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THE TRANSMISSION OF “Da Ge” OF DONG ETHNICITY IN SANJIANG LIUZHOU CHINA

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Abstract

This study uses qualitative research and interview techniques to investigate the transmission of “Da Ge” for the Dong ethnic group in Sanjiang, Liuzhou, China. Using the methods of field investigation, observed and studied the musical scores to understand the types and characteristics of Dong ethnicity “Da Ge”. This study summarizes the distribution method, protection status, and influencing characteristics of the Dong ethnicity “Da Ge” and investigates targeted protections using literature research and interviews conducted. According to the results of the research, the transmission of the Dong “Da Ge” is divided into traditional and contemporary modes based on cultural migration, cultural evolution, economic growth, and social development. The best method for preserving and develop the Dong “Da Ge” is to maintain its local community's characteristics while continuously absorbing it through interaction and collision with other cultures.

Keywords: “Da Ge”, Folksong, Transmission process, Sanjiang China

1. Introduction

The Dong ethnicity is an important member of the ethnic minority family in Guangxi. The current population is about 286 thousand, accounting for 11.41% of the national Dong population. It currently lives in the three autonomous counties of Liuzhou Sanjiang, Rongshui, and Guilin Longsheng. The Dong ethnicity the people have not formed their own national language. "Singing" has become an important means and way for the Dong people to express their sentiments, express religious worship, record and tell the reasons for the ethnic group, impart production and life experience, and entertain. Folk songs have become the link between the cultural heritage of the Dong people and the contact between the people of the Dong people. (Huang, 2007).

“Da Ge” of Dong ethnicity in Sanjiang County, Liuzhou is a representative project of national intangible cultural heritage and a typical representative of the excellent traditional

culture of the Dong ethnicity in Liuzhou. On May 20, 2006, Liping County of Guizhou Province, Liuzhou City of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region declared that “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list with the approval of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China. The intangible cultural heritage item is numbered II-28. In 2009, “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity was included in the representative list of human intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO. (Digital Museum of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2020).

With the changes of the times and economic development, a variety of complex cultural elements impact folk music art and culture. Popular music, jazz, and electronic music occupy people's entertainment positions, and traditional aesthetics are under attack. Like the music culture of many other nationalities, “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity are facing a crisis of transmission. Because “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity exists by relying on people, it uses sound as a means of expression, and uses oral teaching as a cultural chain to continue. Therefore, the singers who are the main body of “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity should receive more attention. “The poorer and backward the place is, the better the tradition and national culture will be preserved.” This cultural paradox is a true portrayal of the current national culture. Some remote and backward ethnic minority areas retain a large amount of original ecological and precious culture, but the living conditions of local artists are worrying. Due to economic pressure, more young people choose to go out to work for a living and are unwilling to pass on the excellent culture of their own nation. If the subject of transmission is the main factor for the transmission of a certain culture, then the survival situation of the subject of transmission is the key reason for the longevity of the culture. (Tian, 2006).

The current transmission and preservation of the Dong's “Da Ge” is not optimistic. Soon after the Dong ethnicity “Da Ge” was included in the world's intangible cultural heritage in 2009, reporters from “People's Daily” paid attention to the problem of lack of successors. The reporter learned during the interview: In the main areas where the Dong's “Da Ge” are spread (Liping, Congjiang, Sanjiang), the number of singers who can sing more than one hundred “Da Ge” is less than one hundred; most of these singers are of age very old, many “Da Ge” are being lost. The younger generation mostly went out to work, learning Dong songs, and fewer and fewer people sang Dong songs. There are only very few young people who can sing Dong songs. Wu Pinxian, a singer who started to sing “Da Ge” when he was 6 years old, performed in Beijing, was received by Mao Zedong and other leaders, and won the Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage Transmission Award, said frankly in an interview with the media that “Dong ethnicity is a good thing, but it seems that people have gradually forgotten that many young people here don’t know how to sing. Even if they can sing a little, they don’t have the original taste” (Shi, 2000).

Nowadays, “Da Ge” songs are getting less attention from younger generations due to the growing interest in modern culture that has lost their legacy. In this article, the researcher will present the inheritance process as a guideline for presenting a systematic inheritance approach in order to pass on this song to the next generation and keep it alive.

2. Research objectives

To guidelines the Transmission process of “Da Ge” of Dong ethnicity in Sanjiang, Liuzhou, China.

3. Review literature

3.1 The cultural environment of “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity in Sanjiang County

As a traditional folk art, “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity is closely related to the folk culture of the Dong ethnicity. “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity was born out of labor at first, but later developed due to the needs of folk culture. The Dong people's folk activities in Sanjiang County are very rich, mainly including religious sacrifices, weddings and funerals, festivals, house building, social etiquette, etc. These folk activities are mainly grouped. It is in these activities that “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity has been transmitted and developed. At the same time, “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity recorded the matters in these folk activities and passed them on in the form of songs. Therefore, “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity is not only produced as an art category or aesthetic phenomenon, but also represents the unique social relationship and social structure, as well as the cultural heritage and ideological system above it. (Wang, et.al., 2021).

3.2 The social environment of Dong “Da Ge” in Sanjiang County

Although the natural environment plays an important in the generation and development of the traditional culture of “Da Ge” of Dong Ethnicity, it is still the social environment that has a decisive influence on the existence and development of the Dong Ethnicity “Da Ge”. “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity is related to the rice production of the Dong ethnicity. For a long time, the Dong ethnicity has mainly planted rice. However, there are still some customs of group labor in the rural commune period in productive labor, and the phenomenon of "group farming" and "group harvesting" in farming is still relatively common. As the main performance of the Dong people's life, rest, social interaction and entertainment, the Dong's “Da Ge” singing is usually arranged when there is no agricultural work. For a long time, people have formed a busy farming environment represented by rice cultivation and a slack social life environment represented by the performance of the Dong ethnicity's “Da Ge”, which provides time and space for the self-culture development of the Dong ethnicity, especially for the transmission of the Dong ethnicity's “Da Ge”. Such a self-sufficient agricultural slack production and life mode, and its relatively closed natural environmental conditions, contain the characteristics of the Dong ethnicity's “Da Ge” created by the Dong ethnicity in this slack farming festival (Fan, et.al., 2020).

4. Methodology

The research methods of this article are as follows: 1) Documentary data method: through collecting, sorting out, and identifying existing documents and forming a scientific method of understanding by studying these data. The materials involved in this article mainly include: documents about the music culture of the Dong people, and materials about “Da Ge” of the Dong people. 2) Field investigation method: Field investigation is the basic method to obtain first-hand information. The author obtained some information related to “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity through on-the-spot investigation of the survey area. 3) Qualitative research method: Explain the collected data (Oun & Bach, 2014).

4.1 Research site

The reason: Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County is the county with the largest Dong population among the five Dong Autonomous counties in the country, and it is also the only county of Dong ethnicity in Guangxi. “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity in Sanjiang County, Liuzhou is a representative project of national intangible cultural heritage and a typical representative of the excellent traditional culture of the Dong ethnicity in Liuzhou. On May 20, 2006, Liping County of Guizhou Province, Liuzhou City of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region declared that “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list with the approval of the State Council of the People's Republic

of China. The intangible cultural heritage item is numbered II-28. In 2009, “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity was included in the representative list of human intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO. (Digital Museum of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2020)

In recent years, the Sanjiang County Government has built the Sanjiang Dong Museum, which is currently the largest museum of the Dong ethnicity in China, in order to transmit and preserve “Da Ge” of the Dong ethnicity and promote the development of the cultural industry. At the same time, holding the "Dong Ethnicity “Da Ge”" festival, the Dong Ethnicity “Da Ge” training class, and launching the Dong Ethnicity “Da Ge” into the campus activities are of great significance to the further continuation of the Dong cultural heritage.



Figure 1. Map of Guangxi Province

Source: <https://nanningchinaguangxi.com/nanning-business-investment-climate-business-opportunities>

4.2 Key informants

4.2.1 Ms. Yang Yunxiang, is the representative transmitter of the "Dong Ethnicity “Da Ge”" Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County level. She is also the representative inheritor of the "Dong Ethnicity “Da Ge”" in Liuzhou City. She won an award in the 13th CCTV Young Singer TV Contest, and participated in the compilation and recording of the school textbook "Dong Ethnicity Music" for primary and secondary schools in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County.



Figure 2. Ms. Yang Yunxiang

4.2.2 Mr. Zheng Xiongjun, is a member of Guangxi Folk Artists Association, has been engaged in Dong cultural work for nearly 30 years, and is good at folk art, lusheng production and performance. He is currently the art instructor of Sanjiang County Cultural Center. He organizes and participates in the folk folk activities of the Dong ethnicity in Sanjiang County throughout the year. He is the liaison between the researcher and the folk artists of the Dong ethnicity.



Figure 3. Mr. Zheng Xiongjun

4.2.3 Ms. Yang Peiqing, is a native of Sanjiang County, Guangxi. She has lived in the Dong ethnic area for generations and will act as a bystander as the key informants.



Figure 4. Ms. Yang Peiqing

4.3 Research tools

The research tools used in this dissertation are mainly interview and observation. In order to obtain the research data, the researcher designed the questionnaire and designed the corresponding interview form and observation form according to different research objects.

4.4 Data collecting

The researcher collected data through documents analysis and fieldwork. In order to make an in-depth study, researcher refer to literature materials in libraries and cultural centers and use network platforms such as CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) and other network platforms to complete the documents analysis. Then, the researcher went to the research site (Sanjiang County, Liuzhou City, Guangxi Province, China) for field investigation. Researcher recorded the transmission and development process of Dong “Da Ge” through interviews, observations, audio and video recordings.

5. Results

5.1 The Transmission Process of Dong Ethnicity “Da Ge” in Sanjiang County

The traditional song of the Dong ethnicity in Sanjiang County has been passed down for thousands of years. Researchers have conducted in-depth fieldwork in Sanjiang County and found that although the transmission of “Da Ge” is still tight in the countryside, as far as the channels of transmission are concerned, it has already surpassed the rural society and ethnic local culture and is closely integrated with the contemporary social background. On top of the original transmission backbone, it has developed and evolved into other transmission modes, namely, the transmission of master and apprentice, family transmission, community transmission, cultural performance transmission and school education transmission. This article refers to the first three as "traditional transmission ", and the latter two as "modern transmission ". The following is a detailed description and analysis of these four “Da Ge” transmission methods.

5.1.1 The traditional transmission of Master and apprentice mode. In Sanjiang County, the transmission of the form of master and apprentice is a primitive way to teach “Da Ge” in an organized and systematic manner. It is closely related to the traditional social production and life customs and forms a system of its own. It is the traditional mode of “Da Ge” passed on from generation to generation. "Teacher" mainly refers to the teacher whose mission is to pass songs and teach songs; the "disciples" are all villagers. Based on the stockaded village, they organized various singing classes according to age and gender, and gathered crowds to learn songs. One of the important purposes of this form of transmission is that song class members learn songs and sing together with the singers on weekdays, and show their skills in the drum tower antithetical song of Spring Festival and other activities, so as to win glory for the stockaded village.

5.1.2 The traditional transmission of family mode. Family transmission refers to the transmission from elder to younger in the family, including mother-daughter, father-son, grandfather-grandfather, etc. The Dong family has the custom of singing “Da Ge” since ancient times, and many Dong people began to sing from childhood, so the family category closely related to it has naturally become the most frequent and common transmission field. In this transmission field, the two matters of "teaching songs" and "practicing singing" often run through the whole daily life and labor, and gradually become an active and effective "family-style cultural communication".

5.1.3 The traditional transmission of community mode. Mainly manifested as a kind of art sharing and ritual influence. Although everyone has “Da Ge” class, has his own singing partner, and has his own Ge Shi, this structure is only relative and does not have absolute constraints. When investigating the stockaded village in Sanjiang County, the researcher asked the singers' masters. Many singers have multiple masters. This phenomenon is not accidental. Although Ge Shi has a lofty status in Dong stockaded village and has great influence and authority in a specific community, learning songs is a free activity. There is no distinction between the Ge

Shi of the Dong ethnicity, and it has become a common phenomenon for singers to learn from different Ge Shi. Moreover, because of a good singing foundation, it is easy to figure out the skills of others singing, so as to integrate with one's own singing style. In a sense, this is also a kind of ethnic art sharing. Although it is a skill, such a skill does not emphasize exclusiveness and exclusiveness, but hopes that more people will come to communicate. This is not only the methodology of collective oral art, but also the values of artistic creation. Gu Lou antiphonal model is the traditional transmission of the community model. In a specific time and space dimension, people use singing as a clue to realize the transmission link of "Da Ge" through the antithetical song between "Da Ge" classes. Gu Lou antiphonal group communication method can not only fully demonstrate the ability of singing, preparing songs and antiphonal songs in the village, but also promote the interaction and communication between stockaded village and stockaded village, and the medium of interaction between the village and the village, as well as the communication between young men and women caused by this.

5.2 Modern transmission of cultural and artistic performance Mode

At present, there are new ways of transmission parallel to the traditional master-apprentice transmission, family transmission, and community transmission, as well as school education transmission and cultural and artistic performance transmission. Moreover, these two emerging transmission methods are on the rise. It is based on traditional transmission methods, but has its own relatively standard and normative transmission ideas. Cultural and artistic performance is a kind of instant dissemination, and its performance only reflects the fragments and dots of the Dong culture, it is different from the three-dimensional presentation when performing in the community transmission. But cultural and artistic performances also fulfilled the function of transmission.

5.2.1 Transmission organization a cultural and artistic performance team. Sanjiang County's cultural and artistic performance team can be roughly divided into three categories: one is that the county government selects young and middle-aged men and women with better conditions from various villages to form a special performance team (hereinafter referred to as the government's cultural and artistic team); There are singing classes of different ages in the village (hereinafter referred to as folk cultural and artistic teams), and there is also a kind of art and singing teams in kindergartens, primary and middle schools (hereinafter referred to as school cultural and artistic teams). The three types of cultural and artistic performance teams generally do not perform at the same time, but according to the different identities, different purposes and different requirements of outsiders, one or two types of cultural and artistic performance teams are selected to participate in the performance, of which the government cultural and artistic team is the main transmission organization of performances.

5.2.2 Transmission process performance show. Performance display is a new type of dissemination method that appeared after Dong's "Da Ge" came out of the community and faced the market. The exhibition mentioned here has three meanings: one refers to the stage for various official cultural activities; the second refers to the stage where Dongzhai tourism is performed; the third refers to the stage where Dong singers go out to perform "art work". Although the stage performance embodies a flat display on the surface and no teaching activities, it is also an important way for the transmission of the Dong folk song. Even in a sense, this is one of the most important ways for the transmission of the Dong's "Da Ge" in modern society, and it is also the main type of national cultural spread.

5.2.3 Transmission methods and characteristics. The Sanjiang cultural and artistic Performance Team mainly sings Dong songs represented by "Da Ge" to show the outside world the unique customs and culture of the Dong people. Because this method has a strong artistic performance and folklore display, we call this transmission method "performance display."

Performance display mainly centers on performance, showing one's own unique skills and abilities in front of aliens. Realizing the expansion of communication objects, performance field, functional value, social relations, etc. In summary, the performance display method has the characteristics of entertaining, one-way, and modularization.

5.3 Modern Transmission of School Education Model

In addition to being widely transmitted among the people, the Sanjiang Dong Ethnicity Song has also been introduced into the classrooms of local kindergartens, elementary schools and middle schools, and has become an integral part of the school's teaching content. The introduction of Dong's "Da Ge" into the classroom originated from the teaching attempt of Mr. Zhang Yong (penname Puhong), director of the Cultural Center of Rongjiang County, Guizhou Province in 1984. Mr. Zhang Yong found in a national cultural survey that students in schools in the Dong ethnic group do not know how to sing the songs of their own ethnic group, so he sprouted the idea of introducing ethnic music into the classroom, taking Chemin Primary School, Chejiang Township, Rongjiang County, Guizhou Province. The experimental base introduced Dong songs into the school's music education system for the first time, which attracted widespread attention from the music and cultural circles. Afterwards, many schools in the Dong ethnic area followed suit. Under the influence of this kind of background, Sanjiang County School has opened up a new way for the transmission of "Da Ge"-school education transmission.

6. Conclusion and discussion

From the perspectives of ethnomusicology will sanjiang county "Da Ge" the existing national traditional music in the specific natural environment and social cultural environment, through the national member (individual or other) is how to build according to their own cultural tradition, use, dissemination, and developing the music of the investigation and interviews, Sanjiang county "Da Ge" is divided into the traditional transmission: master and apprentice transmission, family transmission, community transmission; and modern transmission: cultural and artistic performance transmission, school education transmission (Rattanachaiwong, 2021).

Master and apprentice transmission is the transmission of "Da Ge" taught by GeShi.

Family transmission refers to the transmission from one generation to the next in a family.

Community transmission is mainly reflected in a kind of art sharing and ritual influence.

The transmission of cultural and artistic performances is a new way of dissemination after "Da Ge" of the Dong ethnicity go out of the community and face the market.

For Sanjiang people, the transmission of "school education" is a concept other than rural life and traditional culture, and it is also a necessary place for the acquisition of modern mainstream cultural knowledge (Curdt-Christiansen, 2008).

From traditional master-apprentice transmission, family transmission, community transmission to emerging school education transmission, cultural and artistic performance transmission, the transmission of Dong ethnicity "Da Ge" presents a diversified and complex trend. As a highly original form of folk music, the emerging transmission model has an inevitable impact on the music itself of the Dong ethnicity "Da Ge" (Song, et.al., 2021).

Because the change of form will inevitably have an impact on the content. The most important thing is whether such effects are positive or negative. From the perspective of cultural exchange and dissemination of the Dong ethnicity, both the transmission of school education and the transmission of cultural and artistic performances are inevitable products

under the new transmission background. It is impossible for a national culture to exist in isolation in an artificially delineated circle, and it is unrealistic to cut off its connection with the times and society, and it is also a cultural regress. How to avoid the negative effects of the new inheritance method on the Dong ethnicity “Da Ge”, the most important point is that the folk music essence of the Dong ethnicity “Da Ge” should not be changed.

In the 1950s, American anthropologist Steward proposed the concept of "cultural ecology". In his view, "the special type of ecology determines the characteristics of the human being as a cultural carrier." The relationship between culture and the environment is not simply the relationship between one thing and another. But the ecosystem in which culture is located does have a great influence on culture (Lapka, et.al., 2012).

The focus of the protection of the Dong’s “Da Ge” culture should be at least embodied in the following aspects, fully embodying the omni-directional, multi-level, and three-dimensional protection principle: 1. Implement effective natural ecological protection measures to provide a good survival for the Dong’s “Da Ge” Natural environment; 2. Emphasis on national cultural education in the protection, such as bilingual teaching, Dong's excellent culture enters the hall, and the establishment of a system of inheritors of the Dong's big song, etc., to provide the cultural atmosphere for the transmission of the Dong's big song; 3. Strengthen the protection of the community To maintain the community ecology in the area where the Dong ethnic group’s “Da Ge” is taught and practiced; 4. Establish a cultural ecological protection system. It is necessary to restrict the behaviors that may damage the Dong ethnic group’s cultural ecology and actively participate in the protection of the cultural ecology.

The individuals and communities that have been created are admirable. In the finish, it is necessary to protect the Dong's "Da Ge" cultural ecology, liveliness, and integrity to ensure the authenticity of the cultural ecosystem that constitutes symbiosis, coexistence, interaction, and so on, so that its self-regulation and self-development abilities can be fully realized. The following are the researcher's suggestions: 1) The preservation of the Dong ethnicity "Da Ge" in Sanjiang County has always been a dynamic process. As a result, long-term and dynamic follow-up investigations and studies are critical for understanding the Dong ethnicity "Da Ge" preservation status in Sanjiang County. In the future, will continue the follow-up work. 2) Promote the sustainability and values of the Dong ethnicity, "Da Ge," by using a contemporary transmission model of school education. 3) Implemented efficient natural ecological preservation measures, such as ecological museums and ecological reserves, to offer a suitable natural environment for the development of the Dong ethnicity "Da Ge."

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