

# From Cultural Memory to Experience Economy: A Probe into the Dynamic Inheritance and Development Path of Chaoshan Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Realistic Context

-- Taking Teochew Opera as the Design Element of Tourism Performing Arts as an Example

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**Abstract:** As a treasure of Lingnan culture, Teochew opera has been included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list since 2006. The protection of Teochew opera has initially established a trinity model of "filing and survival - financial subsidies - education and communication" (marked by the regulations of Shantou on the protection and inheritance of Teochew Opera). However, based on the realistic context, there are two dilemmas in the perspective of dynamic inheritance of Teochew Opera: on the one hand, the cultural memory fault and inherent cognition between the new generation audience and the traditional opera; On the other hand, there is a structural contradiction between the traditional performance mode and the contemporary aesthetic demand. In this context, this paper focuses on the innovation and development path of Teochew opera from the perspective of cultural and tourism integration. By constructing the theoretical model of "cultural memory reproduction - Experience Economy Transformation - reconstruction of cultural identity", it explores the operation mechanism of Teochew opera opera by using modern tourism performing arts as a cultural intermediary, using the characteristics of scene narration and immersive experience of modern tourism performing arts to stimulate the emotion and cultural identity of the new generation of audiences, making the dynamic protection strategy of Teochew opera intangible cultural heritage with sustainable economic benefits through industrial operation, breaking through the limitations of the static protection of Teochew opera opera intangible cultural heritage. This approach offers more space for innovation and development in Chaoju, with the goal of transforming the protection of Chaoju's intangible cultural heritage from "blood transfusion-style maintenance" to "hematopoietic development." The aim is to provide a solution that combines academic and practical significance for the modern survival of traditional opera.

**Keywords:** Intangible Cultural Heritage of Teochew Opera; Tourism Performing Arts; Experience Economy; Integration of Culture and Tourism.

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## 1. Introduction

In the era of deep integration of intangible cultural heritage protection and cultural tourism, Teochew opera in Guangdong, as a national intangible cultural heritage representative project, has gradually become a regional cultural label of Chaoshan cultural tourism. Driven by intangible cultural heritage protection policies and non-governmental organizations, the static protection of Teochew opera has gradually matured. However, in order to realize the innovative development of Teochew opera art itself, it is necessary to cultivate a broader performance market and generate sustained economic benefits in the new era. It is required that Teochew opera has certain social and economic values to attract and cultivate a new generation of talents for dynamic inheritance (Zhang, 2024). During the "14th five year plan" period, the Ministry of culture and tourism of the people's Republic of China proposed to create a unique and charming Chinese cultural tourism experience by adhering to the principle of building tourism with culture and highlighting culture with tourism. The integration of culture and tourism has entered a high-quality development stage. Under the background of the popularity of culture and tourism integration, tourism performing arts featuring appreciation and strong experience have become an important medium to help the development of local intangible cultural heritage

drama culture, deepen the memory of regional cultural symbols, and realize the modernization of intangible cultural heritage social functions. Therefore, if Teochew opera intangible cultural heritage opera wants to glow new social and economic values in modern times, it can use modern tourism performing arts as the operation mechanism of cultural intermediaries to promote the development of local intangible cultural heritage drama and Teochew opera opera. The integration and symbiosis of culture and tourism, the modernization and transformation of the experience economy, So as to break the survival problems and innovative obstacles in the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage of Teochew opera.

## 2. Dynamic Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Teochew Opera

"Experience economy" refers to the combination of services, goods and the environment to create activities worth recalling by consumers, which is separated from the service economy. As a comprehensive art form, traditional opera Teochew opera is also a part of experience economy. Nowadays, the dilemma of dynamic inheritance of Teochew opera is largely due to the lack of competitiveness in the experience economy, that is, the conflict between traditional art forms and modern cultural consumption patterns, which

gradually weakens the market economic benefits and social values of Teochew opera, and then leads to the contradiction between the inheritance mechanism and the market ecology, affecting the confidence of subsequent Teochew opera inheritance work. Therefore, the problems in the industrial ecological chain of Teochew opera experience economy are structurally related to the practical dilemma of dynamic inheritance, which is mainly divided into three aspects: the change of aesthetics in the era from the perspective of experience economy, the fault of cultural memory of the new generation of audiences, and the reduction of traditional social functions.

### **2.1. The Change of Aesthetics in the Era from the Perspective of Experience Economy**

Teochew opera opera originated from southern opera in the song and Yuan Dynasties. It has been more than 400 years since the formation of "Chaoqiang opera" and "chaodiao opera" in the Ming Dynasty. It has a systematic performance mode and distinctive artistic characteristics. However, it is facing multi-dimensional practical difficulties in the aesthetic changes of the times.

On the one hand, the aging trend of Teochew opera audiences is serious. According to the survey data, the proportion of middle-aged and elderly audiences in Teochew opera opera performances is more than 80%, and the proportion of young audiences is about 10%. Today, the audience of Teochew opera opera is still mainly middle-aged and elderly groups. However, the audience is the life of opera, and the aging of the audience also indicates the prospect of the future Teochew opera market. Considering the future of Teochew opera opera, while paying attention to the internal inheritance of Teochew opera art, we also need to pay attention to the inheritance of the audience, especially the recognition of young audiences who are the main consumer groups. Although the regular "opera into the campus" activity is a basic project to cultivate young opera audiences, it is necessary to pay attention to the inheritance of the audience (Luo & Zhou, 2024). However, to cultivate potential young audiences who do not have the consumption ability and who are also non-Teochew Opera Opera audiences of the previous generation, they are gradually moving away from Teochew opera after leaving the campus, The probability will be lost in the lack of continuous stimulation and cultivation of Teochew opera culture in the future, which will have little effect on today's dynamic inheritance.

On the other hand, there is a certain disconnection between the aesthetic stereotypes of Teochew opera and the aesthetic habits of modern audiences. The long-term audience of Teochew opera will form an independent aesthetic formula according to the performance form of Teochew opera after adapting to the situation of "valuing the artistic meaning but contemping the image of the stage props" (Zheng, 2025) of Teochew opera, the tactful expression of dramas, and the prescribed action program. For the audience who contact Teochew opera passively or actively and occasionally, the modern aesthetic habits cannot be connected and corresponding with the aesthetic formula of Teochew opera, thereby amplifying some limitations of the art of Teochew opera, and then producing the impression of confusion, misunderstanding, and even conflict with Teochew opera, such as the bright and sharp timbre of traditional musical instruments, abstract and crude stage effects, repetitive and lengthy actors' singing, and story themes that are divorced

from modern values. Etc. Although the artistic details and cultural details of Teochew opera are worth considering, with the continuous development of intelligent media and diversified new culture in the current era, it affects the audience's aesthetic habits in all aspects. In terms of the changes in the development of viewing media, the audience has gradually changed from the "live resonance" in the theater to the imaging, interactive and immersive experience in the intelligent era (Li & Wang, 2024). In terms of viewing content, they have gradually focused on sensory stimulation, concise cultural expression and more direct and fast-paced emotional and spiritual transmission. More diversified and "short and fast" choices will also reduce the patience of some modern audiences to feel the intangible cultural heritage charm of Teochew opera opera.

### **2.2. The Fault of Cultural Memory of the New Generation of Audiences**

The deep-seated contradiction of dynamic inheritance of Teochew opera opera is essentially the appearance of the rupture of the cultural ecological chain, and is affected by multiple social and cultural factors. The crux can be attributed to two aspects: first, in the past two decades, the popularity of the local language Chaoshan dialect is insufficient, and the society pays more attention to the practicability of the language. Therefore, the use space of Chaoshan dialect is compressed, resulting in the estrangement of Chaoshan descendants growing in Chaoshan or other regions from the culture related to their hometown language, including opera, and thus weakening their identity and cultural identity of their hometown. Second, in the process of urbanization, the environment of community symbiosis is divided, and the youth group is sensitive to Teochew opera has been gradually stripped away, However, the conflict between urban culture and rural ethnic culture caused by the different growth environment between the young group and the older generation of family members is easy to drive the stereotype that "tradition is old" to the main body of the elders as "etiquette and music education", such as opera culture. As a result, the aesthetic opposition between Teochew opera and modern urban culture in the minds of the young group, which focuses on the social function of paying gods and ancestors, is increasingly obvious. This aesthetic opposition reflects the historical and cultural identity of the local new generation group, and the contradiction in the process of urbanization. The internal cause of the contradiction is the fault of the new generation's cultural memory.

### **2.3. The Reduction of Traditional Social Functions**

At present, the social function of Teochew opera in Guangdong Province is relatively thin, and the social function is related to social value and economic value, which affects the process of dynamic inheritance of Teochew opera in talent training and the innovation and development of art itself. From modern times to the period of reform and opening up, a large part of the social function of Teochew opera opera is to serve the performances of large and small theaters in the Chaozhou Shantou region. With the diversified development of entertainment culture, the social function of Teochew opera today is mainly to serve the social customs it depends on, such as the God welcoming activities in the Chaozhou Shantou region, which is one of the main sources of income for most of the Chaozhou Opera Troupes' actors. Taking Teochow

Chaozhou Opera Troupe as an example, the annual performance of "square opera" (i.e. "Lord opera", God welcoming performance) is stable at about 180, and the average annual income for each actor is about 50,000 yuan. However, the situation faced by Teochew opera is the same as that faced by most intangible cultural heritage projects. Once the crisis in the future with the outflow of youth groups, the dependent social customs weakened or gradually disappeared, resulting in the weakening of the social function of Teochew opera. Due to the single social function of Teochew opera today, the mode of production and labor that Teochew opera relies on will change in the future. With the reduction or even disappearance of the number of actors, the music that was originally dependent on a single social function will be extracted and protected from the original single social function (Zhang, 2024). With the weakening of the economic benefits and social values of Chaozhou Opera, the space for innovation will also be greatly compressed, which will affect the development and confidence of the subsequent inheritance of Teochew opera.

### **3. Rationality and Complementarity of Teochew Opera Integrating Modern Tourism Performing Arts**

Tourism performing arts refer to comprehensive cultural and tourism products that take the tourism destination as the carrier, combine with the local culture, history or natural landscape, and provide entertainment experience for tourists through the form of artistic performance. Its core value is reflected in the dual attributes of cultural integration and economic driving: on the one hand, through the innovation and integration of traditional opera, folk art and other diversified art forms, based on the rationality of artistic integration, realize the integration and complementarity of stage resources, build a multi-dimensional sensory experience scene for the local traditional performing arts, and promote the living transformation and market-oriented dissemination of cultural heritage; On the other hand, it drives the transformation and upgrading of the tourism industry. Through the development of cultural IP and the multi-dimensional extension of the performing arts industry chain, it forms a virtuous cycle of "shaping tourism with culture and highlighting culture with tourism", and ultimately realizes the symbiosis and co-prosperity of regional cultural communication value and tourism economic value.

#### **3.1. Rationality of Artistic Integration**

From the perspective of cultural industry, both traditional Teochew opera performance and modern tourism performing arts belong to the category of experience economy, emphasizing the creation of sensory experience and emotional identity in the context, seizing the audience's attention, and changing the audience's consumption behavior. Even the products of different times have identity, and Teochew opera, as a national intangible cultural heritage and local cultural treasure, also has significant commonality with tourism performing arts in terms of cultural transmission and artistic expression. The rationality of its artistic integration can be summarized into the following two aspects: first, the homology of cultural genes, that is, both are based on regional culture, emphasizing the promotion of national culture, the development of local characteristics, and the telling of folk tales. To ensure that the cultural core and

spiritual transmission do not deviate in the process of artistic integration; The second is the innovation of artistic expression, that is, in essence, it constantly seeks the innovation of artistic expression in the process of performance development, and continues to try a variety of artistic performance forms, such as "martial arts", "song and dance" and "acrobatics". In the attempt, it also tries to break through the traditional performance mode. For example, Teochew opera is good at virtualizing opera situations (Luo, 2024), such as "whip instead of horse" and "paddle instead of boat". Modern tourism performing arts are mainly based on Immersive stage technology, with more emphasis on the use of technological means such as VR and naked eye 3D. The combination of opera and tourism performing arts has a successful precedent in the country. For example, Beijing opera, Cantonese opera, Sichuan Opera, Shanghai Opera, Kunqu Opera, Shaanxi opera, Huangmei Opera and other music types joined the tourism performance and were accepted by the market, such as the Legend of the White Snake, and the Fragrance of Plum Blossom. Therefore, the combination of opera and tourism performing arts can effectively realize the two-way optimization of traditional and modern performance art, and better meet the growing aesthetic needs of the audience.

#### **3.2. Complementarity of Art Application and Development**

The complementarity of Teochew opera intangible cultural heritage and modern tourism products is reflected in two aspects:

On the one hand, the intangible cultural heritage Teochew opera has made up for the isolation from the cultural experience of consumers caused by the sense of technology and commerciality for the modern tourism performing arts, that is, it has injected the cultural core and filled in the emotional identity and cultural connotation of the modern stage content, while the modern tourism performing arts have promoted the modern transformation of Teochew opera performance and deepened the audience's aesthetic experience. Taking the large-scale stage play "Han show", which has the largest commercial investment in China, as an example, one of the main reasons for its high box office performance is that it relies on high-tech technology with accumulated funds to create sensory stimulation to attract audiences, ignoring the importance of stage culture content. However, the development of tourism performing arts in other local scenic spots generally has defects such as similar programs and serious commercialization of performances. The main reason is that the content lacks local stories that can reflect the national life and take the unique national regional culture as the background, and ignores the performance core from "cognition" to "emotion" (Yang et al, 2025), so that the audience's sense of experience and emotional identity of local culture are not satisfied. Therefore, a successful performance consists of a starring role and a supporting role on the stage. Intangible cultural heritage Teochew opera has a strong story and profound cultural connotation, which can inject spiritual core into tourism performing arts. As a tool and medium to improve the stage effect, tourism performing arts can enhance the all-round sensory experience of drama performance. This complementarity can help realize the modernization of intangible cultural heritage Teochew opera art by using the comprehensive performance elements of the modern stage and the application of modern technology in the tourism

performing arts in the form of immersion, concentration and boutique performance. At the same time, it can also create modern performance products that are more in line with the cognitive and emotional characteristics of tourists.

On the other hand, the introduction of Teochew opera elements into tourism performing arts can provide new social functions for the intangible cultural heritage Teochew opera in modern society, realize the reconstruction of social and economic values, fundamentally promote the dynamic inheritance of Teochew opera intangible cultural heritage, and is an efficient strategy to promote the local tourism economy and strengthen the shaping of cultural symbols. In 2024, the box office revenue of national tourism performance was 16.389 billion yuan, and the number of visitors reached 85.4223 million. The market prospect is very broad. In the context of intangible cultural heritage dynamic inheritance, the integration of tourism performance can make the social function of intangible cultural heritage change from relying on the original social customs to modern commercial performances. In terms of economic value, it can enhance the economic benefits created by intangible cultural heritage in modern society and reduce the burden of government support for intangible cultural heritage projects; In terms of social value, it has created more jobs suitable for intangible cultural heritage inheritors, endowed Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritance with good employment prospects, indirectly driven the local tourism economy and enhanced the influence of cultural symbols; In terms of the internal reform of art, tourism performing arts have led to more possibilities for the innovation and development of intangible cultural heritage in modern times, realizing the modernization transformation, reducing the constraints of the real economic conditions and the prospects of the traditional performance market, so that intangible cultural heritage inheritance has more discourse power and autonomy in the development of art.

## **4. Feasible Strategies for the Integration of Teochew Opera Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism Performing Arts in the Realistic Context**

### **4.1. Coordination of Local Art Resources: Building an Ecosystem of Inter Agency Cooperation**

With In the past 50 years, Shantou culture and art school (formerly "Shantou Opera School") and Shantou Chaozhou Opera Troupe have reached a closed-loop transmission from talent training to employment, so as to consolidate the professionalism of Shantou Chaozhou Opera Troupe. The talent preparation for the performance of tourism performing arts can learn from the local art colleges and groups' transmission mode, and form a cooperative ecology of "targeted training employment" in the coordination of local art resources, so as to ensure the quality and professional level of the performance of tourism performing arts while stabilizing the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, and interact with other excellent local art organizations, including the public sector, the private sector and the third sector to develop the art of Teochew opera and tourism performing arts. We should explore, cooperate and exchange views in the process of integration, reform and reference, so as to build an inter agency cooperation

ecosystem.

### **4.2. Policy Empowerment and System Guarantee: Constructing The Early Stage Fund Support System**

With the promotion of the government's intangible cultural heritage protection policy in the past decade, the protection of Teochew opera opera's intangible cultural heritage has gradually become systematic and attracted the attention of Chaoshan businessmen at home and abroad. In the capital preparation stage of tourism performing arts, the government can set up special departments and special funds to support the integration of culture and tourism. With the help of the Biennial International Chaozhou businessmen 'conference, the government can attract investment, raise funds from Chaozhou people and Chaozhou businessmen at home and abroad who are interested in building their hometown for the early site selection and construction support of tourism performing arts in their hometown, encourage the participation of social capital, and give certain support and guarantee to the land for tourism performance projects. In terms of Taxation, the implementation of tax reduction and exemption policy at the start-up stage of the performance can refer to the "intangible cultural heritage performance tax reduction and exemption" mode in Fujian Province, and implement the "immediate collection and refund" of the value-added tax on the tourism performance income of Teochew opera, so as to reduce the operating costs of enterprises and give room for initial development.

### **4.3. Design of Art Communication Means: Stimulating Market Potential**

In terms of art communication means, we need to grasp the psychology of tourists, fully grasp the market demand, and stimulate the potential of the tourism performance market. First of all, we can use the participation of celebrities or artists to play the publicity effect. Take the song and dance drama "Yunnan Image" led by dancer Yang Liping and the tourism performance works "Impression · Liusanjie" and "Impression · Lijiang" led by famous director Zhang Yimou as examples. While celebrities and artists can endow commercial performances, we should grasp the tourists' preconceived cognition of the performance level and pursue the consumption psychology of stylized performances. Then we can use online media as the publicity media to emphasize the local unique national spirit and regional cultural characteristics in the performance, and grasp the artistic highlights of the products for efficient publicity. At the same time, the local festivals and tourism performing arts will be linked in the media, The local diversified art forms are interspersed around the offline performance sites to create a festival atmosphere, and at the same time, it can drive the symbiotic development of featured accommodation, catering, cultural and creative industries (Zhang & Li, 2022).

### **4.4. Pre Control of Market Investment Risk: Establishing a Sustainable Business Operation Mechanism**

In the development of tourism performing arts, due to the large scale of capital investment in tourism performing arts, the accurate allocation of economic capital and risk pre control are the core of sustainable development. tourism performing arts, which will be dominated by Teochew opera

opera elements, should pay more attention to the driving force of the internal development of culture, prevent excessive investment in science and technology from weakening the cultural core and making performance products bear a heavy cost burden, so as to establish a sustainable commercial operation mechanism and make adjustments in the monitoring process of entering the market. Taking Wuhan Wanda Group's "Han show" as an example, the performance is known as "the best stage show of the world", with a total investment of 3 billion yuan. However, over the past ten years, the annual performance has been about 240, with an annual audience of about 400,000 and an annual income of 240 million yuan (Xiao & Qian, 2018), which is not enough to maintain the operation and recover the investment. The reason is that the ambiguous technology worship in the performance design leads to excessive capital investment in the early stage, and a large amount of capital is excessively tilted to three freely rotating screens with a total weight of more than 800 tons, 2,000 active audience seats, high-altitude flyers and other cutting-edge technologies (accounting for 73% of the capital). As a result, the narrative of Chu culture is weakened, and the audience's emotional resonance is only 37%. The annual income of 240 million yuan is difficult to cover the high operation and maintenance costs, so the Han show is not a special case in the tourism and performing arts industry. Due to capital dominance, over investment and technology worship, the box office is not optimistic due to cultural aphasia. The tourism performance industry is relatively common in China. Therefore, for tourism performance projects that integrate traditional opera culture (such as Teochew Opera), it is more necessary to build a balance mechanism between cultural endogenous power and technical support in capital allocation, so as to ensure that the weight of core cultural elements in the total investment is not less than 50%, that is, to use scientific and technological means as an auxiliary, and pay attention to moving the audience with the cultural connotation and work spirit of Teochew opera. At the same time, it is necessary to predict the investment risk, reasonably control the investment cost, use modern technology for situational presentation rather than alternative expression, realize the collaborative growth of project profitability and cultural communication efficiency through the structural optimization of cultural capital and technological capital, adjust the stage content through real-time monitoring of audience emotional resonance and ticketing market feedback, and establish a sustainable business operation mechanism.

## 5. Conclusion

Shantou, Guangdong Province, as one of the first special economic zones in China and the core bearing area of

Chaoshan culture, has a broad tourism market. Relying on the resource advantages of "China's excellent tourism city", Shantou, Guangdong Province, set a new high of 5.07 million tourists and 4.37 billion yuan of tourism revenue in the Spring Festival of 2024 (a year-on-year increase of 133%). At the same time, Shantou has the highest level of Teochew Opera Troupe in the country, Guangdong Chaozhou theater and Guangdong culture and art school (the former Shantou opera school). Backed by the support of intangible cultural heritage protection policy and excellent talent training environment, it is market-oriented to create an intangible cultural heritage inheritance ecology integrating performance, income generation and education through the use of modern tourism performing arts, so as to realize the resource integration and complementarity between modern tourism performing arts and traditional opera art. It is not only a new path to explore the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage of Teochew opera, but also a feasible strategy to realize the two-way empowerment of culture and tourism.

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