

トン戲の保護と継承：住民参加の視点から

The Inheritance and Safeguard of Dong Drama: From the Perspective of Residents Participation

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1. Introduction

(1) Research background

Dong drama, an unique intangible culture of Dong minority, formed around 1830. This activity originated from Liping, Guizhou province (貴州省黎平縣). And it is accessible in Sanjiang, Guangxi province (廣西省三江縣), and Tongdao, Hunan province (湖南省通道縣). The form of Dong drama is a significant sign that the history and culture of Dong ethnic had developed in a new stage. In 2006, the culture department of China nominated it in the first batch of Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in China¹.

According to the National key scientific research projects of China (国家重点科研項目) implemented in 1999, the statistics showed that there were 394 kinds of Chinese drama in the past. In 1959, the number reduced to 360, and 50 of them were formed after 1949. By 1982, the number of Chinese dramas had dropped to 317. The Chinese drama is disappearing rapidly.

With the deepening of globalization, how to deal with the impact of foreign culture becomes very important. As a weak minority, Dong formed its own drama by absorbing from Han, which is a very successful case of resisting an invasion of foreign culture.

(2) Research purpose and methodology

Based on the above background, this study has three purposes.

Frist is to study the development and influence of Dong drama. Second, to prove the impact of residents' participation on Dong drama. Third, to combine the above research results, put forward suggestion for the safeguard and inheritance of Dong drama.

The methodology were literature research and field investigation. In literature research, the main work is clarifying the history development, and current situation of Dong drama. In field work, three counties intangible cultural heritage center and national level Dong drama inheritors had been investigated. Considering Liping Guizhou province is the origin of Dong drama and had been nominated as the *Hometown of Dong drama* in 1994. This place is the major of survey.

(3) Basic information of Dong drama

Dong drama group (トン戲班) is the main organization for Dong drama. Actors, scriptwriter and band belong to the group. All the participants are residents. Usually, one village has one Dong drama group. Since the birth of it, the group never has a professional troupe, and the members always change.

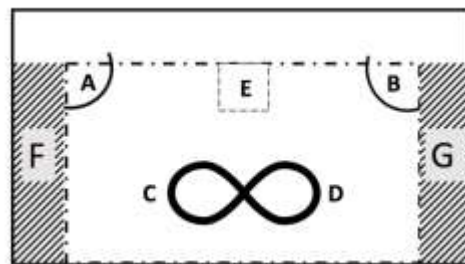


Figure 1 Stage composition

A: Entrance
B: Entrance and exit
C & D: Actors' stand point
E: An altar
F: Scriptwriter
G: Accompaniment band
∞: The movement route of actors

Because of the amateur participants, the stage's spatial structure is unique. As a local leisure activity, most of the participants of Dong drama make their living from agriculture, which means they don't have much time to practice. To make sure the show goes smoothly, the scriptwriter will sit on the stage and give actors a prompt. This is a special performance movement in Dong drama². (Figure 1)

In figure 1, C and D are the positions of actors, F point is where the scriptwriter sits. In order to hear the hints, the actors will walk to C point naturally and move back to the D point to finish the paragraph. Because this moving route is very similar to an 8-character, it is called an 8 step (八字步). This feature greatly reduces the requirements for actors and allows everyone able to participate in Dong drama.

(4) Current situation of Dong drama safeguard and inheritance

The *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China* divided intangible culture

Table 2 The support fund for Dong drama

Region	Support fund (To support activities of Dong drama in county)	For National level inheritor	For Provincial level inheritor	For Prefecture level inheritor	For County level inheritor
Liping county, Guizhou (貴州省黎平縣)	600,000 yuan	20,000 yuan	8,000 yuan	2,000 yuan	600 yuan
Tongdao county, Hunan (湖南省通道縣)	500,000 yuan -900,000 yuan	20,000 yuan	10,000 yuan	3,000 yuan	0
Sanjiang county Guangxi (廣西省三江縣)	600,000 yuan	20,000 yuan	Unknown	Unknown	600 yuan

inheritor into 4 levels: National level, Provincial level, Prefectural level, and County level. The law ordains that a National level inheritor can get 20,000 RMB each year as the allowance. For other levels, the identification and management of inheritors is depending on the government at the same level. (Table 2)

In Liping county, by the end of 2017, the local culture department has built 20 training institutions. It is a special place for local Dong drama group and other intangible cultural heritages to practice and assemble. It is managed by the village committee.

In Guangxi Sanjiang area, the culture department set up a Dong drama inheritance base in Nanzai Village. In the base, the musical instruments, costumes, and the history of Dong drama have been demonstrated. This place is managed by Yang Kaiyuan, the national inheritor in Guangxi.

At the same time, there is no special method to protect the Dong drama in Hunan Tongdao county. In an interview of Wu Shangde, the national inheritor in Hunan, he mentioned that the Dong drama in Hunan is declining.

2. Transition of Dong drama

(1) Initial stage (1828~1911)

Around 1644, transportation was developed rapidly, and town thrived and prospered in Dong ethnic area. More and more Han people moved to Dong area and brought various opera there. Meanwhile, the power of the government continuously increased, and lots of cultural organizations was created, such as county school, and local college³.

Dong people received the Han nationality's education in various degree against this background. Paralleling with the gradual deepening of two minorities' communication, Dong people raises concerns about Han opera while Han opera group often performs in Dong villages.

By 1828, *Wu Wencai* (吳文彩), an educated Dong people who passed the imperial examination at the country level was attracted by Han opera and created a new faction of opera for Dong minority⁴. After the first appearance, the show had an enormous success. To get closer to the Han opera, a lot of items of Dong

drama had been adjusted. Since then, the stage of Dong drama from one actor changed to multiple actors, and the accompaniment musical instruments were raised. In this period, although the story in Dong drama still relies on Han minority, it is the shape of Dong drama.

(2) Growth period (1911~1966)

In this period, the script *Zhulang* and *Niangmei* (珠郎娘美) presented the formation of Dong drama. *Zhulang* and *Niangmei* is the first original script of Dong drama. The entire script is based on a true story, set in Dong minority in the mid-19th century⁵. Using the heroine's love tragedy as the clue, it depicted the life of all social classes, reconstructed the contradiction of marriage customs in Dong minority.

It perfected a form of Dong drama, ultimately reappeared the profound culture of Dong minority, which won the heart of every audience and also the attention of the Guizhou culture department (貴州省文物局). The department began to conduct research on Dong drama and support the development of local performing group.

After that, the Guiyang opera company (貴陽市黔劇團) remade the story of *Zhulang* and *Niangmei* into a Han drama called *Qin Niang mei* (秦娘美) and played it successfully at Beijing theater in 1960⁶. In the same year, the Shanghai Haiyan Film Studio (上海海燕製片廠) brought *Qin Niang Mei* to the screen. The film helped the story of *Zhulang and Niangmei* win widespread fame. The Dong drama rang a new period.

(3) Stasis and revival period (1966~)

In 1966 came the 'Cultural revolution', which lasted a whole decade. Considering that most contexts of play involves religion or belief, all of the local Dong drama group spontaneously disbanded. With the end of *Cultural revolution*, the government organization has reformed 4 times.

The transition of Dong drama shows that Dong drama was indeed influenced by the Han minority at first, but after a while, the Dong drama explored its

own mode, which in turn affected Han drama. Throughout the phase from Han opera to Dong drama, then back to Han opera and remade into a movie, Dong drama development has become mature.

3. Analysis of Scripts of Dong drama

(1) Two types of Dong drama scripts

The content of Dong drama has two varieties: adaptation and original scripts. A story that has appeared in other drama and has been translated it into Dong language by author, or made it into a new version, is considered as an adaptation script. The original script means that it is the first script, not a copy by someone else.

During the fieldwork, at least 537 scripts of Dong drama were collected, of which 220 were original scripts and 317 were adaptations.

(2) Case study: Script Data Analysis

In the process of field work, based on the principle of “the most complete, the earliest, and the most Representative”, ten scripts of Dong drama were selected as the study objects to understand the influence and function of Dong drama. According to the classification above, two of them are the adaptation scripts, and eight of them are original scripts.

The analysis shows that the content of those ten cases can be classified to 4 types.

(i) Education and ideology

Policy introduction, educational encouragement and moral education are vital contents of education and ideology. One script explains the contents of National Congress of the Communist Party of China to villagers. Two scripts encourage the residents to continue their education instead of seeking work outside. Moreover, Dong drama has a significant function to create the principle of society, especially moral boundaries. Diligence is the vital point among them, and five of cases all mentioned it.

(ii) Religion and belief

The goodness Sa (薩) and animism are the basic religions in Dong area⁷. Meanwhile, 7 scripts related to religion and belief indicates that there are a large number of religions like Taoism Buddhism of Han minority in Dong culture. This strong emotional bond between Han and Dong ethnic was formed around 1830.

Since then, Dong people started to get to know Han minority's culture and were deeply affected by the religions, especially the yin-yang and five elements theory of Taoism. Those religions of two minority are closely connected and work successfully together.

(iii) Daily life and traditional knowledge

In daily life and traditional knowledge, agriculture and landscape are the major contents.

About agriculture, 27 contents appear in scripts. As a minority living on rice cultivation, the knowledge

related to agriculture is the most important survival skills that Dong people must learn and understand. Most of the Dong drama subconsciously pass on knowledge to local residents, such as how to plant and how to determine the farming time. Moreover, 15 kinds of farm products are recorded in those ten scripts.

On the aspect of landscape, there are 16 kinds of Indigenous vegetation and 7 landforms in ten scripts. The environment description line shows that the Dong village landscape exhibits a high to low structure. This result reflects that Dong drama recorded the geographical characteristics of Dong people's habitat and represented the coexistence of Dong people and nature.

(iv) Event

Marriage is the major subject in Dong drama, 6 scripts have discussed marriage. This analysis is related to the conflict between the two marriage traditions of Dong ethnic.

Cousin marriage is a custom that relatives get married. In this condition, the marriage is decided by parents.

Another custom is called Xing ge zuo yue (行歌坐月). When a young man reaches a certain age, usually a suitable age for marriage, he will visit the house of a young lady who is at a similar age and sing together to express love. In this tradition, the marriage is decided by the young.



Picture 3 Dong ethnic traditional custom *Xing gezuo yue* (photo from the Tangan eco-museum)

Among the ten cases, 4 scripts discuss about the contradiction. In 1960, the heroine of *Jinhan* and *liemei* (金漢列美) cannot disobey the cousin marriage, so she chose to escape from the village and had a happy ending in the end. In *Once Upon a Time in Wuliang hill* (霧梁情), the heroine imitated the old story of *Jinhan* and *liemei* but died in the elopement. This script questions cousin marriage. Besides, in 2017, the heroine of *Wu huaka* (吳華卡) directly rejected cousin marriage, and suggested that it should not be existed.

In 2016, the script of late marriage (結晚婚) brought a new idea that people are never too late to get

married. Considering the traditional marriage age in Dong ethnic is 14 to 15 years old, the new idea is considered as a great break. The result also indicated the marriage conception changes of Dong ethnic.

4. Resident participation and Safeguard in Dong drama.

(1) Two participant patterns

The 8-step movement helps actors not to memorize the lines of Dong drama. In addition, as the main culture for the festival, each group usually requires 20-30 actors for a show. Those features make the participation of resident become a great characteristic of Dong drama.

The fieldwork in 2019 confirmed two modes of participation in Dong drama: Native performance and Interchange performance.

(2) Tripartite relationship in Native performance

In native performance, the performer and audience come from the same village. Three main sections exist in this mode: scriptwriter, group members, and audience.

The scriptwriter chooses the proper actor for each role, and the actors' performance affects and attracts audience. To support the Dong drama group, audience will give them money or other gifts, such as food or clothes. A scriptwriter controls the whole situation, and everyone on the team can get a role in performance, which means this performance pays more attention to residents' participation than to professionalism.

(3) The social interaction in Interchange performance

Interchange performance is a big event between two Dong villages. The performer and audience come from different villages.

In this event, the village that performs the Dong drama is usually called Guest village, and the village that watches the play is called Host village. Those two villages will exchange performances to strengthen relationships.

On the one hand, the interchange performances promote the development and progress of Dong drama. On the other hand, this event increase population mobility between villages. This mobility strengthens the bond between the Dong people and makes the regional communities more united.

5. Conclusion

Besides the consideration above, this survey reveals that the development of Dong drama proved that the great way to resist an invasion of foreign culture is to take an active learning of foreign culture, transplant the local culture, and form its distinctive features. Whereby, the Dong drama protection and inheritance are worth discussing and considering.

In this research, the results pointed out that the safeguard method would not work if Dong drama

requires actors, which are residents, to be professional. The Dong drama study should treat it like a Community culture. It is essential for long-term safeguard and inheritance. However, with the increasing population of working outside the hometown, it is hard to find a villager who is willing and able to receive training. Even if the inheritor is found, it is unlikely for him/her to stay in the village and continue the inheritance work.

To maintain this community culture, this study suggests that the local department may establish a professional organization only for business performance and tourism.

The developing tourism can bring more consumers and funds to local businesses, which contributed to a good condition for the returning population. Simultaneously, the population increasing provided actors' successors for the professional organization. The scriptwriter can be recruit into the organization for script providing and consulting. Under this condition, residents are making a good living and are contented.

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