

RESEARCH ON THE VALUE EXCAVATION AND ACTIVATION PATHS OF LINGNAN ANCIENT VILLAGE EDUCATIONAL CUSTOMS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MEDIA PILGRIMAGE

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Abstract: This paper uses literature analysis, case studies, and field research methods, combined with media pilgrimage theory, to explore the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages and their value excavation and activation paths. By analyzing the historical background, cultural value, and the intervention of modern media in the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, the study proposes specific paths for excavation and activation, providing theoretical basis and practical guidance for the protection and inheritance of ancient villages.

Keywords: Media pilgrimage; Lingnan ancient villages; Educational customs; Value excavation; Activation paths

1 INTRODUCTION

General Secretary President Xi emphasized: "We must strengthen the protection and utilization of cultural relics and the preservation and inheritance of cultural heritage, continuously expand the international influence of Chinese culture, and enhance national pride and cultural confidence." Ancient villages are integral components of cultural heritage, embodying the spiritual values, national character, and cultural genes of the nation, serving as bridges and links for the continuation of national history. These ancient villages are also critical nodes of traditional Chinese society, important carriers for the creation, transmission, and development of traditional Chinese culture, and living "specimens" for the examination and study of the evolution and development of traditional Chinese society and culture. Lingnan ancient villages, as important cultural heritage in southern China, contain rich educational customs and cultural traditions[1]. With the advancement of modernization, the educational customs of ancient villages face the risk of being forgotten and lost[2]. Media pilgrimage theory provides a new perspective and method for studying the inheritance and activation of ancient village educational customs. This study aims to explore how to excavate and activate the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages through media means, with the goal of protecting traditional culture while adapting to the development needs of modern society. The significance of this research lies in providing theoretical support and practical guidance for the protection and inheritance of ancient villages.

2 OVERVIEW OF MEDIA PILGRIMAGE THEORY

2.1 Origin and Development of Media Pilgrimage Theory

Media Pilgrimage Theory originated from the intersection of cultural studies and media studies and aims to explore the role of media in cultural heritage and representation[3]. The theory was first proposed by British cultural studies scholars, emphasizing the unique role of media as a tool for cultural dissemination. Initially used to analyze media coverage of religious and sacred sites, the theory later expanded to include cultural heritage, historical memory, and other fields.

During the development of media pilgrimage theory, researchers gradually recognized that media is not only a channel for information transmission but also an important site for cultural representation and cognition[4]. Through media, people can "pilgrimage" to specific cultural and historical sites, experiencing and perceiving cultural memories and traditional customs that are otherwise inaccessible[5]. The media, as a site of pilgrimage, transcends its role as a mere transmission tool and becomes a space for cultural pilgrimage[6]. Through media, people can virtually "visit" certain cultural scenes and historical sites, engaging in cultural and emotional experiences[7]. This expansion of the theory has led to its widespread application in fields such as cultural preservation and educational inheritance.

2.2 Pilgrimage Tourism and Media Pilgrimage

Academic exploration of tourism motivation and the deeper spiritual significance of travel has facilitated the integration of religious pilgrimage and tourism experiences. Graburn introduced the concept of tourism as a ritual, examining the essence, motivation, experience, and meaning of tourism, and viewing it as a "sacred journey" that moves from the secular to the sacred and back. Researchers such as MacCannell have explicitly suggested that tourism is a modern form of pilgrimage ritual, positing that individual travel activities can be seen as pilgrimages undertaken to satisfy spiritual needs. In the field of communication studies, there is also discourse on media and pilgrimage tourism. Couldry proposed the media ritual theory, suggesting that media rituals are new forms of human ritual centered around media

practices. Couldry combined the concept of "pilgrimage" with the context of mediatisation, describing the behavior of tourists traveling to real-world locations behind the screen to participate in narratives from television, film, and other mass media as "media pilgrimage." In this sense, the act of traveling to film and television shooting locations or encountering celebrities allows audiences to reaffirm the authenticity of media narratives and locations, representing a boundary-crossing and spatial performance between the media world and the real world. Media pilgrimage focuses on the bodily practices of tourists at media sites, emphasizing ritual behavior that transcends the "inside" and "outside" of media, thus framing tourism as an activity pursuing symbolic rituals, distinct from traditional tourism experiences that anticipate the authenticity of landscapes. Currently, researchers have examined the continuum of screen tourism concepts and the impact of symbolic differences within and outside media on pilgrimage experiences in film tourism, yet the theory of media pilgrimage has not been thoroughly discussed in the context of exploring and revitalizing the educational customs and values of ancient villages[8-9].

Media pilgrimage theory provides unique insights into understanding the role of media in cultural transmission. Through media pilgrimage, we can not only "visit" distant cultural sites but also re-recognize and experience the value of traditional culture in modern society. This theoretical application offers important support and practical guidance for excavating and activating the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages.

3 OVERVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL CUSTOMS IN LINGNAN ANCIENT VILLAGES

3.1 Historical Background of Lingnan Ancient Villages

The Lingnan region, located in southern China and including Guangdong, Guangxi, and Hainan, features a unique geographical environment and a long history. Lingnan culture integrates Central Plains culture, South Yue culture, and foreign cultures, forming a distinctive regional character. As an important cultural heritage in this area, Lingnan ancient villages preserve rich historical memories and cultural traditions.

The architectural style, living habits, and social structure of Lingnan ancient villages reflect local cultural characteristics[10]. For example, common village buildings include walled houses, ancestral halls, and academies, which are not only living spaces but also important venues for cultural education. Ancestral halls and academies play a significant role in village education, responsible for passing on family culture and educating descendants.

As of now, China has included 8, 155 traditional villages in the national protection list, safeguarding 539, 000 historical buildings and traditional residences. This effort has preserved and developed 4, 789 items of intangible cultural heritage at the provincial level and above. Consequently, China has established the world's largest, most content-rich, and most valuable and comprehensively protected living heritage cluster of agrarian civilization. Guangdong Province boasts abundant traditional village resources, which hold significant historical, cultural, scientific, artistic, economic, and social value. As of July 1, 2024, 292 villages in Guangdong Province have been included in the traditional village list, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 Traditional Villages in Guangdong Province

Number	City	Time	Quantities	Municipal level
1	Guangzhou	2012-2019	13	Provincial Capital
2	Shenzhen	2012	1	Special Economic Zone
3	Foshan	2012-2019	22	Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Are
4	Dongguan	2012-2014	6	Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Are
5	Zhaoqing	2012-2019	12	Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Are
6	Huizhou	2012-2023	14	Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Are
7	Jiangmen	2012-2023	17	Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Are
8	Zhongshan	2012-2023	7	
9	Zhuhai	2016	2	
10	Shantou	2012-2023	13	Eastern Guangdong
11	Chaozhou	2012-2023	9	Eastern Guangdong
12	Jieyang	2013-2023	9	Eastern Guangdong
13	Shanwei	2012-2013	2	Eastern Guangdong
14	Meizhou	2012-2019	78	Eastern Guangdong
15	Heyuan	2012-2023	18	Eastern Guangdong
16	Zhanjiang	2012-2023	13	Western Guangdong
17	Maoming	2013	1	Western Guangdong
18	Yangjiang	2013-2023	3	Western Guangdong

19	Yunfu	2012-2016	3	Western Guangdong
20	Shaoguan	2012-2019	14	Northern Guangdong
21	Qingyuan	2012-2023	35	Northern Guangdong

3.2 Evolution of Educational Customs in Lingnan Ancient Villages

The educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages have a long history, evolving from family schooling to modern school education. In traditional society, family schooling was the main form of education, typically set in ancestral halls or homes, taught by scholars or respected elders in the village, focusing on Confucian classics, poetry, and etiquette. This education emphasized moral cultivation and cultural inheritance, highlighting traditional virtues such as respecting teachers, honoring parents, and revering ancestors.

Over time and with societal development, the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages gradually changed. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Western educational ideas were introduced to China, and modern school education began to emerge in the Lingnan region. Private schools and charity schools started appearing in villages, with education content expanding to include science, mathematics, and foreign languages. Although modern education systems gradually replaced traditional family schooling, the influence of family schooling persists. Many ancient villages still retain traditional education venues such as ancestral halls and academies and continue to pass on educational customs through festivals and ancestor worship activities.

3.3 Cultural Value of Educational Customs in Lingnan Ancient Villages

The educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages have significant cultural value, mainly in the following four aspects.

1) **Moral Education and Community Cohesion.** Educational customs enhance community cohesion. Educational activities in villages, such as ancestor worship, ancestral hall education, and academy lectures, not only convey knowledge but also serve as important platforms for community interaction and emotional exchange, strengthening community unity and identity. The educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages emphasize moral education, teaching Confucian classics and traditional virtues through family schooling and ancestral halls, cultivating moral concepts and behavior norms across generations. This moral education plays an important role in family and social stability.

2) **Cultural Inheritance and Cultural Identity.** Educational customs are crucial for cultural inheritance in Lingnan ancient villages. Through family schooling, traditional culture is passed down through generations, with family history, local culture, and folk knowledge being preserved and developed during the education process. Through educational customs, villagers, especially the younger generation, can understand and identify with their cultural roots, enhancing pride and recognition of traditional culture. This cultural identity is significant for maintaining cultural diversity and regional cultural characteristics.

The educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages are not only about the transmission of knowledge and skills but also the inheritance of cultural values and concepts[11]. They have historically played an important role in personal moral cultivation, family stability, community cohesion, and cultural identity. With the advancement of modernization, these traditional educational customs face the risk of being forgotten and lost. Through the perspective of media pilgrimage, these educational customs can be better excavated and activated, bringing new vitality to them in modern society.

4 EXCAVATION OF EDUCATIONAL CUSTOMS VALUE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MEDIA PILGRIMAGE

4.1 Media Recording and Dissemination of Educational Customs

Media, as an important information dissemination tool in modern society, has powerful recording and dissemination functions[12]. From the perspective of media pilgrimage, various media forms (such as texts, images, videos, documentaries, etc.) can detail and vividly recreate the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages. For example, documentaries can reproduce educational scenes in ancient villages through images and sounds, recording traditional educational forms such as ancestral hall education and family schooling. News media can introduce the historical origins and modern inheritance of ancient village educational customs through special reports and interviews. Social media platforms provide a broad dissemination and interactive exchange channel, where users can share and discuss the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, further expanding their influence.

4.2 Media Shaping the Cultural Value of Educational Customs

Media is not only a recorder and disseminator of educational customs but also a shaper of cultural values. Through media presentation, the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages can be recognized and understood on a broader scale, and their cultural value can be reinterpreted and enhanced. Media can shape the cultural value of educational customs in the following ways.

- 1) Historical Recreation. Through historical documentaries, literary columns, and other forms, the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages can be recreated, helping audiences understand their historical background and cultural connotations. This recreation is not only a revisit to history but also a re-recognition of traditional cultural values.
- 2) Storytelling. By telling the stories behind educational customs, such as the educational experiences of famous scholars and traditional family education, audiences can feel the profound cultural heritage and humanistic sentiments of educational customs. This storytelling method is not only vivid and interesting but also resonates with and gains recognition from the audience.
- 3) Cultural Interpretation. Through cultural interpretation programs and academic discussions, experts and scholars can deeply interpret the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, revealing their cultural value and social significance. This method can improve the public's understanding and cultural literacy of educational customs.

4.3 Reproduction and Reconstruction of Educational Customs from the Perspective of Media Pilgrimage

From the perspective of media pilgrimage, the reproduction and reconstruction of educational customs is an important process. Media uses various technical means and creative ways to reproduce and reconstruct traditional educational customs in modern forms, giving them new vitality[13].

- 1) Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR). VR and AR technology can realistically reproduce the educational scenes of Lingnan ancient villages, allowing people to experience them immersively. For example, using VR to recreate the ancestral hall education scene enables people to "pilgrimage" to the historical scene, feeling the cultural atmosphere of traditional education.
- 2) Interactive Media. Interactive media platforms provide participatory opportunities for the audience, making them not only recipients of culture but also participants and creators. For example, online interactive courses can integrate the educational content of ancient villages, enabling people to learn about and experience traditional educational customs through online platforms.
- 3) Digital Reconstruction. Digital media can digitally reconstruct the educational customs of ancient villages, such as creating digital archives and virtual exhibitions to present traditional educational customs in an all-around way. These digital reconstructions can be preserved and displayed long-term, making them available for people to appreciate and study at any time.

In conclusion, the value excavation of educational customs under the perspective of media pilgrimage is not only the recording and dissemination of traditional educational customs, but also the reshaping and enhancement of their cultural values through the reproduction and reconstruction of media. This process not only helps to protect and pass on the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, but also enhances the public's sense of identity and pride in traditional culture and promotes cultural diversity and sustainable development. Through the intervention of the media, the educational practices of Lingnan ancient villages are able to regain their luster in modern society and continue to play their roles of cultural inheritance and social indoctrination.

5 CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES IN REVITALIZING THE EDUCATIONAL CUSTOMS OF LINGNAN ANCIENT VILLAGES

In the process of revitalizing the educational customs of ancient Lingnan villages, many challenges are encountered, such as the impact of modernization, insufficient funding, and inadequate personnel training.

- 1) Modernization Impact. The process of modernization poses significant challenges to traditional educational customs, leading to the risk of these traditions being forgotten. Addressing this issue requires increased promotion and education to enhance public recognition and awareness of traditional culture. Integrating courses on the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages into school curricula can help the younger generation understand and carry forward these traditions.
- 2) Insufficient Funding. Revitalizing educational customs necessitates substantial financial support. This can be addressed through diverse fundraising channels, such as government special funds, social donations, and cultural foundations. Additionally, promoting cultural tourism and organizing traditional cultural activities can attract tourists and financial resources, thereby supporting the preservation and transmission of educational customs.
- 3) Imbalance in Personnel Training and Heritage Transmission. The preservation of traditional educational customs relies on the support of skilled professionals. Implementing training programs can cultivate a group of experts who understand and master these traditions. Moreover, encouraging and supporting older scholars and custodians to impart their knowledge and experience is crucial for sustaining the transmission of these customs.

6 ACTIVATION PATHS OF EDUCATIONAL CUSTOMS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MEDIA PILGRIMAGE

To revitalize the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, it is essential to combine traditional media with modern media. Traditional media includes newspapers, magazines, and books, while modern media encompasses television, the internet, social media, and virtual reality (VR).

6.1 Application of Media Technology

Media technology plays a crucial role in revitalizing the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages. By utilizing various media technologies, the recording, dissemination, and interaction of educational customs can be achieved.

- 1) Utilizing VR and AR technologies, virtual educational scenes of Lingnan ancient villages can be created, allowing audiences to immerse themselves in traditional educational customs. For example, VR technology can recreate the classroom environment of traditional private schools, enabling audiences to interact with teachers in a virtual setting and learn traditional Confucian classics.
- 2) Producing high-quality documentaries and microfilms can visually record and showcase the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, conveying their cultural value to the audience. These visual materials can be broadcast on television and online platforms, expanding their reach.
- 3) Utilizing social media platforms such as Weibo, WeChat public accounts, and Douyin, content related to the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages can be shared, along with online lectures and live classroom activities, enhancing audience interaction and participation.
- 4) Establishing digital archive systems to record the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages in text, images, and videos facilitates long-term preservation and research.

6.2 Integration of Education and Training

The integration of education and training is a vital approach for revitalizing the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages.

- 1) Incorporating courses on the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages into primary, secondary, and higher education curricula introduces students to their historical background, cultural value, and significance of transmission. Classroom teaching and extracurricular activities can help students understand and appreciate these customs.
- 2) Conducting traditional cultural lectures and training sessions in communities to popularize the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages among community members. Inviting scholars and custodians to provide explanations and demonstrations can enhance community participation and recognition.
- 3) Establishing a training mechanism for custodians to systematically train existing custodians of educational customs in Lingnan ancient villages, improving their educational level and transmission capability. Encouraging the younger generation to learn and pass on these customs ensures their continuous transmission.

6.3 Policy Support and Community Participation

Policy support and community participation are fundamental guarantees for the revitalization of educational customs in Lingnan ancient villages.

- 1) Local governments should formulate policies to protect and revitalize the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, providing financial and resource support. Establishing special funds for the restoration of traditional educational sites such as ancestral halls and private schools, and funding related research and dissemination activities. For instance, some ancient villages in Foshan Nanhai have revived traditional private school education through community participation and government support, rebuilding private schools and inviting traditional scholars to teach. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also revitalizes it in modern society.
- 2) Encouraging and mobilizing community members to participate in the protection and transmission of educational customs in Lingnan ancient villages. Community activities and cultural festivals can enhance members' recognition and sense of responsibility towards these customs. Integrating educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages into tourism projects can attract tourists to visit and experience them. This not only increases economic income but also expands the influence and recognition of educational customs. Local governments should establish and improve cultural heritage protection mechanisms, formulating relevant regulations and management measures to ensure the long-term protection and sustainable development of the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages.

6.4 Cultural Activities and Exhibitions

Cultural activities and exhibitions are important means of revitalizing the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages. Regularly hosting cultural festivals focused on the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages through traditional education displays, interactive experiences, and lectures to attract public participation and attention. Organizing special exhibitions on the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages in museums and cultural centers, showcasing their historical background, cultural value, and transmission status. Using various forms such as graphic panels, artifacts, and interactive installations to enhance the audience's viewing experience. Engaging in international cultural exchange activities to introduce the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages to the global community. Academic exchanges and cultural exhibitions can expand their international influence and promote cultural diversity and global cultural exchanges.

6.5 Modern Technology and Innovation

Modern technology and innovation offer new possibilities for the revitalization of educational customs in Lingnan ancient villages.

- 1) Utilizing AI and big data technologies to systematically research and analyze the educational customs of Lingnan

ancient villages, uncovering their deep cultural value and transmission patterns. Intelligent methods can achieve precise transmission and personalized dissemination of educational customs.

2) Establishing digital museums for the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages, using online platforms to display and disseminate these customs. Audiences can engage in online visits and interactive experiences to learn about the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages.

3) Leveraging multiple platforms such as television, the internet, and mobile devices for dissemination, expanding the coverage of the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages. Offering diverse content and formats through different platforms enhances dissemination effectiveness. Traditional media can detail the historical and cultural aspects, while modern media can broadly share these customs, attracting more attention. For example, high-quality documentaries and microfilms can be broadcast on television and online platforms.

7 CONCLUSION

Through collaborative efforts across various domains, including media technology application, education and training integration, policy support and community participation, cultural activities and exhibitions, and modern technology and innovation, the educational customs of Lingnan ancient villages can be effectively revitalized and transmitted, ensuring their continued cultural and educational significance in contemporary society.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

FUNDING

This article is sponsored by projects: 2021 Guangdong Province Higher Education Teaching Reform and Construction Project“Research on the Optimization Path of the Practical Teaching System for Tourism Management Majors Based on Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability Cultivation”; Zhaoqing Social Science Federation Project (24GJ-06);Open Topic on Ideological and Political Work of Zhaoqing University 2023 (SXZZ202304); Zhaoqing Social Science Federation Project(23GJ-54); Zhaoqing University Research Fund (QN202419).

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