every year. There were only two newspapers in Xinjiang before the founding of the People's Republic of China. But by the end of 2017, Xinjiang had 126 newspapers, 223 periodicals, and publishes around 10,000 titles of books, audio and video products and electronic publications every year.

**Strength in cultural, sports and ethnic medicine industries is growing.** At present, Xinjiang has over 10,000 cultural companies covering press, publishing and distribution, radio, film and television, performances, entertainment, games, cultural tourism, arts and crafts, artwork, animation, cultural exhibitions, innovation design and digital cultural services. By the end of 2017, there were six model bases for cultural industries at national level, 109 at autonomous region level, 11 government-approved animation companies, 20 cultural industry parks, 12 national 5A tourist attractions and 17,000 tourist guides. The added value of the cultural and tourist industries is growing every year.

A group of professional sports clubs have been set up, with sports competitions and sports show flourishing. The Taklimakan Rally is a commercial success and China Basketball Association (CBA) in Xinjiang is doing well. The sports leisure market is maturing as demonstrated by the success of the China International Camping Congress, International Desert Cross Rally, Aydingkol Motorcycle Rally, and Sayram Bicycle Rally. Huge potential is also apparent in horseracing, winter sports and aviation sports.

Xinjiang has formed a complete industrial system of medicine and health covering Chinese medicine (including ethnic medicine), hospital-made preparations, foods (including health foods), medical equipment, and packaging for medicines. Among ethnic medicines, many Uygur medicines, Kazak medicines, and Mongolian

medicines – boasting a long history and regarded as cultural treasures – have been categorized under national standards or included in national standardization research projects. The sales of ethnic medicines in Xinjiang’s pharmaceutical industry are increasing year by year, and ethnic medicine companies are expanding sales not only in domestic markets, but also in neighboring countries and regions as an effort to enter the international markets.

**Internet culture develops rapidly.** The rapid development of the internet in China has made it the new space for people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang to study, work and live, and a new platform to access public services. By the end of 2017, Xinjiang had 11,520 registered websites, 5.7 million fixed broadband subscribers, and 18.56 million mobile internet users. The subscribers on the official WeChat platform “Last Kilometer” extend across all provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government and dozens of countries and regions. Over 30 internet cultural projects such as “making a good netizen”, “Etles Silk from Tianshan to the World” and “video programs on ethnic solidarity” launched more than 7,000 online cultural activities across Xinjiang. In 2017, online retail sales to Xinjiang consumers reached 56.91 billion yuan, an increase of 29.8 percent over 2016. The prosperity of Xinjiang’s internet culture helps to foster healthy social morals.

## **VI. Active Cultural Exchanges with Other Countries**

Xinjiang has been an important gateway for China’s civilization to open to the West, and has played a significant role in cultural communication and mutual learning between East and West. Supported by the central government, Xinjiang has created a framework of cultural exchanges with other countries in all sectors and at all levels.

**Xinjiang participates in international cultural exchanges and cooperation in various forms.** Xinjiang International Ethnic Dance Festival, Chinese and Foreign Culture Week of China-Eurasia Expo, and Publishing Expo have become branded cultural exchange projects of considerable international influence. Since 2009, Xinjiang has held seven China International Youth Arts festivals, inviting more than 2,330 young people representing 119 art troupes from Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan of Central Asia and Russia, Mongolia, Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Thailand, the Republic of Korea and Azerbaijan. From 2012 to 2017, Xinjiang has held seven seminars for directors of media from countries along the Silk



Road Economic Belt, inviting directors of more than 100 media from 25 countries to Xinjiang on study, communication and visits.

In recent years, Xinjiang has been active in building the core area along the Silk Road Economic Belt, strengthening cultural and scientific and technological exchanges with countries along the Belt. In 2016, it hosted the scientific and technological cooperation forum of the Fifth China-Eurasia Expo, inviting 154 guests from more than 30 countries and international organizations. Xinjiang has built 12 state-level bases for international sci-tech cooperation, launching cooperation and exchanges with more than 30 countries and regions and 10 international organizations and research institutes in such fields as agriculture, resources and the environment, processing of agricultural products, astronomy, coal chemicals, bio-medicine, and energy.

It has steadily implemented the “Study-in-China” initiative, gradually increasing scholarships for outstanding students from countries along the Silk Road Economic Belt. Institutions of higher learning in Xinjiang engage in active international exchanges and cooperation, and their foreign students are growing in number and their teaching quality is much improved. From 1985 to 2017, colleges and universities of Xinjiang enrolled 50,000 foreign students.

With its particular strength in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), including Uygur and Kazak medicine, Xinjiang plans to establish Chinese-foreign institutions of traditional Chinese medicine and worked to establish a system of international medical services for TCM including ethnic minority medicine, attracting more and more patients from neighboring countries. From 2015 to 2017, five hospitals in Urumqi began to offer international medical services, accepting 17,000 foreign patients in total. Xinjiang has held a series of high-level sports events, attracting numerous international athletes and sports fans.

**Xinjiang presents different ethnic cultures to foreign countries.** Since the late 20th century, quality exhibitions of Xinjiang cultural relics, such as the “Exhibition of Ancient Silk Road Cultural Relics of Xinjiang” and “Secrets of the Silk Road – Exhibition of Xinjiang Cultural Relics”, have been held in Japan, the United States, Germany, the Republic of Korea, and some other countries. Some of Xinjiang’s intangible cultural heritage items have been presented in performances or exhibitions in the UN headquarters, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, and in those countries adjacent to Xinjiang. In recent years, cultural communication events such as “Experiencing Xinjiang – Cultural Exploration of Xinjiang, West China”, “Xinjiang Cultural Exchange Forum”, and “Xinjiang Culture Week” have been held in the United States, Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan,

Afghanistan, Malaysia, Brunei, and Laos. Xinjiang has also sent several delegations on behalf of China to attend the World Nomad Games on the shores of Lake Issyk-Kul, strengthening sports exchanges and cooperation with other member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

## **Conclusion**

The Chinese culture was created, carried forward and developed by all ethnic groups of China, and is a bond of ethnic unity and national unification. Facts have proven that ethnic cultures of Xinjiang are components of the Chinese culture, which is always the emotional attachment and spiritual home for all ethnic people in Xinjiang, as well as the dynamic source for the development of ethnic cultures.

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, pointed out: “Since its founding, the Communist Party of China has actively guided and promoted China’s advanced culture while keeping China’s fine traditional culture alive and strong. Today, we Chinese Communists and the Chinese people should and can shoulder our new cultural mission, make cultural creations through practice, and promote cultural advancement along with the progress of history.” Today, under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Xi Jinping as the core, the Chinese nation has marched into a new era and onto a new journey. On the stage of cultural exchanges and integration, people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang should and can shoulder their new cultural mission to create a new boom in cultural creations and make new developments along with cultural progress.