

From “Art Activation” to “Value Cultivation”: The Practical Logic of Bayu Folk Art Empowering Ideological and Political Education in Universities

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Abstract

Bayu folk art, as the carrier of three value dimensions—“Ancient Bayu People’s Spirit”, “Red Revolutionary Spirit” and “New Era Bayu People’s Spirit”, has the implicit ideological and political education functions of cognitive construction, emotional resonance and behavior guidance. By building a “art decoding-value internalization-behavior shaping” education path, combined with innovative methods such as VR/AR technology and intangible cultural heritage practices, it realizes the paradigm transformation of ideological and political education from “explicit” to “implicit”, and experiences the “goodness, beauty and truth” carried by the “vulgar form” of folk art, affecting the thoughts and behaviors of college students in a subtle way, and providing cultural support and practical paradigms for colleges and universities to implement the fundamental task of moral education.

Keywords

Bayu Folk Art, Implicit Education, Ideological and Political Education

1. Introduction

In the context of the popularization of higher education, the scale of new student enrollment is constantly rising, and the development trend presents a trend of polarization. Many new problems have emerged among student groups, such as poor self-discipline and prominent mental health problems. At the same time, students’ self-awareness is awakening, their value orientation is diversified, and there is a large contrast between ideals and reality. In view of this, it is urgent for

university ideological and political educators to change the traditional “preaching” education model, innovate education methods of “invisible teaching”, and achieve the goal of “preaching, teaching and solving doubts”. By building a “art decoding-value internalization-behavior shaping” education path, combined with innovative methods such as VR/AR technology and intangible cultural heritage practices, it realizes the paradigm transformation of ideological and political education from “explicit” to “implicit”, and experiences the “goodness, beauty and truth” carried by the “vulgar form” of folk art, affecting the thoughts and behaviors of college students in a subtle way, and providing cultural support and practical paradigms for colleges and universities to implement the fundamental task of moral education.

General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized in “On the Party’s Propaganda and Ideological Work”: “The highest realm of art is to touch people’s hearts, to purify their souls, and to let them discover the beauty of nature, life and soul” (Guo, 2020). The rich forms of Bayu folk exemplifies this quality. By decoding Bayu folk art, it guides college students to discover the beauty of nature, the light of life, and the goodness of the soul, gives full play to the functions of “Ritual-Music Education” such as cognitive construction, three-view shaping, emotional resonance, and behavioral guidance, realizes the spiritual inheritance of daring to fight and being good at fighting, the value guidance of Ethical Coherence, and the moral education of positive energy, and subtly feels the “true, good and beautiful” carried by the “exoteric form”, affecting the thoughts and behaviors of college students in a subtle way.

2. Cultural Characteristics and Spiritual Value of Bayu Folk Art

Bayu folk art has various forms, covering many fields such as performing arts and folk crafts. In terms of performing arts, there are folk paper-cutting in Xuanhan, art lantern performance, Anren bench dragon, Taiping waist drum in Wanyuan, stone bridge fire dragon, Tujia family grass drum in Chuandong, Zhunao in Dazhu County, lion dance in Qu County, Tujia and Madu folk songs, Fan Shan-jiaozi in Yongjin Township, as well as Liangping three unique (Liangping New Year paintings, Liangping bamboo curtains, Liangshan lantern opera), Tongliang dragon dance, Qianjiang shaking hand dance, Xiaohe gong and drum, Chuangjiang number, Bayu beat (Jielong beat, Jinqiao beat), Xiushan lantern, etc. In terms of folk crafts, they include embroidery, paper-cutting, sugar painting, clay figurines, etc. There are also square stories, folk legends and so on. These works integrate a variety of expression methods such as singing, dancing, writing, painting, pinching, carving, cutting, and playing, involving fine arts, music, dance, literature, handicrafts and other art categories. They are created and inherited by the working people in the Bayu region, and are closely related to regional culture, local customs, folk customs, value orientation, and social fashion. They are the sum of folk art that has been continuously created and inherited to meet their own sur-

vival and life, emotional expression, and aesthetic needs.

Bayu folk art is not only a collection of art forms, but also carries the spiritual guidance of the Bayu region, and the implicit ideological and political education function it contains is an important embodiment of its unique charm. It can provide rich materials and multiple perspectives for ideological and political education in colleges and universities, make the content of education closer to students' lives and emotional needs, stimulate students' sense of identity and pride in regional culture, so as to enhance the attraction, appeal and affinity of education. More importantly, it can enable students to deeply understand the rich connotation of socialist core values and realize the organic unification of knowledge imparting and value guidance. By building a "art decoding-value conduction-behavior shaping" educational link, ideological and political education is no longer limited to traditional theoretical teaching, but presented to students in a more vivid and vivid way, transmits to college students the national feelings of vigorous upward, diligent and enterprising, and promote the mainstream thinking of the beauty of good. The ideological and political education function of colleges and universities and the characteristics of Bayu folk art are intertwined to form a unique value system.

3. Concrete Expression of Ancient Bayu People's Spirit in Historical Context

The ideological and political education value of Bayu folk art is rooted in the Bayu spirit core it carries. French scholar Taine pointed out: "The production of works depends on the spirit of the times and the surrounding customs" (Chen, 2011). Bayu folk art carries thousands of years of historical heritage of the Bayu region, just like a mirror, clearly reflects the unique geographical environment of the Bayu region, rich folk customs, profound human history, vibrant cultural ecology, core values and the spirit of the times. The folk art performances such as dragon and lion dance, Fanhanhuozi, baiwang dance, artistic cart lantern, grass drum, waist drum in the Bayu region show the spirit of "loyalty, courage, trust, justice, courage and war, boldness and inclusiveness" of the ancient Bayu people in a warm and unrestrained style. The performance of folk art such as folk songs, folk songs, suona, Chuangjiang hashtags, and Bayu beat, or melodious and euphemistic, or vigorous and stirring, reproduces the spirit of the ancient Bayu people who are brave in fighting and good at struggling. In addition, artifacts such as stone, pottery, jade, bronze and other art works also demonstrate the spiritual characteristics of the ancient Bayu people. These activities and characteristics have a subtle and lasting impact on the thoughts, behaviors, words and beliefs of college students. It helps college students to establish a correct world outlook, outlook on life and values, cultivate socialist core values and value systems (Li, 2024), enhance national cohesion, build a spiritual home, and build a consciousness of the Chinese nation community, and inspire college students to grow into qualified builders and reliable successors of the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and

become “Four Haves” New Generation with ideals and beliefs, morality, culture and discipline, as well as new people of the times who can shoulder the Heavy Responsibility of national rejuvenation.

The diversity of the external form of art works and the complexity of the expression show the internal social “convergence” and the “goodness” of soul, which is the essential characteristic of art works (Gao, 2023). Carrying out various forms of appreciation of ancient Bayu culture and art and ideological and political education practice activities in Sichuan colleges and universities, through the three-stage design experience of “art decoding-value internalization-behavior externalization”, college students can directly appreciate the brilliant civilization created by the ancient Bayu people, deeply understand the “loyalty, filial piety, etiquette, righteousness” symbols in Liangping New Year pictures, the collectivism spirit in Chuangjiang hashtags and other value behind the intangible cultural heritage art; students can also integrate Bayu folk art into the research and development of cultural and creative products, or directly participate in the production of traditional crafts such as paper cutting and bamboo weaving, guiding them to feel the spirit of craftsmanship, teamwork awareness and sense of responsibility for cultural Perpetuation in the process of hands-on. Develop the “Ancient Bayu Spirit VR Experience System”, after students wear equipment can “participate” in the ancient Bayu people to fight floods and build walls, migration conquest, hunting sacrifices and rituals and other virtual scenes, through interactive tasks (such as cooperative drum transmits signal), feel the “Valiant and Skilled in Battle” ancient Bayu spirit. At present, college students will have a strong and lasting emotion, aesthetic “convergence” and moral, value “goodness” in their hearts by observing, studying, experiencing and practicing Bayu folk art. Bayu folk art has a distinctive spiritual orientation and positive ideological edification role for college students, which can guide them to the beauty of goodness, and subtly influence their family and country feelings, moral ethics, aesthetic tendency and ideals and beliefs.

4. Artistic Expression of Red Bayu Spirit in the Course of Revolution

The spiritual power contained in Bayu folk art is not only reflected in its inheritance of the spirit of ancient Bayu people, but also has a close internal connection with the red revolutionary spirit. During the red revolutionary history, folk art forms such as heroic deeds, songs and dances, art works and slogans have been formed and inherited to this day (Yang & Jian, 2016). They not only further sublimate the folk art of the ancient Bayu people with profound historical value and rich ideological connotation, but also the great artistic crystallization of the combination of the Bayu regional spirit and the revolutionary ideal. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Bayu people actively participated in various historical stages of revolutionary activities such as the democratic revolution, the national revolution, the Anti Japanese War and the War of Liberation, made great sacrifices for national independence and national liberation, and

formed the red Bayu spirit of “emphasizing emotion and righteousness, daring to Fearless and relentless, unity and struggle, wisdom and courage, and determination to fight to the end”, which has become a great force and precious wealth to encourage the children in new era of Bayu to march forward bravely.

In the contemporary education ecology, deeply excavate the red resources in the Bayu region (Mo & Zhang, 2018), integrate them into the daily activities of ideological and political education, and give full play to their key functions in cultivating roots and casting souls. By holding red theme performance activities, moving red stories to the stage, creating realistic revolutionary scenes, and with the melodious and inspiring music melody, it brings strong visual shock and auditory impact to college students (Xiang, 2018), so that they can feel the heroic fearlessness of the revolutionary predecessors and the profound connotation of the red spirit in person, and then stimulate the emotional resonance and ideological identity of college students (Li, 2016). Organize students to arrange modern dance dramas such as “Chuangdong Tujia Family Grass Drum”, carry out activities of red paper-cutting into the campus and integrating into the classroom, and understand the function of art serving the society. Organize students to go to Dazu rock carvings and the birthplace of Xiushan lanterns to carry out field research and academic research activities, and feel the “family and country feelings in artistic symbols”. Hold a speech competition on the revolutionary story of “General of the Holy Sword” Zhang Aiping, break through the limits of traditional education, organically integrate the art of red revolutionary era with the help of modern technology such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and multimedia interaction, reproduce historical scenes, enrich the form and content of education, innovate and carry out publicity and education study tours, and build an education system with the characteristics of the times, so as to enhance the attraction and participation of education activities, and transform the red Bayu spirit from abstract symbols into real physical and mental experiences, so that students have a deeper empathy for the self-sacrifice, optimism, the courage to break new ground and other spirits of the revolutionary predecessors. It enlightens the soul with beauty of art, nourishes the character with goodness of morality, and promotes the all-round growth and development of college students from multiple dimensions such as ideological guidance, moral shaping and artistic edification, fully demonstrating the unique value and lofty realm of literary and artistic works in ideological and political education across time and space, and provides strong spiritual motivation and cultural support for cultivating a new generation capable of shouldering the mission of national rejuvenation.

5. Continuation of the Spirit of the New Era of Bayu People in Socialist Construction

The richness and diversity of Bayu folk art is also the key to its brilliance in the process of socialist construction. The spirit of the new era of Bayu people contained in Bayu folk art is the spiritual beacon of socialist construction. In the wave

of socialist construction and reform, Bayu folk art, with its unique artistic charm and profound cultural connotation, has become a key force in the inheritance and development of regional culture, and plays an irreplaceable important role in the continuation of historical culture and construction of national spirit. During this period, Bayu folk art closely followed the pulse of the times, focusing on the real scenes of the new era of Bayu people in flood control and disaster relief, fire fighting and reconstruction of homes, vividly showing the core of the spirit of the times. These works use artistic brushstrokes to depict the fearless pictures of Bayu people hand in hand to build a solid human wall to resist the flood when the flood ravaged, the heroic scenes of firefighters and people working together to overcome difficulties in the fire, and the united pictures of everyone working together to carry building materials and rebuild a beautiful homeland after the disaster. They are not only the crystallization of artistic creation, but also a vivid witness to the inheritance of Bayu's excellent culture, with lofty moral sentiments permeating between the lines, and a vivid interpretation of the spirit of new era of Bayu people, such as "overcoming difficulties and innovation, unity and struggle, hard work and innovation". It has become a source of spiritual strength for Bayu people to march forward bravely.

Through the establishment of interdisciplinary and cross regional research teams of Bayu folk art and ideological and political education, the combination of semi-otic analysis of Bayu folk art symbols and ideological and political education theory, the joint editing and publication of "Map of Recessive Moral Education in Bayu Art", the transformation of art resources into ideological and political education materials is realized, providing theoretical support and discipline resource sharing for teaching. At the same time, it cooperates with local governments, intangible cultural heritage protection institutions and local museums to establish "Bayu Cultural Heritage Base", develop "AR guided ideological and political course", when students watch the bronze tiger button in the Warring States Period, they can trigger the knowledge question and answer of Party history by scanning cultural relics, and form a "university society student" trinity education network. This kind of education mode of "carrying the truth in art and educating people with culture" not only solves the dilemma of single form and insufficient appeal of traditional ideological and political education, but also realizes the organic unity of "recessive education" and "dominant education" through the emotional resonance and value penetration of art, and provides a replicable practical paradigm for cultivating new people of the times with cultural confidence and political awareness.

Bayu folk art, as the common carrier of these three spirits, vividly demonstrates the spiritual style of people in Bayu region with different historical stages. These art works are deeply endowed with the value concepts of beauty, love, morality and goodness, reflecting the aesthetic cognition and emotional world of the new era of Bayu people. The works not only convey the core concept of people-oriented and serving the people, but also vividly demonstrate the infinite yearning

and unremitting pursuit of the Bayu people for a better life. From the traditional spirit of the ancient Bayu people to the red revolutionary spirit and then to the spirit of the new era of Bayu people, although they are in different times, they all reflect the yearning of the Bayu people for a better life, the pursuit of justice, and the spirit of selfless dedication for the collective interests. This internal connection makes Bayu folk art have a richer connotation and value in ideological and political education, and can guide college students to better understand the historical and cultural context of the Bayu region. Inheriting and carrying forward these two precious spiritual wealth not only illuminates the way forward for college students, guides the direction for their growth, but also sets a lofty spiritual benchmark for contemporary college students, becoming a firm practitioner of communist ideals and beliefs.

When college students appreciate Bayu folk crafts and art works, they can clearly grasp the development process of the Bayu people along the artistic context, deeply feel the generation-to-generation Perpetuation of the Bayu people's spirit, so as to stimulate their deep love for Bayu culture, and further enhance their cultural pride and confidence. With its unique charm, Bayu folk art leads the trend of times and culture, promotes the ideological awakening of college students, and urges them to gradually move from the unconscious state of "spontaneous" kindness to the active state of "conscious" kindness, internalizing "truth, goodness and beauty" into their noble personality, and realizing the unity of knowledge and action of "internalization in the heart and externalization in action". As a result, college students take it as their own mission to inherit and carry forward the spirit of Bayu people, and are determined to grow into outstanding young people in the new era. This spiritual force also inspires the new era of Bayu people, making them more in love with the culture of ancient Bayu and red culture, and constantly passing on the spirit of the Bayu people. Looking forward to the future, it is urgent to further explore and make full use of the value of Bayu folk art, expand its application in the field of ideological and political education, promote its positive role in cultural inheritance and innovation, make it an important source of strength to nourish the national spirit and cultivate new people of the times, and contribute to the construction of a strong cultural country.

6. Conclusion

This study, grounded in a cultural education perspective, systematically deconstructs the cultural essence of Bayu (Chongqing region) folk art through three dimensions: spiritual inheritance, where art forms like Chuanjiang Haozi (Yangtze River Boatmen's Work Songs) and Tongliang Dragon Dance tangibly manifest an "indomitable spirit and pioneering enterprise," epitomizing regional character; ethical values, wherein carriers such as Qi Jiang peasant prints and Xiushan lantern performances crystallize norms of "virtue worship, righteousness pursuit, and harmonious coexistence" to construct folk moral frameworks; and aesthetic education, whereby craft arts exemplified by Shu embroidery and Dazu stone carvings

embody “harmony between humanity and nature with masterful ingenuity,” reflecting cosmological craftsmanship. Building upon this framework, we reconceptualize ideological education’s tripartite functionality: cognitive construction facilitates intertextual interpretation between traditional culture and Socialist Core Values through artistic symbol decoding; emotional resonance establishes affective pathways connecting aesthetic experience with cultural memory and national sentiment; while behavioral guidance cultivates value judgment and ethical decision-making through hands-on artistic practice. Accordingly, systematic innovations include: a three-tiered curricular module (“Art Appreciation→Cultural Interpretation→Value Sublimation”) transforming cultural connotations into value education; multidimensional practice platforms (“Intangible Heritage Workshops + Field Research + Creative Adaptation”) enhancing experiential pedagogy; and collaborative mechanisms (“University-Local Partnerships + Interdisciplinary Integration + Digital Empowerment”) optimizing educational ecosystems. Through innovative content transformation, we develop visualizable, experience-enabled, and disseminable digital resources while adopting immersive, project-based, experiential, and inquiry-driven pedagogies, complemented by process-oriented and value-added assessment mechanisms to elevate educational efficacy. By constructing the “Cultural Decoding→Value Transmission→Behavioral Shaping” pedagogical chain, this research establishes an implementable regional paradigm enhancing ideological education’s affinity and effectiveness, offering significant theoretical and practical contributions to the creative transformation and innovative development of China’s outstanding traditional culture.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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