

Changes in Livestock Farming and Reestablishment of Host Organizations of the Ovoo Ritual in Mongolia with Emphasis on Otog Area in Inner Mongolia

BAI Lili

Lately, local governments in Inner Mongolia have been spending an enormous amount of public money on carrying out once-forgotten traditional rituals to revitalize the country's traditional culture. In livestock farming regions, local governments take the initiative in the resurgence of the traditional culture by facilitating the performance of the Ovoo ritual that takes place every summer. Various events are held in the name of the Ovoo Cultural Festival.

Many previous studies examined the Ovoo ritual-related public events organized at league and banner levels under the authority of local governments to find out how the ritual has been handed down through generations as a rite in livestock farming culture. In the livestock sector, the form of farming is undergoing various changes. However, only a few academics have studied the influence of these changes on traditional livestock farming rites including the Ovoo ritual and directions of local groups and host organizations that have been passing down the ritual for generations.

This paper will take a close look at typical livestock farming villages in the Otog area in Inner Mongolia in reference to previous studies on the Ovoo ritual. Since the 1980s, pastureland there has been distributed to local farmers, and they settled down as a farming community. How that has affected and changed local livestock farming will also be discussed. Moreover, information obtained from a field study will be used to examine how the ritual performed by local farming groups was revived amid China's efforts to revitalize its traditional cultural activities, changes that host organizations have gone through and conditions needed to host the ritual, thereby identifying characteristics in the establishment of new host organizations.

Hosts of the Ovoo ritual are responsible for passing it down from generation to generation. Therefore, understanding their organizational features is the key to understanding its history and future development. Such understanding is also crucial in terms of the continuation of the folk ritual.