Journal of Landscape Research 2026, 18(5): 7-14

Exploration and Utilization of Cultural and Tourism Resources Related to "Interactions, Exchanges, and Integration" among Ethnic Groups in Inner Mongolia: Local Practices for Fostering a Strong Sense of Community for the Chinese Nation

WANG Li, JIANG Bingbing*

(College of History and Tourism Culture, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, Inner Mongolia 010070, China)

Abstract Focusing on fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation, and grounded in the regional practice of Inner Mongolia as a historical forefront for interactions, exchanges, and integration (hereafter referred to as the "three exchanges") among ethnic groups in northern China, this study systematically identifies and categorizes the cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" throughout the region, in order to elucidate the resource background, reveal distribution patterns, and subsequently explore local practical pathways for resource development and utilization. A total of 660 individual cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups were examined, encompassing five primary categories: architecture, ruins, water bodies, biological resources, and geographical features. The study reveals that the cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia are diverse in type, rich in endowment, and characterized by distinct thematic elements. These resources function as a living textbook of the multi-ethnic integration pattern of the Chinese nation. Nevertheless, several challenges remain, including the scattered and concealed nature of some resources, insufficient integration and utilization, limited narrative diversity, and an incomplete mechanism for equitable benefit sharing. Emphasizing the cultivation of a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation as the guiding value, this approach employs narrative reconstruction, a "point-belt-surface" networked utilization strategy, and multi-subject collaborative governance. These methods transform resource advantages into educational, cultural, and developmental benefits that foster a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. This framework offers valuable insights from Inner Mongolia for the tangible, perceptible, and effective promotion of a strong sense of community within frontier minority regions.

Keywords "Three exchanges", Cultural and tourism resources, A strong sense of community for the Chinese nation, Inner Mongolia, Local practice

DOI 10.16785/j.issn 1943-989x.2026.5.002

Fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation is the principal line of the Party's ethnic policies in the new era, as well as the primary guiding principle for all initiatives in ethnic minority regions[1-2]. Cultural identity is the most profound form of identification, serving as the foundation of ethnic unity and the essence of ethnic harmony. Geographically, Inner Mongolia is situated in the northernmost part of China, encompassing areas of Northeast, North, and Northwest China. Historically, it has functioned as a corridor facilitating interaction and exchange between the agricultural civilization of the Central Plains and the nomadic cultures of the northern regions. Over the long course of history, various ethnic groups, including the Xiongnu, Xianbei, Turks, Khitan, Jurchen, Mongols, Han, Manchu, and Hui, have migrated to and interacted within this region. These groups engaged in trade, intermarriage, and formed alliances, thereby leaving a substantial legacy of diverse historical relics and cultural landscapes[3]. These cultural and tourism resources, which embody the historical interactions, exchanges, and integration (hereafter referred to as the "three exchanges") among various ethnic groups, document the formation and development of the multi-ethnic integrated pattern of the Chinese nation in both tangible and intangible forms. They are invaluable assets for educational initiatives aimed at fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation[4]. The comprehensive exploration and rational utilization of these resources hold significant theoretical value and practical significance in guiding all ethnic groups to firmly embrace the concept of a shared community characterized by shared weal and woe, shared honor and disgrace, shared life and death, and a shared future.

Existing research provides the foundation for this study: the role of tourism in facilitating the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups has garnered increasing attention[5-6]. In terms of theoretical connotation, internal logic, and practical experiences related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups, the academic community has produced substantial and diverse findings[7-10]. Within the domain of ethnic cultural resources, technical approaches for resource exploration, multidimensional evaluation, as well as protection and utilization have become progressively mature[11-12]. Overall, cultural and tourism resources characterized by the value orientation of the "three exchanges" have yet to become an independent and systematic research object; studies that explicitly focus on the "three exchanges" and treat such resources as the subject remain scarce. Numerous relics that bear witness to ethnic exchanges are dispersed throughout the region, and a comprehensive census and identification of these resources has yet to be completed. Prior research has predominantly concentrated on an individual heritage site or a specific league or city, thereby fragmenting what was originally a continuous historical line of the "three exchanges". A more pressing issue concerns the transformation of these identified resources into effective educational materials, a process for which a clear and feasible pathway has yet to be developed.

This paper utilizes resource survey data from 12 leagues and cities across the region

Received: August 16, 2026 Accepted: October 9, 2026

* Corresponding author.

to systematically identify the type system and quality characteristics of the "three exchanges" cultural and tourism resources among ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia. It quantitatively analyzes the spatial patterns and differentiation rules governing resource distribution within each league and city. Building on this analysis, the study explores practical pathways to resource development and utilization guided by the goal of fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. This research serves not only as a localized empirical investigation of the theory of the Chinese nation as a community but also as a practical inquiry into promoting ethnic unity and progress through the integration of culture and tourism[13-14]. The findings aim to provide theoretical support and experiential references for the comprehensive construction of a model autonomous region in Inner Mongolia and the high-quality development of frontier minority regions.

1 Research design

1.1 Overview of the case study location

The Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region spans three principal geographical regions: Northeast China, North China, and Northwest China, covering an area of approximately 1.183 million km^2. The region extends approximately 2,400 km from east to west in a straight line. It shares borders with eight provincial-level administrative divisions including Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning, Hebei, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Ningxia, and Gansu, and is contiguous with Mongolia and Russia to the north. The selection of Inner Mongolia as the case study location is both typical and representative. Historically, the Inner Mongolia region served as a convergence point for significant historical routes, including the Grassland Silk Road, the Yinshan-Yellow River Passage, and the Liaoxi Corridor. Various northern ethnic groups, such as the Xiongnu, Xianbei, Turks, Khitan, Jurchen, and Mongols, successively emerged in this region and engaged in continuous interactions with the Central Plains dynasties and neighboring ethnic communities. The historical trajectory of interactions, exchanges, and integration among ethnic groups in this area has remained uninterrupted, preserving a continuous and comprehensive sequence of archaeological remains from prehistoric times to the present. Inner Mongolia, as the earliest provincial-level ethnic autonomous region established under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, is recognized as a "model autonomous region" and bears the political responsibility of upholding this distinguished status in the new era. Utilizing the entire Inner Mongolia region as a case study to investigate the exploration and utilization of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" not only offers a comprehensive spatial representation of the historical development of the "three exchanges" but also provides replicable practical examples for other frontier minority regions.

1.2 Research methods

1.2.1 Literature and archival analysis. The research team systematically collected and organized local chronicles, cultural relics chronicles, lists of cultural relic protection units, local textbooks, introductory materials of tourist areas (spots), and existing academic research findings, and also compiled historical document records concerning the "three exchanges" among various ethnic groups, thereby providing foundational historical materials and source clues for resource identification.

1.2.2 Field investigation. In accordance with the national standard for the *Classification*, *Investigation, and Evaluation of Tourism Resources*, a research team was assembled to conduct a comprehensive census of individual resources across 12 leagues and cities within the region[15]. The team systematically documented the names, types, locations, scales, preservation conditions, and the connotations of the "three exchanges" related to each individual resource. This process resulted in the creation of detailed investigation archives for individual resources, alongside the on-site collection of their geographical coordinates.

1.2.3 Mathematical statistics. The individual resources acquired from the investigation were subjected to classified statistical analysis and cross-examination based on dimensions such as type, grade, league and city, and region. This approach aimed to assess the quantitative structure, quality structure, and spatial differentiation characteristics of the resources, thereby uncovering the overall pattern of resource distribution.

1.2.4 GIS spatial analysis. The coordinates of individual resources were imported into a geographic information system to construct a spatial database. This database facilitated the analysis of the agglomeration characteristics of resource points and their spatial coupling relationships with historical channels and geographical elements through spatial visualization, providing support for the research on cultural corridors and spatial layout. The methods and data corresponding to each research link are presented in Table 1.

1.3 Data source

The data utilized in this study were primarily derived from three sources. First, the research team conducted a specialized investigation into the cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia. This investigation yielded a total of 660 individual resource records encompassing 12 leagues and cities across the region. Each record contained attribute fields such as the name, type, league, city, banner or county of location, geographic coordinates (longitude and latitude), and quality grade, thereby constituting the core dataset for the present analysis. Second, official documents including lists of cultural relic protection units, intangible cultural heritage sites, and A-level tourist attractions published by relevant cultural relics, culture and tourism authorities at various administrative levels were employed to verify and supplement the individual resource data. Finally, local chronicles from each league, city, banner, and county, as well as cultural relics chronicles and existing investigative and research findings, were utilized to verify the historical context of the resources and to elucidate the connotations of the "three exchanges". The resource levels were assessed according to the Comprehensive Evaluation System for Common Factors of Tourism Resources in the national standard *Classification*, *Investigation*, *and Evaluation of Tourism*

Table 1 Correspondence between research content, methods and data sources

Research content	Method	Data source
Construction of a resource identification and classification system	Literature and archival analysis, field investigation	Local chronicles, lists of cultural relic protection units, and investigation archives
Analysis of resource types and quality structure	Mathematical statistics, control evaluation	Attribute data of 660 individual resources
Analysis of the spatial distribution pattern of resources	GIS spatial analysis, visual mapping	Coordinate of individual resource and spatial database
Discussion on the pathway of resource exploration and utilization	Case analysis, inductive deduction	Typical resource cases and field investigation materials

Resources. This assessment incorporated the accuracy of the investigation and general survey and was conducted through a control evaluation at four levels: fifth, fourth, third, and ordinary. Resources rated at third level and above were classified as excellent.

2 Type system and general characteristics of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia

2.1 Concept definition and basic attributes

The cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups refer to various entities, phenomena, and factors that have been formed in the long course of ethnic historical development. These resources embody the historical memory of the "three exchanges" among all ethnic groups, reflect the concept of ethnic unity and progress, and serve purposes such as cultural exhibition, educational tours, and tourism experiences. They are characterized by humanistic, historical, regional, and environmental attributes[16]. Distinct from general ethnic cultural resources, the core value of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" lies in their role in "witnessing interactions, facilitating exchanges, and promoting integration". For example, Wang Zhaojun's Tomb symbolizes ethnic reconciliation through marriage alliance policies; the Site of Xanadu historically functioned as an international metropolis jointly established by multiple ethnic groups; and Meidaizhao exemplifies the tripartite symbiosis among grassland political systems, Tibetan Buddhist culture, and architectural techniques from the Central Plains[17]. Consequently, these resources possess an inherent educational function and act as tangible carriers for interpreting the collective endeavors of all ethnic groups in jointly exploring vast territories, jointly writing a long history, jointly creating splendid cultures, and jointly cultivating great spirits[18].

2.2 Type structure: human resources constitute the primary component

In accordance with the national standard for the *Classification*, *Investigation*, and *Evaluation of Tourism Resources*, and considering the thematic attributes of the "three exchanges", this identification categorizes individual resources into five primary categories: architecture, ruins, water bodies, biological resources, and geographical features. A total of 660 individual cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" were identified throughout the region, with their type structure presented in Table 2.

As presented in Table 2, there are 345 architectural resources, accounting for 52.3% of the total, while the 132 ruin resources account for 20.0%. Together, these two categories comprise 72.3% of the total resources. This supports the assertion that human resources constitute the overwhelming majority within the type system. Architecture resources primarily include temples and monasteries, pagodas, sections of the Great Wall, ancient tombs, princes' mansions, and memorial buildings, which collectively embody the historical information of the "three exchanges": religious dissemination, military and political interactions, and trade exchanges. Ruin resources mainly encompass ancient city sites, ancient settlements, and ancient human cultural heritages, serving as archaeological evidence for tracing ethnic migrations and regime changes. Although water bodies, biological resources, and geographical features collectively represent only 27.7% of the total, they are not purely natural landscapes. Features such as Hulun Lake, Mo'ergele River, and Huhenor Grassland are examples of "culturalized nature", deeply intertwined with nomadic livelihoods, sacrificial rituals, and ethnic memories. These resources also possess significant narrative value in elucidating the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups.

2.3 Quality characteristics: excellent resources are oriented towards the "three exchanges" theme

According to the control evaluation criteria distinguishing "excellent level" from "ordinary level", the hierarchical structure of individual resources across the entire region is presented in Table 3. A total of 180 resources are classified as excellent, representing approximately 27.3% of the total; this includes 10 resources at fifth level, 24 at fourth level, and 146 at third level. The remaining 480 resources, accounting for 72.7%, are classified as ordinary level.

Higher-level resources show a significantly stronger "three exchanges" theme, as clearly demonstrated by the ten fifth-level resources (Table 4). For instance, the Site of Xanadu, the capital city constructed under the supervision of Kublai Khan, was the product of collaborative efforts among Han craftsmen, Mongolian nobles, and the Semu people from the Western Regions from the initial stages of its planning. When inscribed on the *World Heritage List* in 2012, the World Heritage Committee acknowledged its significance as a witness to the convergence of grassland and agricultural civilizations. The case of Wang Zhaojun's Tomb is distinct; although the tomb itself may not be her actual burial site, the sustained mourning by Han, Mongolian, and other ethnic groups for over 2,000 years has transformed it into a collective symbol of ethnic harmony. This process of "cumulative formation" serves as a vivid annotation to the "three exchanges". Several other sites also possess distinct focal points. The murals and architecture of Dazhao Temple exemplify the synthesis of Tibetan Buddhist art and construction techniques from the Central Plains. The stone chamber of Gaxian Cave contains stone inscriptions

Table 2 Type structure of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia

Resource type	Number of individual resources	Proportion//%	Number of excellent individuals
Architecture	345	52.3	76
Ruins	132	20.0	30
Water bodies	67	10.2	40
Biological resources	61	9.2	22
Geographical features	55	8.3	12
Total	660	100.0	180

Table 3 Hierarchical structure of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia

Level of resources	Number of individual resources	Proportion//%	Notes
Fifth	10	1.5	Premium
Fourth	24	3.6	Excellent
Third	146	22.1	Excellent
Ordinary	480	72.7	Ordinary
Total	660	100.0	–

that authenticate the Tuoba Xianbei's initial migration from the Greater Khingan region and their subsequent integration into the Central Plains. The section of the Qin Great Wall in Guyang, Manzhouli Port, Huhenor Grassland, Asihatu Stone Forest, and Baragan River Grassland correspond to themes such as border defense interactions, port trade, and grassland livelihoods, respectively. Collectively, these ten resources encompass the principal dimensions of the history of "ethnic three exchanges" and are the primary and most valuable materials for the region to utilize in educational initiatives aimed at fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation.

3 Analysis of the distribution characteristics of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in various leagues and cities

The spatial distribution of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups is a spatial projection of the historical processes involving prolonged interactions, exchanges, and integration among diverse ethnic groups. By categorizing 660 individual resources by league and city and employing GIS-based spatial visualization (Table 5, Figs.1−2), the overall pattern and regional variations in resource distribution across the region are clearly delineated.

3.1 Overall pattern: concentration in the central and eastern regions, extending along the historical passageway

In terms of quantity distribution, Chifeng City leads the region with 133 individual resource sites, accounting for 20.2% of the total. It is followed by Hulunbuir City (83 sites, 12.6%), Hohhot City (75 sites, 11.4%), and Ordos City (71 sites, 10.8%). Collectively, these four leagues and cities account for 55.0% of the region's total, indicating a pronounced agglomeration effect. In contrast, Wuhai City has only 4 sites, accounting for 0.6% of the total. According to the consolidation of the three major regions (Table 5), the central region contains 288 sites (43.6%), the eastern region has 276 sites (41.8%), and the western region includes 96 sites (14.5%), illustrating a distribution pattern characterized by "concentration in the central and eastern regions and relative sparsity in the west". The spatial distribution of points depicted in Fig.2 further confirms this conclusion. Individual resources are concentrated in three distinct dense belts along the Yinshan-Yellow River line, the Xilamulun River-Laohahe River Basin, and the eastern foothills of the Greater Khingan Range. These belts exhibit a strong spatial correlation with historical routes such as the Grassland Silk Road, the Yinshan-Yellow River Passage, and the Liaoxi Corridor. Many resource-rich areas historically served as hubs for ethnic migrations, reciprocal trade, and political interactions. Consequently, the spatial distribution of these resources provides tangible evidence of the multi-ethnic yet integrated pattern of the Chinese nation.

3.2 Type differentiation: degree of humanistic dominance varies between the East and the West

From the perspective of resource type structure (Tables 6−7), the resource endowments of each league and city exhibit distinct regional variations. The proportion of humanistic resources exceeds 90% in Hohhot (93.3%), Alxa League (91.8%), and Bayannur (90.7%), reflecting their historical roles as "transportation hubs and centers of military, political, and commercial activity". The Shengle Ancient City, Yunzhong City, and Fengzhou Ancient City in Hohhot collectively embody the historical legacy of the Central Plains dynasties' governance over northern regions and the succession of multi-ethnic regimes. The ruins of Heicheng and the Juyan Han bamboo slips in Alxa League document the international ecosystem of the Silk Road, characterized by the coexistence of "multiple languages, currencies, and religions". Chifeng City possesses the most comprehensive variety of resource types. The Site of the Upper Capital of Liao Dynasty and the Site of the Middle Capital of the Liao Dynasty, together with the Hongshan and Xiajiadian culture sites, constitute a complete sequence tracing the origin of Chinese civilization and the integration of ethnic regimes; simultaneously, its geographical resources are notably prominent. Hulunbuir City, with a humanistic resource proportion of 54.2%, is abundant in ecological resources and exemplifies the unique natural and cultural complex of the transitional zone between forest and grassland. It serves as a multifaceted carrier of the traditional livelihoods of the Ewenki, Oroqen, Daur, and other ethnic groups, as well as the historical origins of northern ethnic populations[19].

3.3 Quality differentiation: "small cities are not short of "big resources"

From the perspective of excellent resources

Table 4 List of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups

No.	Resource name	Location	Resource type
1	Mausoleum of Genghis Khan	Ordos City	Architecture
2	Site of Xanadu	Xilingol League	Ruins
3	Wang Zhaojun's Tomb	Hohhot City	Architecture
4	Dazhao Temple	Hohhot City	Architecture
5	Stone chamber of Xianbei ruins (Gaxian Cave)	Hulunbuir City	Ruins
6	Manzhouli Port	Hulunbuir City	Architecture
7	Section of the Qin Great Wall in Guyang	Baotou City	Architecture
8	Huhenor Grassland	Hulunbuir City	Biological resources
9	Baragan River Grassland (nomadic tribe)	Xilingol League	Biological resources
10	Asihatu Stone Forest	Chifeng City	Geographical features

Table 5 Summary and statistics of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in the three major regions

Region	League or city	Number of individual resources	Proportion//%	Number of excellent individuals
Eastern	Hulunbuir City, Hinggan League, Tongliao City, Chifeng City	276	41.8	86
Central	Hohhot City, Baotou City, Ulanqab City, Ordos City, Xilingol League	288	43.6	75
Western	Bayannur City, Alxa League, Wuhai City	96	14.5	19
Total	−	660	100.0	180

(Table 6 and Fig.3), there is not a complete alignment between quantity and quality. Hulunbuir City possesses 40 excellent resources, accounting for 48.2% of the total, ranking among the highest in the region. Its ecological assets, including grasslands, rivers, and lakes, complement its ports and ancestral sites. Xilingol League has 39.6% of its resources designated as excellent and is home to the region's sole world cultural heritage site, the Site of Xanadu. Although Wuhai City contains only four individual resource sites, two of these, the Zhuozishan (Table Mountain) Rock Painting Group and the Wuhai Section of the Yellow River, are rated as excellent, exemplifying the characteristic of a "small space, big history" corridor. The proportion of excellent resources in Hinggan League also reaches 40.0%. The red resources, such as the founding site of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Government, embody the collective memory of multiple ethnic groups jointly establishing the people's government. This differentiation in quality underscores that resource utilization should not be evaluated solely by quantity but should emphasize the depth of the "three exchanges" theme and adopt differentiated, refined exploration strategies.

3.4 Function orientation: complementary regional themes, complete narrative chain

Based on the comprehensive resource distribution and historical context, each league and city has developed a distinct yet complementary functional orientation (Table 8). The resource themes of the twelve leagues and cities collectively constitute a complete "three exchanges" narrative chain spanning from prehistoric times to the present, encompassing environments from forests and grasslands to deserts and oases[20]. This framework provides a foundational resource base for the systematic development of an educational space aimed at fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation.

4 Practical pathway for resource exploration and utilization under the guidance of fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation

4.1 Adhering to value guidance and promoting the reconstruction of the narrative of "ethnic history" to that of "interaction history"

The initial step in the exploration and utilization of resources involves the renewal of

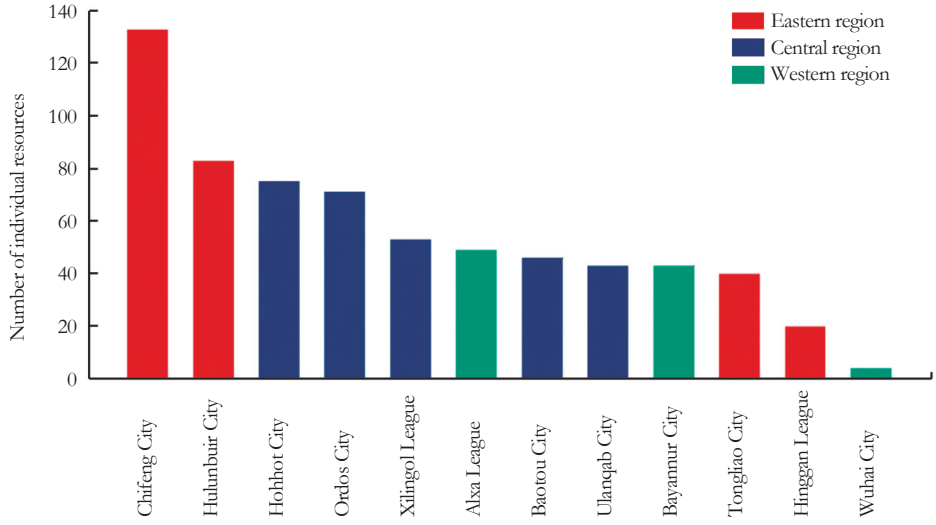


Fig.1 Distribution of individual cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in each league and city

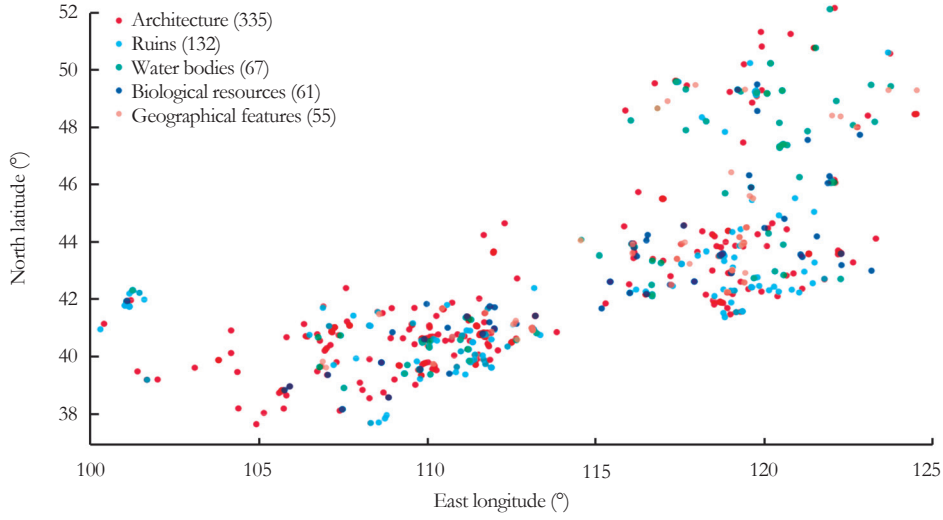


Fig.2 Spatial distribution of individual cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" among ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia

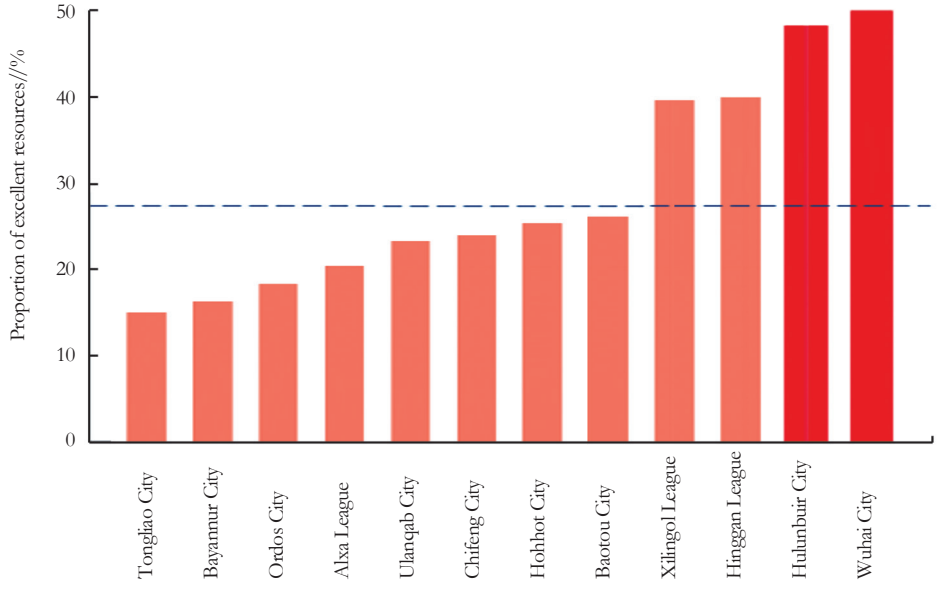


Fig.3 Proportion of excellent resources in each league and city

Table 6 Statistics on the distribution of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" in various leagues and cities of Inner Mongolia

League or city	Number of individual resources	Proportion//%	Number of excellent individuals	Proportion of excellent individuals//%
Chifeng City	133	20.2	32	24.1
Hulunbuir City	83	12.6	40	48.2
Hohhot City	75	11.4	19	25.3
Ordos City	71	10.8	13	18.3
Xilingol League	53	8.0	21	39.6
Alxa League	49	7.4	10	20.4
Baotou City	46	7.0	12	26.1
Ulanqab City	43	6.5	10	23.3
Bayannur City	43	6.5	7	16.3
Tongliao City	40	6.1	6	15.0
Hinggan League	20	3.0	8	40.0
Wuhai City	4	0.6	2	50.0
Total	660	100.0	180	27.3

Table 7 Humanistic and ecological structure of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" in each league and city

League or city	Number of humanistic resources	Number of ecological resources	Proportion of humanistic resources//%
Hohhot City	70	5	93.3
Alxa League	45	4	91.8
Bayannur City	39	4	90.7
Ordos City	54	17	76.1
Baotou City	34	12	73.9
Tongliao City	29	11	72.5
Chifeng City	94	39	70.7
Ulanqab City	27	16	62.8
Hulunbuir City	45	38	54.2
Xilingol League	28	25	52.8
Hinggan League	10	10	50.0
Wuhai City	2	2	50.0

Note: Humanistic resources include architecture and ruins, whereas ecological resources comprise water bodies, biological resources, and geographical features.

the interpretative framework. It is imperative to adopt the cultivation of a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation as the criterion for reinterpreting the value of various resources. This entails shifting from a narrative centered on "ethnic history", which focuses on individual ethnic groups, to one emphasizing "interaction history", highlighting processes of mutual interaction. Examples such as the ethnic reconciliation symbolized by Wang Zhaojun's departure to the frontier, the multi-ethnic co-governance in Xanadu City, the integration of multi-ethnic artistic elements in the murals of Dazhao Temple, and the collective struggle of all ethnic groups represented in red resources should be clearly articulated. Through approaches including exhibition renovation, revision of explanatory texts, and the development of educational tours, fragmented ethnic memories can be integrated into a cohesive narrative of interaction—embodying the concept that "I am part of you, and you are part of me"—thereby transforming each relic into a vivid classroom.

4.2 Empowering important ruins with digital technology and building educational practice bases

Utilizing fifth-level resources such as the Site of Xanadu, the Mausoleum of Genghis Khan, Wang Zhaojun's Tomb, and the Gaxian Cave, alongside other excellent resources, as foundational elements, several educational practice bases aimed at fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation can be established. By employing advanced technologies including digital twins, augmented reality, and 3D restoration, "smart ruins" will be developed to render dormant historical scenes perceptible and comprehensible[21]. In ethnic minority regions characterized by comprehensive cultural preservation and robust community cohesion, "community-led living museums" can be promoted, enabling individuals from diverse ethnic groups to narrate their own stories of interaction[22-23]. Cultural intellectual property (IP) incubation can be advanced in suburban areas with advantageous geographical locations and active capital investment. This will facilitate the deep integration of intangible cultural heritage workshops, live performances, and study tours, thereby creating a point-based demonstration system characterized by the synergy of "smart ruins + living museums + IP incubation".

4.3 Building a cultural corridor with the theme of "three exchanges" based on historical passageways

Breaking free from the limitations imposed by administrative divisions and drawing upon historical routes such as the Grassland Silk Road, the Yinshan-Yellow River Passage, and the Liaoxi Corridor, a segmented and thematically differentiated cultural corridor centered on the theme of "three exchanges" should be established[24-25]. The eastern forest and grassland section emphasizes the theme of "the ancestral road of the northern ethnic group", linking the Gaxian Cave, the Xianbei tombs, and cultural resources related to three ethnic minorities. The central typical grassland section focuses on the theme of "capital and mutual trade", connecting Xanadu, the Jining Road Ancient City, and festival resources such as the Nadam Fair[26]. The western desert grassland section highlights the theme of "fortress, religion, and trade", linking Heicheng, the West Surrender City, and the Zhaomiao community. By integrating these dispersed resource points through continuous corridors, a linear classroom, conceptualized as "walking through the history of the Chinese nation community", is created[27].

4.4 Building a regional integrated pattern of "focal points–clusters–networks"

By designating world heritage sites, premier scenic locations, and national intangible cultural heritage centers as focal points, several "cultural-

Table 8 Functional theme positioning of cultural and tourism resources related to the "three exchanges" in each league and city

League or city	Functional theme	Representative resource
Hohhot City	A model of multi-ethnic integration at the capital hub	Wang Zhaojun's Tomb, Dazhao Temple, Shengle Ancient City
Chifeng City	Core area of Liao culture and convergence point of civilizations	Site of the Upper Capital of Liao Dynasty, Site of the Middle Capital of the Liao Dynasty, Hongshan Site
Xilingol League	A political center-type integration sample of the Shangdu cultural circle	Site of Xanadu, Huizong Temple, Nadam Fair
Ordos City	Multi-ethnic integration corridor at the Yellow River ferry crossing	Mausoleum of Genghis Khan, Tongwancheng Site, Qin Straight Road
Hulunbuir City	Ancestral path of northern ethnic groups in the transition zone between forests and grasslands	Gaxian Cave, Xianbei Tombs, Manzhouli Port
Bayannur City	Military-commercial symbiotic corridor on Yinshan Road	West Surrender City, Jilu Fortress, Yinshan Rock Painting
Baotou City	End of the passageway–religious melting pot–industrial immigrant city	Wudangzhao Monastery, Meidaizhao, section of the Qin Great Wall in Guyang
Alxa League	Cross-civilization dialogue node in a desert oasis	Site of Heicheng, Juyan Lake, Mandela Mountain Rock Paintings
Hinggan League	Memories of the alliance and samples of the Red Community	May 1st Meeting Site, Former Site of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Government
Tongliao City	Forefront of Horqin culture on the eastern grassland passageway	Kailu White Pagoda, Naiman Palace, Andai Dance
Ulanqab City	Trade junction on the grassland passageway	Jining Road Ancient City, Jingzhou Road Ancient City
Wuhai City	A compact historical cross-section of rock art—the Great Wall—the ferry crossing	Table Mountain Rock Painting Group, Wuhai Section of the Yellow River

ecological clusters" can be established based on the homogeneity of transportation networks and cultural characteristics. Utilizing high-speed railways, grassland scenic routes, and intelligent service stations, a comprehensive "fast travel and slow tour" network can be developed to facilitate the integration and value enhancement of cultural and tourism resources alongside industries such as ecology, agriculture and animal husbandry, healthcare, and digital creativity[28]. Concurrently, supportive systems must be implemented. Resource-rich but fiscally constrained leagues and cities can benefit from regional cultural and tourism development through mechanisms such as revenue-sharing funds and cross-regional cooperative operations. Without such measures, the persistent issue of "local resources generating profits elsewhere" is likely to reoccur.

4.5 Collaboration among multiple subjects and integration of policy tools

A five-dimensional collaborative governance model is proposed, encompassing the government, enterprises, communities, social organizations, and tourists. In this model, the government assumes responsibility for planning, standard-setting, and supervision; enterprises contribute through investment and market channels; communities engage in operation and protection via cooperatives; social organizations provide technical support and third-party oversight; and tourists participate in co-governance through voluntary education, crowdfunding for restoration, and other initiatives. Policy instruments such as integrated land use, ecological compensation, dedicated fiscal funds, green credit, and insurance are incorporated. Additionally, a community benefit-sharing fund is established to ensure that all ethnic groups, particularly cultural inheritors, receive stable income from resource utilization[29-30]. This framework aims to foster a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation, grounded in shared unity, collective effort, and common prosperity and development.

References

[1] Zheng, D. F. (2019). Foster a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. *Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Magazine*, (8), 24.

[2] Wang, Y. Z., Zhang, C. P. (2019). Ethnic work and association, exchange and interaction among different ethnic groups in a new era. *Journal of Minzu University of China* (*Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition*), *46*(5), 15-27.

[3] Peng, F. W. (2016). The politic practice named "great unification" as well as multi-ethnic integration and identity in the western Han Dynasty. *Ethno-National Studies*, (2), 98-105.

[4] Yang, X. A. (2016). The development of ethnic blending theory of Marxism in People's Republic of China and the thought of interaction, communication, and integration between ethnic groups. *Ethno-National Studies*, (1), 1-13.

[5] Ming, Q. Z., Han, L. & Liu, H. F. (2023). Theoretical explanation and internal logic of tourism promoting ethnic contact, communication and integration. *Guangxi Ethnic Studies*, (3), 8-16.

[6] Sun, J. X. (2020). Ethnic integration and identity cohesion under the influence of tourism flow: Rethinking on the "pattern of diversity in unity". *Journal of Minzu University of China* (*Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition*), *47*(5), 75-86.

[7] Ma, R. X., Li, J. J. & Zhou, P. Y. et al. (2019). On ethnic contact, ethnic communication and ethnic fusion. *Journal of Xinjiang Normal University* (*Philosophy and Social Sciences*), *40*(2), 35-46.

[8] Man, K., Jiang, T. T. (2021). Analysis on the communication and integration of ethnic cultures and the generation and development of "Chinese national community": Taking northwest China as an example. *Journal of Minzu University of China* (*Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition*), *48*(6), 50-59.

[9] Hao, Y. M. (2019). Research on ethnic interaction, communication and integration from the perspective of a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. *Journal of Southwest Minzu University* (*Humanities and Social Sciences Edition*), *40*(3), 9-13.

[10] Hao, Y. M. (2015). Research on western inter-ethnic contact theory and its implications. *Ethno-National Studies*, (3), 13-24.

[11] Zhu, H., Liu, J. M. & Sang, Z. W. et al. (2017). Characteristic and contribution factors of different types of ethnic cultural resources: A case study of Gesar cultural and ecological protection experiment area. *Acta Geographica Sinica*, *72*(6), 1118-1132.

[12] Xu, C. R., Zhao, Y. Z. & Gao, J. (2020). Research progress and insights on the integration of culture and tourism: A review of the literature. *Tourism Tribune*, *35*(8), 94-104.

[13] Zhang, Y., Yu, P. X. (2022). Development of tourism in western china and the establishment of the Chinese national community consciousness. *Journal of South-Central Minzu University* (*Humanities and Social Sciences*), *42*(2), 37-44.

[14] Song, B. H., Wang, W. L. (2019). Discussion on the integration of Tibetan tourism culture with intercourse, exchange and mingle amongst different ethnic groups. *Xizang Studies*, (6), 158-164.

[15] Zhou, D. M. (2014). Anthropology and ethnic tourism: Practices in China. *Tourism Tribune*, *29*(2), 103-109.

[16] Chen, Z. R., Zhang, Y. & Gesangzhuoma, et al. (2021). Academic consideration of ethnic contact, communication and blend. *China Tibetology*, (1), 16-26.

[17] Du, J. (2017). Discussion on interaction, communication and integration among all ethnic groups in China from the perspective of cultural assimilation. *Journal of South-Central Minzu University* (*Humanities and Social Sciences*), *37*(6), 51-56.

[18] Liu, W. W., Li, M. M. & Jiang, Y. Y. et al. (2023). National identity and tourism research: Review and prospect. *Human Geography*, *38*(5), 16-23.

[19] Liang, Y., Guan, X. T. (2021). On the communication and blending from the perspective of cultural changes: Taking Russian nationality from Hulunbuir as an example. *Journal of Hulunbuir University*, *29*(3), 70-74.

[20] Luo, C. J., Lan, W. M. (2022). Using festival as the media: Research on the new mechanism of ethnic exchanges, communication and integration: Taking the Bunuyao Zhuzhu Festival of Guangxi as an example. *Journal of Hubei Minzu University* (*Philosophy and Social Sciences*), *40*(3), 144-153.

[21] Huang, Y. L., Tan, G. X. (2012). Digital protection and development of China's intangible cultural heritage. *Journal of Central China Normal University* (*Humanities and Social Sciences*), *51*(2), 49-55.

[22] Jiang, L. S., He, S. Y. & Wu, Y. J. (2019). Ethnic interaction, exchange and integration from the perspective of common ritual space: A case study of the "Water Splashing Festival" in Shuangjiang Autonomous County. *Journal of Western*, (14), 131-134.

[23] Guo, W., Yang, G. H. (2018). Sacred space production on the evolution of ethnic tourism village ritual practices: Based on the observation of Wengding Va villagers' daily life. *Tourism Tribune*, *33*(5), 92-103.

[24] Wang, Z. F., Sun, P. (2001). Heritage corridor: A relatively new approach to heritage protection. *Chinese Landscape Architecture*, (5), 86-89.

[25] Wang, H. Y., Tao, L. & Li, Y. T. et al. (2023). Research on spatial integrity construction of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal (Beijing section) from the perspective of cultural corridor. *Geographical Research*, *42*(10), 2622-2643.

[26] Huang, F. F. (2017). March street: A cultural space of multi-ethnic communication. *Journal of Sichuan Minzu College*, *26*(4), 23-29.

[27] Zheng, Z. M., Jiao, S. & Xiong, Y. (2020). Study on the characteristics and agglomeration protection of regional historical and cultural resources. *Architectural Journal*, (S1), 98-102.

[28] Tao, H., Wang, Z. (2025). From "isolation" to "integration": A study on the evolution process and mechanism of tourism island in ethnic regions. *Tourism Tribune*, *40*(6), 96-111.

[29] Xu, H. X., Xiang, Z. Z. (2018). Impact of tourism on economic development and ethnic exchanges, communication and integration in areas with mixed ethnic settlements. *Qinghai Social Sciences*, (3), 42-46.

[30] Chen, G. (2012). Impacts of tourism development on ethnic relations in regions inhabited by multiple ethnic groups: A case study at Lugu Lake area on Sichuan and Yunnan borders. *Tourism Tribune*, *27*(5), 94-102.