

Analysis of the Characteristics of Guizhou Culture

Yang Li^{1*} Haiyu Zhang² Hongmei Zhang³

¹ Institute of Education and Science, Xingyi Normal University for Nationalities, Xingyi 562400

² Institute of Education and Science, Xingyi Normal University for Nationalities, Xingyi 562400

³ Institute of Education and Science, Xingyi Normal University for Nationalities, Xingyi 562400

Yang Li^{1*}: corresponding author; email: 14014772@qq.com

ABSTRACT

Guizhou culture has traditionally attracted many different opinions. This paper first defines the connotation of Guizhou culture and then analyzes the influencing factors of Guizhou culture based on historical facts. The paper argues that geographical and economic factors influence Guizhou culture. According to the analysis, it is concluded that Guizhou's culture consists of ethnic culture and mountain culture. The ethnic culture mixes orderly and harmoniously, while the mountain culture forms unique systems simply and naturally.

Keywords: Guizhou, culture, characteristics

1. INTRODUCTION

Guizhou is one of the birthplaces of ancient human beings in China. As early as more than 200,000 years ago, there were footprints of human activities. Our ancestors lived and multiplied here and created ancient culture. The Guanyin Cave in western Guizhou, Jigong Mountain in Weining, Tongzi people, Dadong people, Xingyi people and Piercing people all told the world what happened in that era.

At the time of the establishment of Guizhou province, the area was divided into Guizhou from the neighboring provinces, so far it still maintains a close cultural relationship with the "first territory" in history. The coexistence and common development of diverse cultures have formed the particularity of Guizhou culture. During the Warring States, Qin and Han dynasties, the ancient Yelang culture on the Guizhou Plateau had begun to flourish. From the Wei and Jin dynasties to the Tang, Song and Yuan dynasties, Guizhou had close economic and cultural exchanges with the outside world. Guizhou culture absorbed the strengths of central Plains culture and surrounding regional culture, and flourished in the Ming and Qing dynasties, thus leading to tusi culture and Yangming culture. During the revolutionary war, we had the long March culture and the Anti-Japanese War culture. These unique cultural pixels all represent guizhou's adherence to local culture and integration with foreign

cultures in every historical period, which has been demonstrated by numerous cultural relics protection units and dazzling intangible cultural heritage.

The significance of studying Guizhou culture is to sort out the characteristics and values of Guizhou culture. On the one hand, we should have a cultural perspective and make choices and judgments from the perspective of Chinese culture. On the other hand, we should have a vision of integration. We should not only highlight the value of The Times in the high-quality development of Guizhou culture and the construction of a new highland of guizhou self-confidence and self-improvement spirit, but also see the unique value in the fields of politics, economy, society, ecological civilization and party building. Finally, have a perspective on the future. We should highlight the future value of Guizhou culture at the world level, national level and provincial level.

2. GUIZHOU CULTURE

As for the concept of "Guizhou culture," there are mainly two views in the academic circle. "One is that Guizhou has not formed a separate culture from a macro perspective, and 'Guizhou culture' is just a local reflection of Chinese culture. Another view believes that various cultural phenomena in Guizhou are conceived, formed, and developed in Chinese culture, and are never divorced from the parent at any time." ¹ However, from the micro point of view, namely from the regional cultural

differences, the concept of "Guizhou culture" can be established. The above two points can be said to be different and wise. The first point is to view Guizhou culture from a macro perspective and incorporate Guizhou culture into the general category of Chinese culture. This perspective emphasizes the overall characteristics of Guizhou culture and the Central Plains culture while ignoring the individual attributes of Guizhou culture. The second view is to highlight the personality characteristics of Guizhou culture, which is to treat Guizhou culture as a regional culture, the same as Qilu culture, Three Qin culture, Sanqin culture, Saibei culture, Wu-Yue culture, Lingnan culture, Western Regions culture, Qinghai-Tibetan culture, Bashu culture, Jingchu culture, and Yunnan culture. It is believed that these regional cultures are gradually formed within a certain spatial scope. Due to the differences in history, geography, and ethnic groups, several differences arise with the development of history, showing different cultural features from each other, which is the local characteristics.

Based on the above points, the Guizhou culture can be defined as a multi-ethnic regional culture, with Han Chinese culture as the main part.

3. FACTORS INFLUENCING GUIZHOU CULTURE

3.1. Influence of Guizhou's ethnic economy

Due to the different economic and cultural types of various ethnic groups in Guizhou, their respective cultural traditions are continued. Leaving the Han nationality alone, the minority cultures in Guizhou can be divided into four basic economic and cultural types. The Pu people, who have been settled as indigenous people since early on by farming, are famous for refining cinnabar. They have particular customs such as wearing tube skirts, living in dry-pen houses, wearing copper drums, drinking from the nose, and playing with teeth. The Yi people among the Qiang tribe were originally nomadic people who moved with their animals. They gradually developed into an economic and cultural type of "farming and herding" and were known for their horse breeding, martial arts, and shooting habits. Their writing originated very early, and they have established several ethnic regimes throughout their history. Miao Yao used to like living in mountains instead of plains¹. They were better at hunting. As a typical "mountain nation," they had long followed the farming method of slash-and-burn farming and lived a life of "eating in the mountains." The Baiyue people used to live on plains. They often lived on the waterfront, cultivated paddy fields, and lived the pastoral life of "men farming and women weaving, and supporting themselves," a so-called "nation of rice cultivation." On this basis, different cultural styles and traditions have formed, which determines the cultural

diversity of Guizhou. Another factor that determines the cultural characteristics of Guizhou is the feudal dynasty's long-standing policy of "concurrent rule of the land and the stream" in Guizhou. On the mainland, the officials were dispatched by the imperial court at any time, the population was integrated, the land was raised by measuring, and all political affairs were handled following the decrees of the central government. In the remote areas, however, due to the different socio-economic bases, officials are appointed by local natives, who "inherited their positions, kept their land for generations, and grew their people for generations."² Local officials decide all affairs and the central government is rarely involved. Because of Guizhou's status as a "non-internal and non-border" state, two different administrative systems were in place in Guizhou simultaneously, with both dispatched officials and local officials ruling Guizhou from the Qin and Han dynasties to the Ming and Qing dynasties. Due to the large number of Han immigrants entering Guizhou, Han culture has gradually become a dominant culture since Ming and Qing Dynasties, but it has spread mainly in ethnically mixed areas with a developed economy and along the transportation routes. Han culture has not penetrated the ethnic settlement areas, especially the remote mountainous regions. Therefore, Guizhou culture presents a relatively balanced state between the development of Han culture and ethnic minority culture, and each has its own space for development. Therefore, miscellaneous is the characteristic of Guizhou culture, which is miscellaneous but not chaotic, miscellaneous but orderly, and harmoniously coexistence.

3.2. Influence of the natural environment of Guizhou

On the one hand, the formation of Guizhou culture originates from the different ethnic cultures formed based on the economy of each ethnic group in Guizhou. On the other hand, it is deeply restricted and influenced by the specific geographical environment and produces a unique regional culture. This regional culture has a prominent imprint on mountain culture. The mountains and hills occupy 97% of the province's total area in Guizhou, and the flat land only accounts for 3%. Guizhou has many mountains, and they are very high and steep. Therefore, Yangming Wang, a scholar in the Ming Dynasty, once described that the world's mountains excel in Yunnan and Guizhou. As if the mountains are concentrated in Yunnan and Guizhou. Due to the mountains' obstruction, Guizhou has remained closed to the outside world for a long time and has little communication with the outside world. The culture formed in this environment is bound to have obvious ethnic characteristics and primitive features, called "mountain culture." The mountains hinder people's communication and bring some disadvantages to agriculture. But things are dialectical, and the mountains also have their advantages as they are rich in mineral

resources. It can be said that Guizhou is a typical mountain country, where you can see mountains everywhere. The natural environment of Guizhou directly affects the production and lifestyle of all ethnic groups in Guizhou. The saying that relying on mountains for a living vividly and accurately expresses the relationship between mountains and people's livelihood, mainly reflected in the material culture and spiritual culture of all ethnic groups in Guizhou. Guizhou's material culture can be summarized as a mountain economy in terms of material culture. This mountain economy directly affects Guizhou's agriculture, handicraft industry, construction, and transportation. In the ancient agricultural society, mountain agriculture occupied a prominent and vital position in Guizhou. There are many mountains and many basins between mountains in Guizhou, commonly known as "Bazi." There are more than 2,000 Bazi in Guizhou, so Guizhou culture is also called "Bazi culture." The mountain economy is a closed, natural economy in which men farm and women weave to support themselves. It has no specialized industry, no social division of labor, and emerges in the form of a cottage industry. Due to the affection for the specific natural environment, the national wisdom, aesthetic concept, and arts and crafts formed on this basis reflect the nation's characteristics. For example, flower picking and embroidery of Miao nationality, weaving of Buyi nationality, leather making of Yi nationality, and batik are popular among Miao, Buyi, Shui, Yao, and Gelao nationalities. Guizhou is the hometown of the bronze drum, which is all used by the Gelao, Buyi, Dong, Miao, Shui, Yao, and Yi nationalities. In terms of architecture, the dry column buildings of ethnic minorities are the most distinctive. In addition, there are Miao stilted buildings, also built on the mountain. The Dong Drum Tower is also quite distinctive.

Besides the spiritual culture of ethnic wisdom, aesthetic concepts, and arts and crafts mentioned above, the most representative ones are the philosophical thoughts, literature, calendars, and medicine of ethnic minorities. For example, in terms of myths and legends, the Gelao nationality has the "creationism" view of the growth of heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, and the ancestors of other ethnic minorities in Guizhou Province also have this discussion of nature. In the long-term production and labor practice, the ethnic minorities in Guizhou have also created their calendars (mostly natural calendars, neither solar nor lunar calendars, with autumn harvest as the beginning of a year), among which the typical one is the Shui calendar of the Shui people, which is already a written calendar. This calendar is closely related to the water books of the Shui nationality. In the water book, the words used to record the Five Elements, the Eight Diagrams, the Ten Heavenly Stems and Twelve Terrestrial Branches, and 28 lunar mansions occupy a considerable proportion, and the shape of the Ten Heavenly Stems is similar to Chinese characters, so

there are conditions to calculate the year and month according to the Ten Heavenly Stems. The months of the water calendar are divided, basically according to the change law of the sun and the moon, and divided into twelve months and four seasons ("holy," "crow," "tree," and "fall," namely, spring, summer, autumn, and winter). The calendar of Yi nationality is called the Yi calendar, which is very similar to the Shui calendar. The difference is that the calculation year, month, and day of the Yi calendar are deduced in turns by the twelve Chinese zodiacs. Later, after introducing the "lunar calendar" of the Han people, it gradually replaced the "natural calendar."³ In terms of medicine, it was often said in the past that there was a lack of medicine in minority areas, but this is inaccurate. Before introducing traditional Chinese medicine and western medicine, all ethnic groups already had their own medicine, among which the medicine and herbs of Miao are representative.⁴ In addition, rock culture is also a major feature of Guizhou culture. Guizhou is the most typical area of karst terrain, with about 74% of the exposed limestone area. There is an ancient and mysterious rock painting on the cliffs deep in the mountains. People do not know when it began, let alone its meaning and connotation. Some say that it is the remnants of the original art, and others say that it is some ancient text, which has so far not been interpreted.⁵

3.3. Influence of the ruling policies of feudal dynasties in Guizhou in history

Another factor determining the cultural characteristics of Guizhou is that the feudal dynasty carried out the ruling policy in the interior. Officials were dispatched and transferred by the court at any time, and all government affairs were handled according to the decrees of the central government. In remote areas, due to different socioeconomic bases, local aborigines are appointed as officials, and local officials make decisions with little interference from the central government. Because Guizhou was in the position of "neither inside nor outside", there were two different administrative systems in Guizhou at the same time. Guizhou was ruled by both court officials and local officials from the Qin and Han dynasties to the Ming and Qing dynasties. For these reasons, since the Qin and Han dynasties, China's feudal central government set up prefectures and counties in Guizhou and kept tribal states. Therefore, from the perspective of system and culture, we can see that the culture of Guizhou is neither completely the same as that of the inland nor the frontier. It is precisely because of this "non-frontier and non-inland" situation in Guizhou that the Han culture spread smoothly in the regions governed by various officials and different people. Not only did a large number of Han immigrants move into Guizhou, but also the Han culture occupied a dominant position through education, imperial examinations, ethics and customs. At the same time, in the areas ruled by chieftain, the culture of local minorities also rose to dominate.

For example, in northwest Guizhou, the Yi culture has been fully developed under the rule of an chieftain of yi nationality for a long time, which can be proved by a large number of yi classics and inscriptions.

In fact, other ethnic groups living in this area have also been affected in varying degrees culturally. For example, tunpu in Anshun, Pingba and Zhenning is obviously a historical relic of the Wei Suo system in Ming Dynasty. A large number of Han immigrants settled here in the form of military organizations. As a group of immigrants, but also due to the special protection of the military system, the culture of the Central Plains, Anhui and Jiangnan areas has been inherited for a long time. At the same time, leishan, Taijiang and Jianhe areas in the miaos hinterland were free of government rule and chieftain control, which made the Miaos culture develop freely and preserved a large number of ancient customs. It also became a "treasure ground" to study the Miaos culture. It can be seen that the implementation of "land flow and governance" results in the development of both Han culture and minority culture.

4. CONCLUSION

Ethnic culture and mountain culture jointly constitute the two basic characteristics of Guizhou culture. Due to the influence of its unique natural environment, Guizhou's cultural development is not synchronized compared with the cultural development of other regions of the country. The lagging cultural evolution is an objective reflection of the lagging socio-economic development, and it is precisely this situation that makes Guizhou's culture show more of a quaint style.⁶

To sum up, we summarize the characteristics of Guizhou culture as the intertwined ethnic culture and mountain culture, in which the ethnic culture is mixed and orderly, harmoniously coexisting, and the mountain culture is simple and natural, each forming a system.

Due to the influence of its own special natural environment, the cultural development of Guizhou is not synchronized with that of other parts of the country. The lag of cultural development is an objective reflection of the lag of social and economic development. Due to its late development in history, Guizhou's social and economic development and cultural development are quite different from those of other developed regions. This "congenital deficiency" makes guizhou's culture more authentic and primitive.

In the face of the history and reality of Guizhou, under the great opportunity of western development, it is necessary for us to re-examine the situation of Guizhou province and clarify the thinking of strategic decision-making. This paper analyzes which guizhou culture is adapted to and which is contrary to the social and economic development under the environment of western development, and further discusses the ways of guizhou

culture development, so as to make it serve the construction of material civilization and spiritual civilization in Guizhou.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

(Doctoral Foundation Project of Xingyi Normal University for Nationalities, Project No.: 20XYBS01; 2021 Guizhou Provincial Theoretical Innovation Project (Joint Project) Stage Results. (Project No.: GZLCLH-2021-337).

REFERENCES

- [1] Shen M. X.: History and Culture of Guizhou [M], Chengdu: Southwest Jiaotong University Press, 2015.
- [2] Zhou C. Y., et al. Ancient History of Guizhou. Guiyang: Guizhou People's Press House, 1982.
- [3] Hou S. Z. Ghost of southwest China / /Guizhou History. Guiyang: Guizhou Ethnic Press House, 2005.
- [4] Shi J. Z. Interpretation of Guizhou culture. Guiyang: Guizhou Education Press House, 2000.
- [5] Yelang Academic Research Society Proceedings Editorial Committee. Yelang Studies. Guiyang: Guizhou People's Press House.
- [6] Wang G. W. Textual of Ghost Kunyi. Guantang Jilin: Vol. 1.3. Beijing: China Book Bureau, 1984.