

The Representation and Educational Inheritance of Sanjiang Dong Peasant Life Painting in the Context of 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is: 1) to analyze the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition; 2) to research the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life painting in the context of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition; 3) to study the significance of education in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. The subjects of the study mainly include Sanjiang Dong peasant life painting creators (awarded or selected) who participated in this exhibition: Yang Gongguo, Peng Yongpei, and Chen Meimei. The jurors of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition: Chen Yigang, Deng Bin, Song Zhongyang. Chairpersons (vice) of the Guangxi Artists Association (an authoritative official art association in Guangxi): Shi Xiangdong, Wang Rui. Schools involved are middle schools, high schools, and universities in and around Sanjiang County. The research tools include a record book, drawing, interview questionnaire, and tools for recording audio and video, namely cameras and camcorders. This paper adopts qualitative research methods, focusing on literature collection and field research. It aims to analyze the creative content within the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings at the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, study the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, and how intangible cultural heritage is inherited through education. Data collected through literature and field research indicates that Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings reflect the culture of the Dong people in Sanjiang. These paintings embody the ethnic identity of the Dong people, the local

character of Sanjiang peasants, and the aesthetic characteristics of Dong folk art. Schools and society bear the responsibility and obligation to inherit, educate, and protect intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: Sanjiang Dong Peasant life Painting; Representation; Educational Inheritance

Introduction

Chinese traditional culture has a long and profound history, influencing the cultural landscape of various regions and ethnic groups across the nation. Guangxi, a multi-ethnic autonomous region, stands out with its unique ethnic and regional characteristics. It boasts the highest number of ethnic minority populations in China. In May 2006, the State Council announced the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage items, with 19 projects from Guangxi included (Zheng, 2022). In 2007, Guangxi not only included these 19 national intangible cultural heritages in its regional protection list but also added 39 new projects. This data reflects the diversity of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage and its rich cultural atmosphere.

Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, located at the junction of Guangxi, Hunan, and Guizhou, is the only Dong autonomous county in Guangxi and the earliest established among the five Dong autonomous counties nationwide with the largest population of Dong people. During the Tang Dynasty, Sanjiang belonged to Rongshui County of Rongzhou or the barbarian lands of Guzhou. In 1105, during the fourth year of Chongning of the Northern Song Dynasty, the county was established and initially named Huaiyuan. It was renamed Sanjiang in the third year of the Republic of China (1914). On November 18, 1949, the county was liberated, and on December 18, a county people's government was established; on December 3, 1952, a county-level Dong autonomous region was established, which was then renamed as a Dong Autonomous County on September 17, 1955 (Sanjiang County Ethnic Committee, 1989).

Sanjiang's geographical position is unique, with a long history and distinct ethnic characteristics. Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, a form of Chinese folk art, feature peasants as the main creators, with themes centered around peasants, rural life, and agriculture. These artworks are created to depict the social life, aesthetic ideals, and sentiments of peasants, and to express their pursuit of and aspiration for a better, happy life, showcasing strong regional and ethnic traits. These paintings reflect the lifestyle of the Dong people in Sanjiang and were recognized as intangible cultural heritage by the Ministry of Culture in 2012 (Figure 1).



Fig.1 Yang Gongguo's "Celebrating Centenary of Wind and Rain Bridge"

(Source: Photographed by Yang Gongguo 2023, 20 June)

Most researchers studying the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings within the context of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition have focused on describing the themes, content, and artistic characteristics of these paintings, such as Xie Lin's paper "Rooted in Ethnic Soil: An Introduction to Guangxi Sanjiang Peasant Life Paintings". Some scholars have begun to explore the content and implications of these paintings, including Lyu Ping's paper "Rural Imagery and Modern Transformation in Sanjiang Dong Peasant Life Paintings". However, studies on the "meaning contained within the content of peasant life paintings" have only analyzed Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings as a whole, or only before and after the economic reform and opening up, without exploring the significance of the content of Sanjiang Dong peasant life in the 21st century. No scholar has used the concept of "educational inheritance" to analyze the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings in the context of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, thus this study aims to fill this knowledge gap.

By investigating literature and conducting field studies on Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings within the context of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, it was found that while various groups focus on the art itself, less attention is paid to the meanings expressed by the paintings and to educational inheritance. Thus, this study seeks to fill this academic void by asking: What aspects of Dong culture do the Sanjiang Dong peasant paintings reflect in the context of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, and how is educational inheritance conducted? This paper employs the concepts of "the representation" and "educational inheritance" to analyze and study Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings in this context.

The research objectives are: 1) To analyze the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition. 2) To study the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings at the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, where these paintings serve as “cultural products” that showcase the new rural atmosphere, local flavor, national cultural spirit, and the aesthetics of folk art. 3) To study the significance of education in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, with schools and society playing respective roles in the education and inheritance of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is as follows:

1. To analyze the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition;
2. To study the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings at the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition;
3. To study the significance of education in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

Literature review

1. Analysis of Sanjiang Dong Peasant life paintings

The Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings featured in the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition are part of the broader corpus of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings. Analyzing the current research status of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings helps us understand their representation in the 2023 exhibition. Currently, most researchers focus on describing the artistic characteristics of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, such as techniques, composition, color, themes, and content. In recent years, some researchers have begun to analyze the meanings embedded in the content of these paintings. For example, the article “Colorful and Overflowing, Naive and Childlike Throughout the Canvas—Aesthetic of Guangxi Sanjiang Dong Peasant Life Paintings” discusses the colors, compositions, and shapes of these paintings (Yang, 2013).

Another article, “The Formal Aesthetic Characteristics of Guangxi Sanjiang Dong Peasant Life Paintings,” notes that these paintings are products of agricultural culture, emerging alongside political movements, and reflect the peasants’ primitive experiences and ethnic characteristics.

They pursue full compositions, naive and simple forms, and rich and harmonious colors, creating a unique formal beauty that exudes happiness, conveying the Dong people's pursuit and aspiration for a good life (Li, 2023).

“Rural Imagery and Modern Transformation in Sanjiang Dong Peasant Life Paintings” analyzes the Sanjiang Dong peasant paintings by tracing their origins and historical development. It examines the subject matter, compositional forms, figurative expressions, and color decorations, exploring the rural imagery they create and suggesting directions for future transformations (Lyu, 2013). Currently, research on Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings tends to analyze them as a whole or only considers the periods before and after China's economic reform, without exploring the significance of their content in the 21st century, leading to a somewhat monotonous research perspective.

2. Cultural representation in scholarship

The concept of “representation” was introduced by Stuart Hall in “Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices” (1997). Representation facilitates the circulation of ideas and meanings throughout society. In domestic research on “representation,” focus has been primarily on two areas.

Firstly, the discussion of Stuart Hall's representation includes a master's thesis titled “On Stuart Hall's Cultural Representation Theory and Its Theoretical Practice,” which elaborates on the various connotations of “representation,” the meanings of cultural representation, and the practice of cultural representation theory (Chen, 2006). Another master's thesis titled “Exploration of Stuart Hall's Cultural Representation Theory” discusses the formation and development of Hall's theory, its basic contents, characteristics, and evaluations, in a systematic and comprehensive manner (Sun, 2012). A third thesis, “Analysis of Stuart Hall's Cultural Representation Theory,” explores the origins of the “representation” concept and its three major theoretical evolutions, the connotations of representation theory, its practice, and its characteristics and impacts (Geng, 2015).

Secondly, specific applications of Stuart Hall's representation are analyzed. The book “Historical Forms and Cultural Representation” examines the local culture embedded in Chongqing-Sichuan dialect TV dramas, selecting dialect, “hotpot,” folklore, and Sichuan opera as four typical local cultural symbols to reveal the vivid process of meaning production under cultural appearances (Tian, 2006). A doctoral thesis titled “Research on the Cultural Representation Process in the Midi Music Festival” uses cultural representation theory to interpret the production and consumption processes of the music festival. By conducting empirical research on the theory,

it further explores the dynamic experiences and perceptions in music festival activities, proposing a conceptual model of the cultural representation process in music festival activities and thus expanding the boundaries of representation theory research (Wu, 2019).

Currently, no scholars have used the concept of “representation” to analyze the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings within the context of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap.

3. Educational inheritance of intangible cultural heritage

The educational inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is a process of recognizing the spirit and wisdom of ethnic survival and cultural existence, which holds profound significance. Current research on the educational inheritance of intangible cultural heritage has permeated various educational stages. The article “Introducing ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage’ into Kindergartens” points out that China's intangible cultural heritage is the essence of its excellent traditional culture. How to integrate “intangible cultural heritage” into preschool education and sow the seeds of its protection and inheritance in children's minds is a topic worthy of exploration (Song, 2020). Another article, “The Dilemmas and Breakthroughs in Inheriting Intangible Cultural Heritage in Compulsory Education,” studies how to inherit intangible cultural heritage in regional compulsory education schools. By thoroughly understanding the current situation and through in-depth analysis and summary, the main factors affecting the suboptimal inheritance results in compulsory education schools are identified (Wang, 2016).

The article “The Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Mission of Higher Education” notes that many universities have established teaching and research institutions related to intangible cultural heritage, with related courses and specializations at undergraduate, master's, doctoral, and postdoctoral levels. The methods of education are discussed and organized (Xu, 2010). The “Development and Inheritance Process of Xinyang Folk Songs in Henan, China” explains how Xinyang folk songs have evolved over time with social changes. After being approved by the State Council for inclusion in the national list of intangible cultural heritage, the Xinyang municipal government began to pay attention to the inheritance and protection of Xinyang folk songs. The methods of inheritance include: 1) establishing native folk song villages to cultivate a living space for folk songs; 2) using new media networks to expand the influence of folk songs; 3) setting up intangible cultural heritage training classes to train successors of Xinyang folk songs (Guo et al., 2023).

Research on the “educational inheritance of intangible cultural heritage” in China mainly focuses on two aspects: 1) the educational inheritance of intangible cultural heritage at various educational stages, and 2) the specific educational inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. Currently, no scholars have used the concept of “educational inheritance” to analyze the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings in the context of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap.

Conceptual Framework

Within this conceptual framework, the main subject of study is the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings. The two key concepts used in this study are representation and educational inheritance, set against the backdrop of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition (Figure 2).

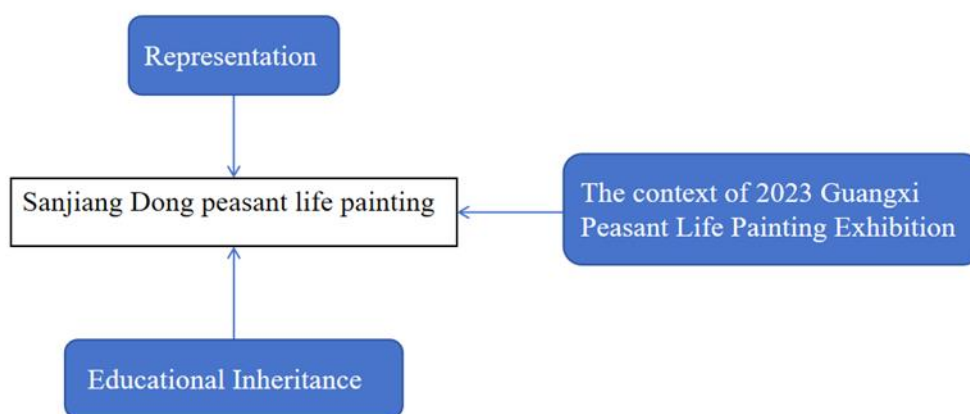


Fig.2 Conceptual Framework

(Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2024)

Research Methodology

Research subjects

The focus of this study is the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings from Sanjiang County in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of China. These paintings primarily depict the daily life scenes of Sanjiang Dong peasants, their ethnic activities during agricultural downtime, and their attitudes and aesthetic pursuits towards life, reflecting the lifestyle and culture of the Sanjiang Dong community. The samples selected for this research are the award-winning and selected Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings from the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition.

Research samples

The primary subjects include creators of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings who participated in the exhibition (whether awarded or selected): Yang Gongguo, Peng Yongpei, and Chen Meimei. Judges of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition: Chen Yigang, Deng Bin, Song Zhongyang. Chairpersons (vice) of the Guangxi Artists Association (an authoritative official art association in Guangxi): Shi Xiangdong, Wang Rui. Schools involved include middle schools, high schools, and universities in and around Sanjiang County.

Data collection

This study focuses on literature collection and field research. On one hand, it involves mining data from literature on Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings and summarizing previous research. On the other hand, according to the research objectives of the thesis, field investigations are conducted in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County, Guangxi Academy of Painting, and schools around the Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County to collect relevant data.

Data analysis

This paper categorizes the collected data and sorts out the data on Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings at the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition; it organizes the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings in the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition; it also examines the role of education in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

Research Results

Objective 1. To study and analysis the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition

The 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition is the largest, most influential, and most authoritative exhibition of peasant life paintings in Guangxi, China, in the 21st century. It invited submissions nationally. The exhibition, organized jointly by the Guangxi Academy of Painting and the Guangxi Artists Association under the strong leadership of the Publicity Department of the Autonomous Region's Party Committee (Figure 3), received a total of 1,179 submissions, including 544 from within the region and 653 from outside. After rigorous preliminary and final reviews by experts, 174 works were selected, including three first prizes, five second prizes, ten third prizes, eighteen excellence awards, and nineteen seedling awards (Chen & Jia, 2023). Among these, the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings won and were selected for a total

of 54 entries, including one second prize, one third prize, three excellence awards, eighteen seedling awards, and thirty-one selected awards.



Fig.3 Group photo at the Opening Ceremony of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition

(Source: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com>, 2024, 17 January)

Objective 2: To study and analysis the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life painting at the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition

The concept of representation facilitates the circulation of ideas and meanings across society. Representation operates at two levels: one as representation (standing for something) and the other as expression (conveying a message). At the first level, analysis focuses on what life scenes or cultural elements the painters of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings choose as representative of their entire cultural set. At the second level, the analysis explores to whom the painters are showing their works and what messages they intend to express through their paintings.

1. As a representative of “cultural products”

Entering the 21st century, with the advancement of the market economy and adjustments in policies related to peasants, Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings have evolved from political propaganda art before the economic reform and opening-up, to regional ethnic art during that period, and into cultural products in the 21st century. Their aesthetic requirements have shifted from aligning with political propaganda to self-expression and meeting the public’s aesthetic needs in the 21st century.

Advancement of the Market Economy: In October 2002, the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China declared the preliminary establishment of a socialist market economy

system in China. The Third Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee in 2003 passed the “Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Several Issues Concerning the Improvement of the Socialist Market Economy System,” marking a new era in the reform of China's economic system toward perfecting the socialist market economy. The flourishing market economy has provided more opportunities and challenges for the development of arts and culture. Professional galleries have surged since 2000, the auction market has rapidly expanded since 2003, and art fairs have entered a phase of standardization. Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings have gradually formed a complete chain from creation in artist studios and through agents to sales at art festivals and exhibitions.

Adjustment of Peasant Policies: Since the 1980s, rural areas have faced many challenges, including heavy burdens, difficulty increasing income, and a lack of welfare protection. To address these “three rural issues,” the Fifth Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee proposed the “New Rural Strategy,” providing a practical foundation for the development of peasant life paintings. In recent years, with adjustments in industrial structures and an increase in cultural consumption, the state has successively enacted policies to revitalize the cultural industry, including the “Cultural Industry Revitalization Plan” passed by the State Council in 2009. In rural areas, due to the scarcity of cultural capital, industrialization has become a key issue in the development of peasant life paintings.

Shi Xiangdong, the chairman of the Guangxi Artists Association, after visiting the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, stated: Under the correct leadership of the Autonomous Region's Party Committee's Publicity Department and the Guangxi Federation of Literary and Art Circles, the Guangxi Artists Association has delved deeply into life, rooted itself in the people, extended literary and artistic services to rural and grassroots areas, actively carried out training activities in peasant paintings, encouraged creation, discovered talents, and promoted exchanges. Guangxi peasant paintings have continuously achieved excellent results in national exhibitions, not only becoming a new highlight in the development of Guangxi's art endeavors but also enhancing the artistic level and national influence of Guangxi peasant paintings, propelling them to become a distinctive cultural brand of Guangxi (Qin, 2023). The 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, as a representative of Guangxi's distinctive cultural products, vigorously promotes the life of Guangxi peasants.

2. Reasons for Peasant Life Paintings serve as representatives of “Cultural Product”

Reason 1: Survival strategy in a market economy.

As the market economy becomes established, Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings need to find a developmental path within the market. Combining peasant life paintings with industry to create a comprehensive industrial path involving production, processing, framing, and sales is essential. By 2020, the output value of Dong peasant paintings in Dutong Town exceeded 5 million yuan, making it a model for enhancing the wealth and income of the Dong people.

Reason 2: Need for innovative development.

In the market economy, the content, techniques, and forms of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings require continuous innovation. Integrating these paintings with tourism culture and commodities to form tourism products can generate greater economic value. This not only provides more financial support and promotional opportunities for the inheritance of peasant paintings but also makes them highly competitive in the tourism commodity market due to their blend of artistic and practical features.

Reason 3: Ethnic characteristics and cultural depth.

Originating from the lives of the Dong people, Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings are widely praised for their vibrant colors and ingenious compositions. They not only highlight the uniqueness of the ethnic group but also showcase the natural scenery, ethnic characteristics, and local culture of the Dong people to viewers. This form of cultural product makes Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings a powerful tool for promoting ethnic culture.

3. Expression

3.1 Expression the new look and spirit of the countryside

At the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, 54 works of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings were selected. The selected works cover a wide range of subjects and rich content. Some focus on the rural landscapes of Sanjiang Dong, such as green mountains and ecological farms; others highlight rural advancements like agricultural technology and live-streamed sales; some reflect traditional festivals and folk activities of the Sanjiang Dong community; and some depict the bustling scenes of bountiful harvests in Sanjiang Dong. The creators of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings capture the current state of Dong peasant life, the flourishing agriculture post-pandemic, and the vibrant new spirit of the Sanjiang Dong community in the post-pandemic era. For example, Peng Yongpei’s “May in Homeland” was selected for this exhibition. The painting depicts Dong farmers picking fruit and selling it on-site. The presence of

Chinese and foreign tourists and the QR code for payment in the painting illustrate the new life and spirit of Dong farmers, depicting a scene of prosperity (Figure 4).



Fig.4 Pang Yongpei's "May in Hometown"

(Source: Guangxi Academy of Painting, 2023, 20 June)

3.2 Expression the local essence

From the perspective of the creators, most of the artists behind the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings are Dong farmers born and raised locally. In the social evolution of 21st-century China, a portion of the Dong peasant population has seen a transformation in identity due to higher education levels, secure employment, and improved living standards, transitioning from peasants to urban residents. Although the identities of some peasant life painting creators have changed, they still retain the lifestyle and mindset of peasants, having been born and raised in rural areas with extensive rural living experiences. The natural environment and agricultural activities in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County provide resources for the content of peasant life paintings, and the peasant mindset shapes the language and expression of the paintings. Creators of peasant life paintings consciously or unconsciously use their experiences and feelings from peasant life in their artwork, thus conveying a strong local essence.

Chen Yuqiu and Wang Lei's "Prosperous Age Welcomes a Bountiful Year" is a specially invited work for the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition (Figure 5). Thematically, it uses the scene of picking palm fruits to express the local essence of the Sanjiang Dong community. In terms of style, the depiction of characters, clothing, accessories, palm fruits, palm leaves, and sheep are highly stylized and exaggerated, eschewing realism for a likeness that emphasizes

simplicity over complexity. This naive and simplistic stylistic approach captures the local essence. In terms of facial features, the inclusion of both the left and right sides of a face on a single head reflects the influence of “confused” thinking. Peasant life painters often lack logical capabilities and tend to confuse the relationships between subjects, objects, and other entities—such as reality and reason, life and myth, time and space, thought and feeling. When depicting subjects and expressing ideas, they do not concern themselves with whether the combinations of images conform to “reality” or “logic.” As long as it fits their imagination, emotions, and desires, the peasants boldly incorporate elements that defy realistic logic into the same frame to express a sense of locality.



Fig.5 Chen Yuqiu and Wang Lei's "Prosperous Age Welcomes a Bountiful Year"

(Source: Guangxi Academy of Painting, 2023, 20 June)

3.3 Expressing the spirit of ethnic culture

The Dong ethnic group primarily consists of peasants, making up over 80% of the population. While there are commonalities between Dong peasants and those in other professions within the ethnicity, there are also distinct differences. All inherit and perpetuate the Dong's language, clan system, and traditional crafts, aspects of Dong cultural tradition, but due to different living environments and modes of production, Dong peasants preserve and transmit these cultural aspects more extensively.

The Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings displayed at the exhibition were diverse in subject, rich in content, and varied in style, fully showcasing ethnic characteristics. Dong elements and cultural beauty were prominently displayed, expressing the ethnic cultural spirit of the Sanjiang Dong. This spirit includes the harmony between humans and nature and the collectivist ethos of unity and mutual aid among people.

Chen Meimei and Cheng Xianhui's "Revival through Song and Dance" won a selection award at the exhibition (Figure 6). The subject matter includes playing the lusheng, a traditional Dong musical instrument, to express the ethnic culture of the Sanjiang Dong. The relatively isolated village culture of the Dong has fostered a sense of community and mutual assistance. This collective consciousness has given rise to traditional cultural practices like "Doye" and "Lusheng Dancing in the Hall." Activities involving the lusheng express the ethnic cultural spirit of unity and mutual assistance among people.

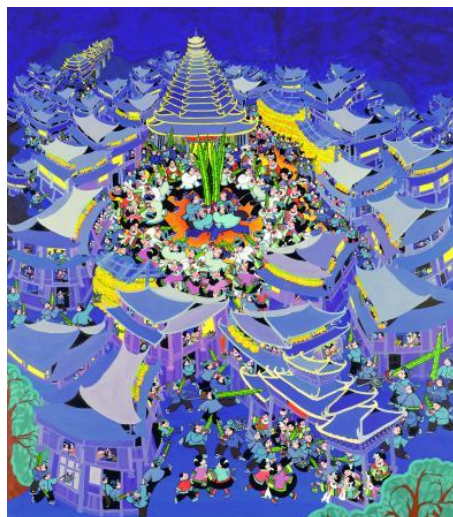


Fig.6 Chen Meimei and Cheng Xianhui's "Revival through Song and Dance"

(source: Guangxi Academy of Painting, 2020, 20 June)

3.4 Expressing the aesthetics of folk art

As a part of agricultural life culture, folk art subtly influences the aesthetic awareness and expression skills of Sanjiang Dong peasant life painting creators.

The Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings displayed at the exhibition drew on the artistic forms of Sanjiang Dong folk art, transplanting the aesthetic ideals of folk art. Artistic forms of folk art include paper cutting, Dong brocade, embroidery, and architecture. The aesthetic ideals of folk art include the beauty of life and the beauty of auspiciousness.

Wu Chunbing's "Lusheng Dancing in the Hall" won a third prize at the exhibition (Figure 7). In the work, Dong brocade patterns and architectural motifs are used to display the aesthetics of folk art. Paper cutting influences the character modeling in Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings. The modeling of characters, buildings, and plants is planar and highly abstract. Situated in the southern mountainous regions, various plants thrive vigorously. Ferns and tree patterns, symbolizing protection for those who venture out, express the beauty of auspiciousness.



Fig.7 Wu Chunbing's "Lusheng Dancing in the Hall"

(source: Guangxi Academy of Painting, 2023, 20 June)

4. Consequences

Increased Economic Income: The Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, recognized as “cultural products,” provided the artists with opportunities to improve their economic income. Exhibitions help to increase the influence of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings. Due to the successful outcome of the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition, the Guangxi Academy of Painting acquired selected works, paying 800 yuan per piece as acquisition fees.

Enhanced Cultural Confidence: Being labeled as “cultural products,” Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings offer a pathway for artists to boost their cultural confidence. The exhibition was promoted on various media platforms including People’s Daily Online, Xinhua, Sohu, Sina, Guangxi Daily, Guangxi Civilization Network, Guangxi Federation of Literary and Art Circles, Guangxi Translation Forest Network, People’s Integrated Media, WeChat Public Platforms, and Youjiang Daily. This widespread publicity helped showcase and disseminate Dong ethnic culture, allowing creators of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings to better understand and spread their own culture, thus strengthening their confidence and pride in Dong culture.

Improved Artistic Level of the Artists: The exhibition provided Sanjiang Dong peasant life painting artists opportunities to communicate and exchange ideas with other peasant life painting artists and professional painters. Artists were able to enhance their artistic skills, creating works with stronger ethnic characteristics and cultural depth to meet consumer demand. This encourages them to continually explore and innovate, driving the development and progress of peasant paintings.

Cultural and Artistic Representation of the Dong Ethnic Group: Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings not only encapsulate Dong ethnic culture but also represent a significant collection of

Dong folk art. These paintings help people from other regions understand the lifestyle, local customs, and aspirations of the people in Sanjiang, promoting broader recognition of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings.

Objective 3: To study and analysis the significance of education in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

China's intangible cultural heritage is an essential component of its excellent traditional culture. It represents a nation's way of life, wisdom, thought processes, imagination, and cultural consciousness. Therefore, effectively protecting, inheriting, and utilizing intangible cultural heritage is crucial for continuing historical traditions, reinforcing cultural confidence, and promoting cultural exchanges. As an intangible cultural heritage, the education and inheritance of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings primarily involve both schools and society.

1. Schools in promoting the education and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

As primary institutions of cultural transmission, schools have a responsibility to pass on and educate about intangible cultural heritage. During their growth, students can learn about ethnic traditional cultures, fostering a sense of identity with and pride in their national culture, thereby promoting holistic development. At the preschool and compulsory education stages, the focus is on transmitting the values of protecting and enjoying intangible cultural heritage, cultivating students' identification with and pride in their ethnic culture, and shaping correct core value concepts. At the vocational and higher education levels, it is vital to leverage the advantages of faculty and resources, integrate across disciplines, provide more professional guidance for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, and select inheritors who are professional, skilled, and innovative. Compared to other societal forces, universities have a greater advantage in inheriting and protecting intangible cultural heritage (Pan & Sirisuk, 2023). Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings can be incorporated into the curriculum at preschool, compulsory, vocational, and higher education levels by offering related cultural or elective art courses. Classroom teaching can introduce students to the history, traditions, and techniques of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, enhancing students' understanding and appreciation of traditional culture. Schools can facilitate the education and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, nurturing students' identification with and responsibility towards traditional culture, and fostering the continuation and development of traditional culture.

2. Society in Promoting the education and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

Society can promote the education and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage through various means such as organizing events, establishing awards, and leveraging new media. Provincial and city artists associations and intangible cultural heritage protection organizations can hold exhibitions and cultural festivals to teach and display intangible cultural heritage to the public. Social organizations can establish related awards or funds to encourage and support inheritors of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, promoting the transmission and innovation of skills. Utilizing new media can expand the influence of the Sanjiang Dong community. With the advent of the information age and the rapid development of various online platforms, it is crucial to use new media to promote Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings vigorously. Internet public platforms can be used to produce documentaries on Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, establish public accounts, and regularly push knowledge and information about Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, allowing more people to learn about them.

The role of education and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is not only reflected in preserving historical memories and disseminating knowledge and skills but also includes promoting cultural exchange and economic development, which are crucial for societal progress. Therefore, protecting and inheriting intangible cultural heritage is one of the important tasks in contemporary societal development (Figure 8).

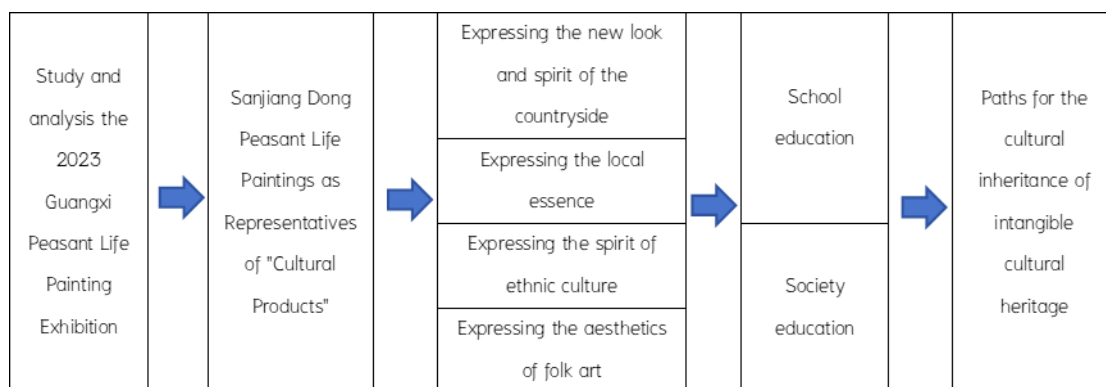


Fig.8 Research results knowledge system

(Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2024)

Conclusion

The Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings exhibited at the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition have become representatives of Sanjiang Dong “cultural products” due to the influences of the market economy, the need for innovative development, and their unique ethnic characteristics and cultural connotations. These works express the new look and spirit of the countryside, local essence, ethnic cultural spirit, and the aesthetics of folk art. They represent the Sanjiang Dong people's village life and reflect the culture of the Sanjiang Dong peasants. Through school education and community education, the Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings showcased at the 2023 Guangxi Peasant Life Painting Exhibition have innovatively explored new paths for development, effectively addressing the imbalance between social, economic, and cultural development. This contributes to the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

Suggestions

1. Academic Suggestions

In specific contexts, it is important to document the content and artistic features of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings under different social and cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the analysis of the future market and development direction of these paintings. Given China's current multi-ethnic development situation, attention should be paid to preserving the distinctive features of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings among the numerous cultural heritages.

As an intangible cultural heritage, the educational inheritance of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings is crucial. This study, starting from the concept of representation, explores the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, analyzes the significance of education in the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, and the importance of analyzing the representational content of these paintings through education. Only by fully understanding the content and significance of the representation of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings can high-quality education and inheritance be achieved.

2. Social Suggestions

This study can provide a reference for the government in formulating development, promotion, and support policies and measures for Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings. Therefore, the research can continue to enhance the enthusiasm for studying Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, enabling more experts and scholars to understand the Dong ethnic group, Sanjiang

County, and peasant life, and participate in the research. This will increase the social influence of Sanjiang Dong peasant life paintings, attract more tourists to Sanjiang County to view the paintings, and bring more economic income to Sanjiang County.

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