

# Miao Canoe Dragon Boat: Protection and Inheritance of Contemporary Guizhou

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

Received: 29 Dec 2024

Revised: 12 Feb 2025

Accepted: 27 Feb 2025

With a rich historical legacy and distinctive national symbolic value, the Miao dug-boat dragon boat culture is a significant component of China's ethnic minorities' intangible cultural heritage. In order to show how this cultural phenomenon adjusts to changes in contemporary society and investigate the prospect of its sustainable growth, this research methodically examines the historical development, cultural worth, protected status, and inheritance route of the Miao dug-boat dragon boat. In order to conduct a multi-level interpretation of the Miao dug-boat dragon boat culture in Qiandongnan, Guizhou Province, this study employs cultural change theory, symbolic interaction theory, ritual theory, and the 5W communication model in conjunction with literature analysis, field investigation, in-depth interviews, and field observation, among other research methods. The Miao dragon boat is a significant carrier of ethnic identity, community solidarity, and cultural legacy in addition to being a kind of folk sports competition, according to the research. From the first religious event to social amusement, folk competition, and national cultural showcase, its role has progressively expanded throughout time. According to the research, digital preservation, integration of the cultural and creative industries, worldwide cultural exchanges, and community co-governance may all help to preserve the Miao dugout dragon boat tradition and bring it back to life in contemporary society.

**Keywords:** Dragon Boat, Qiandongnan, Guizhou Province, Miao Dug-Boat, Cultural Inheritance, Modern Society, Co-Governance, Folk Sports Competition, Field Observation

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and importance

With its extensive historical accumulation and distinctive national symbolic value, the Miao dugout dragon canoe is a significant component of the Miao cultural heritage. Its roots may be found in ancient sacrifice practices. It began as a crucial channel for communication between humans and the gods and progressively evolved into a cultural phenomenon that combines competitive sports, religious rites, and communal togetherness (Jiang, W., 2023). The distinctive feature of the Miao dragon boat, in contrast to other varieties, is that two or three hollowed-out fir trees are attached to the whole fir tree, which has been hollowed out into a groove. The phoenix tail is mounted at the stern, while the faucet is situated at the bow. The canoe can accommodate 30–40 people at a time and is between 12 and 15 meters long overall. In addition to reflecting changes in the Miao social structure, the history of the Miao dugout dragon boat also shows how China's ethnic minority culture has evolved and adapted throughout the modernization process.

Even now, the Miao boat remains a highly symbolic cultural icon of Guizhou Province, particularly during traditional celebrations like the Mid-Autumn Festival and the Dragon Boat Festival (Zhang, X., 2018). With its crisscrossing rivers and mountains, as well as its considerable ethnic variety, Guizhou is situated in southwest China and offers a distinctive natural and cultural setting for the Miao canoe tradition to be passed down. The center of the Miao canoe culture has long been Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, particularly Shidong Town,

Taijiang County. Under the effect of external environmental changes, this ancient skill has survived to this day because of the region's abundance of rivers and strong feeling of ethnic identity. (Xu Y., & Liu, L.D., 2017).

- **Cultural heritage protection and sustainable development:** The Miao people's cultural identity and historical legacy are carried via the Miao boat. However, its existence faces significant problems due to the acceleration of urbanization, the change in the method of economic growth, and the strengthening of cultural convergence.
- **Cultural changes and adaptation under the background of modernization:** In contemporary society, traditional culture must be continuously modified to fit the changing socioeconomic landscape. The Miao dugout dragon boat's traditional function has altered in recent years due to the commercialization of ethnic celebrations and the growth of tourism (P. Wu, 2017).
- **National identity and cultural symbols:** The Miao dugout dragon boat is a significant representation of the Miao national identity in addition to being a tangible piece of cultural heritage. Dragon boat racing is a communal rite that represents the Miao group's unity and historical continuity (Jia, Z.Y., 2016).
- **Impact and optimization of cultural protection policies:** To try to improve the protection of ethnic minority cultural heritage, the Chinese government has released laws like the "Law on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage" and the "Regulations on the Protection of Ethnic Cultural Villages in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture" (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2020).

The younger generation has lost interest, and there are fewer inheritors. Boat-building skills and rituals are in danger of disappearing as a consequence of young people's waning interest in traditional crafts and sacrificial activities brought on by the impact of the contemporary educational system (Zhu, L., & Xu, X.G., 2016). effects of urbanization and modernity. Due to lifestyle changes brought forth by urbanization, fewer Miao boats are used in everyday life, which lowers real involvement (Yuan, X.Z., & Yang, Y.S., 2015). Cultural alienation is a result of commercialization. In order to meet market demands, several traditional rites have been modified or even lost their original holiness, and the growth of tourism has progressively turned the Miao boats into commercial spectacles (Dai, G., 2013). scarcity of natural resources and preservation of the environment. Traditional canoe construction requires a certain kind of wood, but obtaining raw materials for shipbuilding has become more challenging due to the depletion of forest resources and the tightening of environmental protection regulations (Liu, L.G., & Xu, Y., 2011). Local government programs are not being implemented effectively. Unsatisfactory actual results of cultural inheritance result from issues like inadequate implementation and a lack of funds for cultural protection, despite the fact that state and local governments have introduced pertinent protection policies (Yang, S.R., & Wei, J., 2010).

This work has significant theoretical and practical relevance based on the aforementioned concerns. In order to investigate the adaptive growth of the Miao dragon boat culture in historical changes and enhance the theoretical framework of ethnic cultural research, this study integrates the theories of cultural change, symbolic interaction, and the 5W communication model. Practically speaking, the study's findings can serve as a guide for local communities, academics, and government cultural policy makers. They also offer specific recommendations for the long-term viability of the Miao dragon boat, including digital protection, the integration of the cultural and creative industries, international cultural exchanges, and community co-construction.

### 1.2 Objective of study

- To study the history and development of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou contemporary.
- To study the protection of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou contemporary.
- To study the inheritance of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou contemporary.

### 1.3 Definition of terms

- **Miao people :** South China is home to the majority of the Miao, a Chinese nationality. The 2010 China Population Census estimates that there are 9426007 Miao people living in the Chinese Mainland, making up 0.70 percent of the country's total population and ranking as the fifth biggest ethnic group.
- **Miao canoe dragon boat :** In Guizhou, the Miao people have a long-standing athletic folk custom. The Miao people's dragon boat is defined by its form in the notion of the canoe dragon boat. It is one of China's national intangible cultural heritages and got its name from its distinctive form.
- **Protection :** It alludes to Guizhou Province's Miao canoe dragon boat's history and evolution. Shape, manufacturing methods, and ritual are among them.

- **Inheritance:** It discusses how to inherit the Miao canoe dragon boat in Guizhou Province as well as its inheritance content. Ritual, manufacturing methods, and inheritors are examples of inherited content. How to Inherit: the procedure and the topic of inheritance.
- **Gui zhou :** The capital of Guizhou Province, commonly known as Guizhou for short, is Guiyang City. The province is situated in the southwest of China, east of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau.

#### 1.4 Scope of the study

The history of Miao canoe dragon boats may be categorized into three eras based on evidence from field investigations and literature: the Ming Dynasty, which is the oldest time in books, the Qing Dynasty, which was growing, and the Republic of China's period, which was marked by repeated battles. The form, manufacturing methods, and ceremony are all covered in the paper.

Southern China's Guizhou Province is well-known for its diverse ethnic culture and striking natural landscape. It is a good destination for exploration and tourism because of its numerous picturesque locations, including the Qiannan Karst's global natural heritage, Qiandongnan Miao, and Dong traditions.

In Guizhou Province, China, Taijiang County is a county-level city that is under the jurisdiction of Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture. The Miao-dominated Taijiang County, in the southeast of the autonomous prefecture, is a significant Chinese canoe dragon boat birthplace.

Situated in the northeast of Taijiang County, Shidong Town is a subordinate town. Shidong Town is situated in Taijiang County, one of China's canoeing townships. A major canoeing tournament is conducted annually during the Dragon Boat Festival, drawing many of people to observe the event.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It conducts a thorough analysis of the body of research on the evolution of the Miao boat. The study findings about the Miao canoe's historical development, cultural importance, form and workmanship, ritual practice, and adaptability in modern society are all thoroughly examined in this Paper.

### 2.1 Knowledge About Miao Canoe Dragon Boat

One significant aspect of Chinese ethnic minorities' water culture is the Miao Canoe Dragon Boat tradition. Its historical roots are found in the ancient Miao people's aquatic existence and sacrifice practices. A variety of cultural components, including Miao beliefs, customs, contests, and social structures, are carried by the canoe in addition to being a mode of water transportation. The shape, function, and social importance of the Miao Canoe Dragon Boat have changed significantly throughout time, according to the sorting of historical sources and the analysis of pertinent field survey data. In addition to being influenced by elements like the social structure, economic form, and natural surroundings, these changes are also fueled by national policies, intercultural interactions, and the modernization process.

Zhonghai, Z. (2023) The ethnic groups in southern China have a long history of using dragon boats. To honor the renowned poet Qu Yuan, several ethnic groups paddle dragon boats each year at the Dragon Boat Festival. Nonetheless, the descendants of Chi You, a tribal chieftain who was vanquished by the mythical Yellow Emperor in antiquity, would ride a dragon boat in the Qingshui River Basin to honor a legend—the tale of a valiant father slaying a dragon.

T. Sogawa (2016) In the Qingshui River area of China's Guizhou Province, the Miao dragon boat race is a significant agricultural sacrifice. The origins and historical transformation of the Miao dragon boat race are discussed here, elaborated by an analysis of its complex social and cultural phenomena to reveal an impression of Miao society that reflects the integration of enculturation, acculturation, and socialization. During a one-year-and-three-month field investigation and research project, which was based on the methodology and theory of cultural anthropology, the related geographical surroundings, local production and life styles, people's religious beliefs, social structure and customs, and other pertinent aspects were studied from the perspective of others.

F. Fallon (2016) This research charts the development of Dragon Boat racing from its modest origins in 1976 as part of the Hong Kong Tourist Association's (HKTA) local tourism strategy to promote Hong Kong as more unique than a shopping destination or a place with an interest in British colonial history. Now a recognized international sport, dragon boat racing is on the verge of being included to the Olympic program and calls for a worldwide strategy of cooperative partnerships. Integrating special events as a primary tourist experience requires careful consideration of emerging strategies and the symbolic validity of intangible cultural assets.

(P. V. Genovese, 2024) Numerous unique traditional festivals serve as examples of the Miao people's rich cultural history. Some of these festivals have strong ties to particular places, such the Canoe Dragon Boat Festival in Jianhe, the Sister Festival in Taijiang, and the Guzang Festival in Leishan. Through an examination of how village growth has changed the relationship between body rituals (such as dancing, singing, and sacrifices) and the surrounding places, this research explores the impact of these festival traditions on the spatial dynamics of Miao villages. This study uses somaesthetic and typological lenses to investigate the mutually beneficial link between Miao festival culture and village spatial structure, with a particular focus on the Guzang Festival and the traditional hamlet of Jiubai.

## **2.2 Knowledge about protection and inheritance of Miao Canoe Dragon Boat**

The Miao Canoe Dragon Boat is a significant component of the aquatic culture of China's ethnic minorities, carrying social purposes, national identity, and rich historical recollections. But as a result of modernization, the traditional dragon boat culture is facing challenges such shifting natural conditions, the effects of industrialization, the need to adapt to new social structures, and the waning of the younger generation's cultural identity. Thus, the preservation and inheritance study of the Miao Canoe Dragon Boat is a crucial practice for the preservation of intangible cultural assets as well as a vital duty for the survival of national culture. The Miao Canoe Dragon Boat's conservation status and methods are the primary subject of this part, which also examines the major successes and difficulties of the present protection effort based on local experiences, academic research, social groups, and government laws.

At the national level, the Miao dugout dragon boat has been supported by policy and included to the system for protecting intangible cultural treasures. As evidence of the state's high regard for this cultural practice, the State Council authorized the inclusion of "Miao dugout dragon boat racing" in the first round of national intangible cultural heritage listings in 2006 (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2006).

According to researcher Li Shilong (2017), some Miao communities continue to employ traditional methods for building dragon boats, although some of these techniques are in danger of disappearing because of the usage of contemporary automated instruments. The "Miao Dug-wood Dragon Boat Skills Inheritance Plan" was introduced by the Guizhou Provincial Cultural Heritage Protection Center in 2018 to help artisans systematically pass down traditional skills through physical restoration, video recording, and oral history (Wan, J.Z., 1995).

A traditional canoe's body is often carved with meaningful ethnic totems like a dragon, sun, phoenix, etc., and is typically made from a single piece of fir, cypress, or camphor wood. A dragon boat's construction involves many steps, including choosing the right wood, chiselling, polishing, painting, and decorating, all of which need for exceptional skill and extensive knowledge. There is a gap in the legacy of traditional craftsmanship, nevertheless, since traditional manual shipbuilding abilities have rapidly diminished due to the popularity of contemporary mechanical shipbuilding equipment and the preference of many young people to pursue other careers. In order to preserve this skill, some local governments and cultural organizations have started to take action. These actions include creating the "Miao Dragon Boat Manufacturing Skills Inheritance Base," inviting experienced craftsmen to teach, and documenting the traditional process using text, images, 3D modeling, and other media (Li, S.L., 2018).

To encourage students to study this age-old craft, certain colleges and institutions have recently started offering courses on dragon boat construction. To encourage young people to master traditional Miao talents, Guizhou University for Nationalities, for instance, launched a course on "Intangible Cultural Heritage and Cultural Inheritance" in 2021 (Zhang, X.Y., 2021).

## **2.3 Plan and Policy**

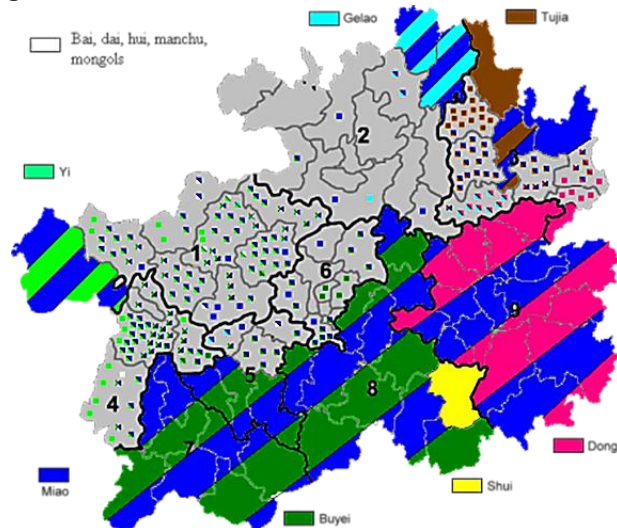
The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China has placed a high priority on preserving and advancing traditional Chinese culture ever since the 18th National Congress. Important guidelines for enhancing cultural openness, advancing the preservation and transmission of Chinese culture, and improving international relations were provided during the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee. In order to increase the global influence of Chinese culture, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee carries out group discussions and research on strengthening the nation's cultural soft power, sincerely understands and studies the Central Committee's spirit, further unifies ideas, raises cultural awareness, and promotes traditional Chinese culture to the world in an innovative and reform-minded manner.

In order to build a cultural power by 2035 and further increase the international influence of Chinese culture, the "Fourteenth Five Year Plan" of China clearly outlined a policy-oriented path to strengthen China's capacity for

international cultural communication in the face of the epidemic. This indicates that "cultural power" and the internationalization of Chinese culture have emerged as important national development strategies and a crucial component of the socialist core value system's construction. In light of this, the development of China's foreign cultural strategy is essential. In the midst of the pandemic, we urgently need to research how to make Chinese culture a vibrant and potent organic component of the global cultural landscape as well as how to discover a fulcrum, direction, and route for international cultural communication from a higher strategic level. (Z.Q. Yang, 1999).

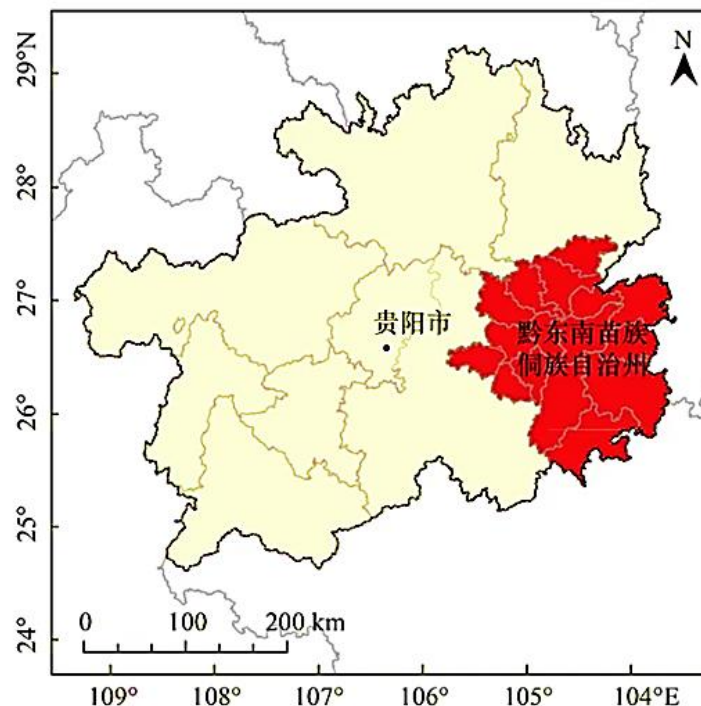
#### 2.4 Study Area

In the People's Republic of China, Guizhou—also known as "Qian" or "Gui"—is a provincial administrative area. The province capital, Guiyang, is situated in Southwest China's hinterland.



**Fig. 1** Schematic Diagram of Ethnic Distribution in Guizhou.

Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture was designated as the "National Demonstration Prefecture of National Unity and Progress" by the National Ethnic Affairs Commission in December 2019. It was chosen by the Central Commission for Rule of Law in June 2020 as one of the first initiatives and demonstration sites for establishing a national rule of law government. Qiandongnan Prefecture is expected to have a regional GDP of 119.152 billion yuan in 2020.



**Fig. 2** Schematic Diagram of Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture.

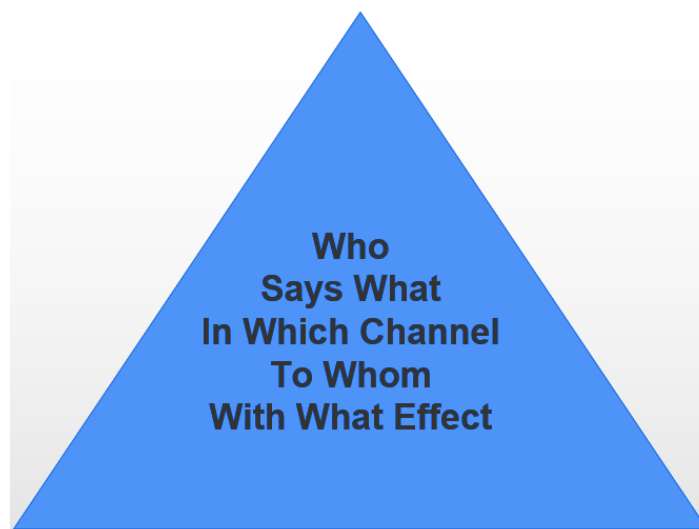
- **Guizhou Miao Sister Festival:** Every spring, the Miao people in certain parts of Taijiang County, Shibing County, and Jianhe County in Guizhou Province celebrate the Guizhou Miao Sister Festival by eating sister meals that are led by women. The Miao sister festival, which takes place from March 15 to 17 on the bank of the Qingshui River in Shidong District, Taijiang County, is the most traditional and outstanding. The festival etiquette is straightforward and distinctive.
- **Miao People's Canoe Dragon Boat Festival:** Relevant individuals both domestically and internationally are becoming more interested in the Taijiang Shidong Dragon Boat and its Dragon Boat Festival in Qingshui River. It has a distinctive canoe cultural phenomenon, and the Dragon Boat Museum was founded in Shidong Town, Taijiang County, by the appropriate Guizhou Province agencies.

### 2.5 Theory and concept

The Miao people are an ancient nationality with a long history and a rich cultural legacy. The Miao people have persevered in fighting, confronting, accepting, and integrating with other ethnic groups in order to create their own culture and history despite several obstacles throughout China's history. The Miao people have preserved a number of traditional ceremonies and celebrations that best reflect the behavior and symbolic expression of their national identity. Canoeing is one of the oldest traditional ethnic minority pastimes that the Miao people still engage

### 2.6 5W theory

In a paper titled "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society," renowned American political scientist Harold Lasswell (1902–1977) first proposed the five fundamental components of the communication process and arranged them in a specific structural order. This led to the creation of the structural process model known as the "5W model" or "Lasswell's scheme." The first letters of the five English basic words are the five W's, and they are:



**Fig. 3** 5W theory.

### 2.7 Relevant research

Buddhism, national customs, and the social ecology of water towns all have a significant impact on Thailand's dragon boat culture. It has changed throughout time, moving from religious rites to sporting events and cultural industrialization. Thai academics have produced comparatively rich academic findings from their recent, in-depth study on the historical evolution of dragon boat culture, the formation of national identity, the preservation of cultural heritage, and its application in contemporary society.

In addition to existing in East and Southeast Asian nations, dragon boat culture has been extensively researched and promoted globally. diverse nations have diverse areas of study, including the creation of ethnic identities, the transmission of cultures, the preservation of cultural heritage, sportification, and its effects on the social economy. The present state of dragon boat cultural study will be methodically examined below from the viewpoints of China, Japan, Europe, North America, and international organizations.



### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a mixed research method of survey, interview and observation. It should be noted that this study is a qualitative study. It systematically analyses the protection and inheritance of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture. The research will focus on the following three core directions:

1. The historical development context of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture.
2. The current status of the protection of the contemporary Miao dugout dragon boat culture.
3. The current status of the inheritance of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture.

#### 3.1 Target group

The selection, research, and analysis of target groups is important for this study because it is related to the construction of useful information for this study.

- For the casual informant, a total of 10 people. They are the hosts of the ceremony, rowers, and drummers.
- For the general informant, for a total of 5 people. They refer to the audience who came to watch the dragon boat race and the interactivity of other villages.

#### 3.2 Research duration and procedures

The investigation time of the study is from April 2024 to April 2025.

Table 2 Time table for investigation.

No.	Content	Time
1	Field investigation, interview the KI	2 months
2	Interview the CI	2 months
3	Interview the GI	1 month
4	Data collection and analysis	4 months
5	Summarize	3 months

#### 3.3 Data collection

For literature analysis, data can be obtained more directly, mainly through published literature. By browsing the literature excessively and listing and classifying relevant knowledge points, most of the survey data can be collected.

Interviews and survey data must be based on on-site work. Depending on the survey time, it may take more than 6 months to complete the on-site survey.

Get first-hand (origin) information by:

- Observing;
- Talking;
- Discussing;
- Survey by questionnaire;
- Meetings;
- Activities.

Record the data details, including the:

- Texts;
- Pictures;
- Audios;
- Videos;
- Other materials.

#### 3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis refers to analyzing, understanding, classifying, and summarizing the data collected in the early stage, clarifying the role and function of the data, and ensuring how to apply the data to the paper. In general, data analysis typically includes categories, grouping, and convergence.

#### IV. RESULTS

In accordance with the research goals, this paper will do a thorough analysis and methodically arrange the primary and secondary data gathered for this study. The preservation and transmission of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture is the main focus of this research, particularly how to secure social involvement and governmental support in the setting of contemporary society.

##### 4.1 The history of Miao canoe dragon boat

###### 4.1.1 Refers to the earliest Miao canoe dragon boat appeared in legend

Since the Miao are a minority group without a written language, one of the primaries means of passing down and preserving their culture is by word of mouth. Following my field visit, I discovered that the dragon boat activity originated from the fact that every Miao village in this region often repeat a similar version of the story about how the bad dragon was killed and the dragon's flesh was shared. Nearly all of the local village elders gave me this response:

*"Being a minority people without a written language, the Miao rely heavily on oral tradition to preserve and transmit their culture. After my field trip, I learned that the dragon boat activity came about because every Miao community in this area often retells the same version of the tale of how the evil dragon was slain and its meat was distributed. I received similar reaction from almost every village elder in the area."*



**Fig. 4** Interview with Professor Feng Xiaodong and Professor Chen Yuping from Wuhan Sports University.

###### 4.1.2 Refers to Miao canoe dragon boat during Ming dynasty

The "Zhenyuan Prefecture Chronicle" from the Zhengtong era of the Ming Dynasty (around 1440–1451) has the oldest documented account of the Miao people paddling wooden dragon boats in Shidong Town:

*"On May 25, men and women dressed up to the nines as the Miao people of Qingjiang staged dragon boat activities."*





**Fig. 5** "Zhenyuan Prefecture Chronicle".

#### **4.1.3 Refers to Miao canoe dragon boat during Qing dynasty**

While maintaining Ming Dynasty customs, the Guizhou Miao canoe's design eventually began to exhibit certain distinctive features throughout the Qing Dynasty.



**Fig. 6** Discussion with the National Sports Teaching and Research Section of Beijing Sports University.

#### **4.1.4 Refers to Miao canoe dragon boat during Republic of China**

The wooden dragon boat culture of the Guizhou Miao people had to contend with a complicated and shifting social milieu throughout the Republic of China era. During this time, Chinese society was undergoing significant upheaval and transformation. The wooden dragon boat culture of the Miao people has not only maintained its deeply traditional features in terms of shape, production technology, and rituals, but it has also undergone some changes and innovations due to the rapid pace of modernization, frequent wars, regime changes, and economic unrest. The old spindle-shaped design of the wooden dragon boat is still there, demonstrating the Miao people's dedication to traditional craft aesthetics and their ability to adapt to their natural surroundings. However, the dragon boat's design started to subtly alter throughout this time to accommodate new practical needs and aesthetic shifts due to the slow penetration of foreign culture and changes in local society Qi (2014).



**Fig. 7** Miao dragon boat race during the Republic of China period in the National Museum.

## **4.2 The protection of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou Contemporary**

### **4.2.1 Shape protection in current situation**

A crucial component of cultural growth and inheritance is the Miao canoe's form conservation. In addition to being the dragon boat's outward look, the form is a tangible representation of its historical significance and cultural meaning. Since the establishment of New China, as society and culture have advanced, it has become more crucial to preserve the canoe's design. The exact steps for form conservation are covered in depth below, including both the recording and restoration of ancient shapes as well as the inheritance and innovation of contemporary designs.



**Fig. 8** Miao Canoe Museum.

### **4.2.2 Protection of production technology in current situation**

The foundation of Miao canoe culture's legacy is the preservation of industrial technique. In addition to demonstrating the Miao people's artistry and intelligence, canoe making is a significant means of passing along their cultural heritage. Following the establishment of New China, as the social economy and modernization progress, canoe manufacturing technology encounters both possibilities and constraints related to innovation and inheritance. The preservation of traditional skills, the use of contemporary technology, the education and encouragement of skill inheritors, and international collaboration and exchanges are the four main facets of the production technology protection plan.



**Fig. 9** Li Shilong, inheritor of the Miao dragon boat.

#### **4.2.3 Protection of rituals in current situation**

It is crucial to preserve the Miao dragon boat ritual as it is a significant component of cultural heritage. In addition to being the focal point of dragon boat activities, these rituals are a significant representation of Miao social life and culture. Four elements must be addressed in order to guarantee that these rites may be successfully preserved and passed down: documentation and classification, inheritance and education, encouragement of cultural endeavors, and social and governmental assistance.



**Fig. 10** The villagers carried the dragon boat together.

### **4.3 The inheritance of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou Contemporary**

#### **4.3.1 Inheritors**

Protecting cultural heritage is primarily the responsibility of inheritors. They are the keepers and propagators of cultural spirit in addition to being the inheritors of talents. The descendants of the Miao dug-wood dragon boat were essential in the preservation and transmission of culture after the establishment of New China. Currently, inheritor inheritance mostly consists of the creation of the inheritor system, inheritor protection and training, inheritor skill inheritance and advancement, and other elements.





**Fig. 11** Zhang Tianrong: Representative inheritor of the Miao ethnic group's dragon boat.

#### **4.3.2 Inheritance of production technology**

The foundation of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture's legacy is its manufacturing technique, which encompasses every step of the process, from material selection and design to carving and assembly. Following the establishment of New China, as society, science, and technology advanced, the Miao dugout dragon boat's manufacturing technology underwent constant innovation and improvement. The preservation of traditional talents, the adoption of contemporary technologies, skill development and advancement, etc., are the primary manifestations of the present inheritance scenario. (S.M. Liu, 2023).



**Fig. 12** The making of the cabin of the Miao people's wooden dragon boat.

#### **4.3.3 The inheritance of rituals**

The Miao dugout dragon boat culture is centered on rituals, which have deep cultural and historical meanings. The ceremonial inheritance of the Miao dugout dragon boat has changed and evolved significantly since the establishment of New China due to social and cultural shifts. The preservation and restoration of ritual forms, the transmission and creation of ritual meanings, and the breadth of ritual involvement are the primary indicators of the present inheritance situation.



**Fig. 13** The simplification and rejuvenation of the Miao ethnic group's dragon boat rituals.

#### 4.3.4 The inheritance subjects

All types of players and supporters, including inheritors, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and community groups, are crucial to the continuation of the Miao canoe culture. The responsibilities and tasks of different inheritors in the inheritance of the Miao canoe culture have steadily been defined and reinforced since the formation of New China, as society has developed and awareness of cultural preservation has increased. This has resulted in a diverse inheritance structure.



**Fig. 14** Traditional ceremony scene.

#### 4.3.5 The inheritance method

The Miao dugout dragon boat culture's growth and preservation are largely dependent on the inheritance system, which also establishes whether or not the culture can endure in contemporary society. Since the establishment of New China, as society has evolved and awareness of cultural preservation has grown, the Miao dugout dragon boat's inheritance method has progressively expanded and become more systematic, encompassing digital inheritance, scientific and technological inheritance, community inheritance, education inheritance, and cultural activity inheritance.



**Fig. 15** Community Collective Volunteer Crew.

## V. CONCLUSION

The historical evolution of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture, the expression of cultural heritage, and its preservation and transmission in contemporary society are all covered in depth in this paper. This paper examines the main obstacles in the process of cultural inheritance, including elements like social structure change, policy support, marketization impact, and ecological environment change, by examining the opportunities and difficulties that the Miao dugout dragon boat culture faces in the modern era in conjunction with the theory of cultural ecology. Furthermore, this paper examines the preservation and transmission of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture, highlighting its significance in social identity and cultural transmission, based on the theories of cultural diffusion and symbolic interaction.

Examine the potential of digital technology in the cultural sector and in promoting education, as well as its practical application value in the long-term growth of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture. Furthermore, this paper presents a thorough analysis of the new information gleaned from the research process, outlines the theoretical contribution and practical significance of the findings, and makes specific recommendations for the future preservation of the Miao dugout dragon boat culture, the development of the educational system, and the digital communication path. It also serves as a guide for future research and practice in these areas.

### 5.1 Conclusion of the history of the Miao Dragon Boat

The Miao people, a minority group without a written language, have relied heavily on oral tradition to transmit and preserve their culture. The form, manufacturing process, and customs of the Miao canoe have been maintained and carried on via oral history and songs that have been handed down from one generation to the next. The findings of this historical era are mostly known from the songs and oral histories that have been passed down since there aren't any written documents.

### 5.2 Conclusion of the protection of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou Contemporary

The key to ensuring that this age-old custom may be carried on and expanded in contemporary society is the preservation of the Miao canoe dragon boat culture. Traditional culture is suffering hitherto unheard-of difficulties as a result of the ongoing social changes, particularly since the establishment of New China. A crucial topic in cultural conservation is how to maintain and advance the Miao dragon boat culture in the face of industrialization and globalization. The three protective measures—form, manufacturing technique, and ritual—are especially crucial in this situation. In addition to demonstrating the reverence and regard for cultural heritage, these preservation efforts also demonstrate the inventiveness and revitalization of Miao culture within the framework of the modern day. By carefully examining these safeguards, we may get a deeper understanding of the Miao canoe dragon boat culture's enduring appeal and its relevance to modern society.



### **5.3 Conclusion of the inheritance of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou Contemporary**

The process of passing down the Miao canoe and dragon boat culture has been significantly impacted by social shifts, cultural origins, and technical advancements throughout history. Inheritance is a sign of social cohesiveness and national identity in addition to being the continuance of culture. The topic matter, shape, and substance of inheritance have changed significantly in tandem with the times. The Miao canoe and dragon boat culture has shown remarkable flexibility and vitality, from the traditional word-of-mouth transmission within the family and community to the inheritance model of multi-subject involvement, institutionalization, and technology in contemporary society. In this regard, thorough examinations of the five elements of inheritors, production technology, rituals, inheritance subjects, and inheritance methods not only highlight the diversity and complexity of cultural inheritance, but also offer a crucial viewpoint for comprehending how this age-old custom can continue to flourish in modern society.

## **VI. DISCUSSION**

### **6.1 Discussion of the history of Miao canoe dragon boat**

We must first comprehend the oral heritage features of this cultural phenomena before we can study the early Miao boat from the standpoint of cultural change theory. The Miao people are a minority with no written records, therefore word-of-mouth is the primary means of preserving and carrying on their cultural history. Myths and tales surrounding the canoe's origin are prevalent and significant in Miao culture. According to cultural change theory, cultural aspects will unavoidably alter as time and the social environment change. Due to the replication and development of memories from many villages and people, the Miao boat tale may have differences and variety in details, even though the fundamental plot may not alter.

The ongoing repeating of the dragon boat mythology in the Miao cultural system serves as a means of providing current social significance in addition to serving as a straightforward memory of the past. To preserve and uphold their identity and standing in Miao culture, many villages will retell and express these tales in accordance with their own social standing and collective memory. Understanding these dynamic processes and how culture maintains its vitality and coherence via ongoing adaptation and reproduction are made easier by cultural change theory.

Given this, it is also appropriate to consider the canoe's early forms and purposes as a component of this process of cultural development. Even though the legend's plot is over-the-top and romanticized, it captures the Miao society's trust in both natural and supernatural forces as well as their desire to use this ceremonial activity to find peace and a bountiful harvest in nature. The Miao people found symbolic expression and validation for the ongoing stability of their social structure and natural surroundings via the dragon boat activity, in addition to reaffirming their cultural identity.

### **6.2 Discussion of the protection of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou Contemporary**

We can comprehend and examine the meaning formation and replication of cultural symbols in social interaction from a unique angle thanks to symbolic interaction theory. According to this theoretical framework, the Miao wooden dragon boat can be considered a symbolic interaction process in terms of its shape, production technology, and ritual changes over time, as well as current protection efforts. It is a traditional cultural form with profound cultural symbolic significance. Through safeguards in modern society, these cultural symbols not only preserve the Miao people's collective identity and historical memory, but they also continue to exist and acquire new meanings. From three perspectives—shape, manufacturing technique, and ritual—we will examine the present state of the preservation of the modern Miao wooden dragon boat and compare it to the Ming, Qing, and Republic of China dynasties.

### **6.3 Discussion of the inheritance of Miao canoe dragon boat, Guizhou Contemporary**

A thorough and methodical framework for examining and comprehending the inheritance status of the modern Miao boat is offered by the 5W theory. The inheritance of the modern Miao canoe can be thoroughly examined from the five perspectives of inheritors, production technology, rituals, inheritance subjects, and inheritance methods through in-depth discussions of "What," "Who," "When," "Where," and "Why." This analysis can then be compared with the Ming Dynasty, Qing Dynasty, and the Republic of China to show how this cultural phenomenon evolved and changed over time.

## VII. SUGGESTION

### 7.1 General suggestion

The Miao dugout dragon boat, a significant national cultural symbol of Guizhou, has gained increasing attention and support in recent years due to the implementation of cultural heritage protection policies, thanks to the promotion and support of Guizhou Province and local governments at all levels. The traditional culture of the Miao dugout dragon boat was progressively added to the list of intangible cultural treasures at all levels in 2008 as awareness of cultural heritage preservation increased. In light of this, there have been some successes in preserving and passing down the Miao dugout dragon boat. However, within the parameters set by national laws and taking into account the unique circumstances of the Miao dugout dragon boat in Guizhou, local governments may create more targeted conservation measures and regulations to guarantee the long-term growth of this cultural form. These policies should emphasize the significance of the Miao dugout dragon boat for social, cultural, and economic development. They should also encourage the preservation and transfer of the Miao dugout dragon boat via efficient resource distribution and cultural inheritance systems.

Growing the team of inheritors is a crucial part of supporting the sustainable growth of national traditional cultural sports in a scientific, reasonable, and efficient manner. In order to revitalize the Miao canoe culture in contemporary society, it is important to actively encourage and attract the younger generation to participate in the Miao canoe's legacy. Education, cultural events, and community involvement can all help to strengthen the younger generation's sense of identity and engagement with traditional culture. In order to increase its impact and popularity, this cultural form should be documented and shared digitally. At the same time, emphasis should be devoted to the fusion of culture and contemporary technology.

### 7.2 Suggestions for further research

Comparative studies can be used to highlight the distinctiveness and universality of the Miao canoe culture across a range of social, economic, and environmental contexts. Future research can concentrate on the parallels and discrepancies between the Miao canoe and traditional water cultural activities of ethnic minorities in other regions. The adaptation and alterations of the Miao canoe in the context of globalization, as well as its inheritance model and development route in contemporary society, might all be the subject of future study. Furthermore, by doing extensive field study, we may get a thorough understanding of the unique practices of the Miao canoe in current community life and investigate how to foster its growth and integration with contemporary society while maintaining its fundamental cultural values.

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