



THE VALUE RECONSTRUCTION OF YI MYTHS IN DIAN CULTURE: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF THE MYTHS OF "BROTHER-SISTER MARRIGE AFTER THE FLOOD" AMONG
THE YI PEOPLE IN KAIYUAN, CHINA



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BY

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The myth of “brother-sister marriage after the flood” is a representative ancient myth among the Chinese, especially among the ethnic minorities in Yunnan. This study focused on the villages of Beige, Zongshe, Pipo, and Laole in Kaiyuan City. Its main objectives were to analyze the historical reasons behind the formation of the “brother-sister marriage after the flood” myths in these four Yi villages and to comparatively examine the similarities and differences in the living myths and related cultural traditions of the Yi people. The research employed qualitative methods, including archival and documentary research, ethnographic approaches (fieldwork and in-depth interviews), and comparative analysis to gather extensive data. The study was conducted from four perspectives: the content of the myths, the related folk belief practices, the geo-socio-cultural environments, and the transmission of living myths. This multi-dimensional approach not only ensures the reliability and validity of the findings but also offered insight into the unique ethnic culture and aesthetic sensibilities developed by the Yi people over generations. Additionally, it sought to reframe the cultural value of Yi myths in the realm of art and culture.

Keyword : The"Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" Myths, Living Myths, Yi Aesthetics, Dian Culture

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Introduction to Research Subjects

Where did humans come from? Who were the ancestors of the Yunnanese? Did they spring from a rock? Does it grow out of a plant? Did they come from animals? Or did the so-called gods create them out of clay? Of course, if we answer in a serious way, the ancestor of Yunnan people should be *Homo erectus yuan mouensis*, one of the earliest human beings in our country, 1.7 million years ago. but from the perspective of myths, the origin of human beings is full of fantasy and mysterious colors and incorporates elements of the original ancestral faith, and many myths around the world posit the ancestors of mankind as a related man and a woman, and most of them are related, such as Chinese myths, such as Fuxi and Nuwa in Chinese mythology, Adam and Eve in the Bible, and Izanagi and Izanami in Japanese mythology. The combination of this brother-sister marriage motif with the flood extinction motif led to the formation of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth, which is widely spread among nationalities in southwest China, especially among the Yi and Miao ethnic groups in Yunnan, Guizhou, and Sichuan. This myth tells a story about the origin of mankind and the flood. The general idea is that a long time ago, there was a great flood in human society that destroyed human life, and only two siblings survived. In order for the human race to continue to thrive, the brother and sister were forced to marry and become the originators of the human race. They eventually gave birth to the first generation of human beings through various hardships and difficulties, thus enabling the human race to flourish and re-establish a new society.

The Yi, the minority group involved in this study, has been living in China's Yunnan, Sichuan, and Guizhou provinces since ancient times, with a small number of Yi in Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand. A small number of Guiding books and ancient Yi scripts remain in some of these places. The Yi people in China mainly originated from the ancient Qiang people who lived in western China and formed the today's Yi

nationality after continuous differentiation and fusion with the outside world in the course of historical changes.

The "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth is a very representative type of ancient myth in China. Mr. Wen Yiduo (D. B. Sun & Wen, 1993), a famous poet in modern China, once called it "the story of the flood survivors recreating mankind with the type of brother and sister spouses", and for the first time put forward the "Combination of the two into one", that is to say, he believed that this type of myth is a combination of the flood myth and the myth of the origin of mankind in two different eras with different connotations. In other words, it is believed that this type of myth is a combination of the flood myth and the human origin myth, two myths of different times and different connotations, which in fact also emphasizes that the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is a typical developmental composite myth. In the Kaiyuan Yi area of Yunnan Province, this mythological type is regarded as a symbol of the origin of Yi ancestors and Yi culture, expressing the Yi people's respect for life and reverence for nature, and has become an important part of the traditional culture and national spirituality of the Yi people in the area, providing the people of Kaiyuan Yi with a sense of national identity and cultural belonging.

Southwest China's ethnic minority regions are recognized as the world's most densely populated area for the "brother-sister-marriage after the flood" myths, and Yunnan University began research on such myths as early as the 1930s and 1940s, with research on the myths of Yunnan's nationalities as one of its main areas of focus. However, since the belief in the originator of brother and sister (the originator of human regeneration) has long since been withdrawn from people's spiritual ancestor belief systems in many parts of the world, the research on the myths of brother-sister marriage among the nationalities in Yunnan has not actually made any significant progress for a long time. Among the fifty-six ethnic groups in China, the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Yi are extremely rich and unique, and almost all of them are related to the national primitive belief in the originator of human regeneration, which is a rare situation. On December 10, 2007, Mr. Li Zixian, a famous Chinese mythological

expert and professor of Yunnan University, when going to Laole Village, Xiaolongtan Township, Kaiyuan City, Yunnan Province, for research, was surprised to find that a Human Ancestors Temple dependent on the living myth of the local Yi people's flood-type brother-sister marriage had survived, which may be the only surviving Human Ancestors Temple of a flood survivor brother-sister marriage in a minority area of southwestern China. The discovery of this Yi Human Ancestors Temple provides important evidence for the in-depth study of the connection between the flood motif, the brother-sister marriage motif (including the theme of the birth of a freak after the marriage), the belief in the national ancestor, and the national aesthetics in the mythological system of the nationalities in Yunnan, especially the Yi. From August 21–27, 2010, Myths of Brother-Sister Marriage and Beliefs Folklore: The International Symposium on the Investigation and Research of the Human Ancestors Temple of the Yi People in Kaiyuan City, Yunnan Province, was held at Yunnan University and in Kaiyuan City, Yunnan Province. This The International Symposium was co-organized by the Department of Chinese of the School of Humanities of Yunnan University, the Municipal Party Committee and Municipal Government of Kaiyuan City, the Institute of Ethnic Literature Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Asian Ethnic Culture Society of Japan. Through the collection and organization of the Yunnan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and their related materials, it is concluded that the order of the narrative elements of these myths is roughly as follows: the time of the flood; the cause of the flood; the flood preview; water-avoidance tools; flood survivors; survivors' marriages; pre-marital divinations or tests; the birth of a strange fetus; and the reproduction of human beings(Wang, 2007).Of course, although the main plots of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths are more or less the same and have a more stable structure in different Yi settlements, specific narrative elements may be added or subtracted, for example, "the origin of the grain seed" and "the Duoyi fruit tree saves mankind", and so on. In order to study the aesthetic and cultural values of Yi myths in Yunnan Dian culture, we should first define the temporal and spatial boundaries of the overall cultural form of Dian culture, analyze and explore the cultural

characteristics of Dian culture and its influence on the cultural context of Yi myths; Secondly, we will conduct a comparative study of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and the corresponding national cultural activities in four villages in Kaiyuan (Beige village, Zongshe village, Pipo village and Laole village) to explore the aesthetic and cultural differences in the myths and to analyze the socio-historical and cultural background reasons for the differences.

The influence of Dian culture on the cultural context of the Yi myths in Kaiyuan

In the numerous and complicated cultural heritage of Dian (Yunnan) culture, the mythological art of nationalities occupies a significant position. Here, numerous identical or similar mythological motifs and related ethnic folk beliefs have survived, allowing Yunnan, a mythical kingdom that has not yet completely collapsed, to present a more colorful and distinctive cultural picture. In particular, the living myths that still survive in the lives of civil society all contain the infinite imagination, creativity, and cohesion of the ancestors of nationalities. As we all know, there is no such thing as a cultural form that transcends time and space, and if we want to discuss a cultural form, we must base ourselves on its spatial and historical boundaries. Yunnan Province, abbreviated as "Yun" or "Dian," is located in southwestern China and is one of the provinces with the longest borders in the country, with eight states (cities) bordering Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam, respectively. Yunnan is the province with the largest number of hereditary ethnic minorities (in China), the largest number of cross-border ethnic groups, the largest number of endemic ethnic groups, the largest number of ethnic groups with small populations, and the largest number of autonomous localities and ethnic groups practicing regional ethnic autonomy in China. Data from the seventh national census published on the Yunnan Provincial People's Government website in 2024 showed that of the province's 46,730,000 people, the Han Chinese population was 31,573,000 people, accounting for 66.88 percent of the total population, and the population of ethnic minorities (in China) was 15,636,000 people, accounting for 33.12 percent of the total population. There are six ethnic minorities (in China) with more than

1 million people in the province, of which the Yi ethnic group has the largest population, accounting for 32.43 percent of the ethnic minority population (People's Government of Yunnan Province, 2024). Soil and water to support one party people, party folk customs and influenced by one person goes the saying. The Yunnan Plateau is not only one of the places of origin of ancient mankind, but also a place where regional cultures have been created from a very early age. The "Ancient Dian Bronze Culture" comprises over 2,700 years of history, strong artistic realism, and high artistic value. It also includes the sun-patterned bronze drums of Wanjiaba, Chuxiong, which are considered the world's first bronze drums; the Cuan culture of Panjiang river basin, which represents the middle ancient civilization of Yunnan, which emerged later; and the culture of Nanzhao-Dali Kingdom, which was formed in the Erhai Lake area and developed to a high degree. Each of these cultures is highly distinctive in terms of regional and ethnic characteristics. Dian culture, however, is a difficult cultural category to define; it can neither be defined simply as the culture of China's Yunnan Province nor can it be roughly equated with the culture of the mysterious Ancient Dian, as recorded in Sima Qian's "Records of the Grand Historian," nor, of course, can it be hurriedly confined to the culture of the historically renowned state of Nanzhao-Dali. Throughout history, the overall natural geography of Yunnan has not changed significantly, and the activities of many ethnic groups and tribes on this ancient continent have not been interrupted in their migration, reproduction, or creation of livelihoods. Furthermore, Yunnan has long existed on the edge of China's political and cultural landscape. Therefore, the Dian culture in this paper can be roughly equated with the culture created and integrated by various ethnic groups on the Red Earth Plateau in today's Yunnan Province. Therefore, the Dian culture in this paper can be roughly equated with the culture created and integrated by various ethnic groups on the Red Earth Plateau in today's Yunnan Province (W. X. Zhang, 1999). In addition, we need to explore the cultural characteristics of Dian culture. In this study, the characteristics of Dian culture are summarized into three aspects: plurality, primitiveness, and marginality, and with this as the basis, we analyze the important influence of Dian culture on the myths of the nationalities in

Yunnan, especially on the birth, development, and transmission of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in the Kaiyuan Yi area.

The pluralistic character of Dian culture is mainly reflected in the fact that Dian culture itself is a pluralistic structure, both from a macroscopic point of view and from a microscopic point of view. From the ancient Dian culture to the Cuan culture to the Nanzhao Dali culture, as well as the Ming and Qing dynasties after the invasion and integration of Han culture, Dian culture and the Chinese Central Plains since the pre-Qin period have gradually formed a clearer and clearer cultural tradition that has made a great difference. From the perspective of inheritance, it is easy to see that the development of Yunnan culture has a certain degree of continuity, but the heterogeneity of the characteristics is more prominent. No matter in which historical period, in addition to the dominant culture, Yunnan culture coexisted with many different cultural factors. For example, Kaiyuan City in Yunnan Province is a county-level city with multi-ethnicity, multi-religion, and multi-cultural intermingling, with Yanshan and Qiubei in the east, Mengzi and Gejiu in the south, Jianshui in the west, and Mile in the north. It is also the transportation hub and center of Southeast Yunnan Province. It belongs to the scope of ancient Wanding country in Xia, Shang, and Zhou, was established as an Ami state in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, and was renamed Kaiyuan in 1931 with the meaning of "stretching out in all directions." There are 33 ethnic minorities in the city of Kaiyuan, and the population of ethnic minorities accounts for 59.4% of the city's total population. The culture of Kaiyuan is mixed with the cultural factors of different ethnic groups, and the phenomenon of mutual influence and integration abounds. Since the Ming Dynasty, Kaiyuan has been one of the important settlements of the Yi ethnic group. For more than 600 years, the exchanges and interactions between the Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan and other neighboring ethnic groups, especially the folk cultures, religious beliefs, and living customs of the Han ethnic group, have been quite deep and wide. It can be said that in the gradual process of mutual influence and integration, the cultural pattern of the various ethnic groups in the Kaiyuan area has gradually formed the overall characteristics of the pluralistic integration of their cultures. From the micro-level

analysis of culture, the overall pattern of "large and small communities" and the continuous infiltration and integration of foreign cultures have formed a diversified situation in Yunnan's cultural composition. In terms of aesthetic thinking and national beliefs, the Kaiyuan Yi are also more or less influenced by Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism to varying degrees and tend to incorporate them into their own culture in an eclectic manner, from the symbols to the concepts. In some Yi areas, there is also Han-shaped temple architecture and art and many religious activities and rituals in the form of temple fairs centered on temples. Nevertheless, the Kaiyuan Yi people have been trying to maintain and pass on their own beliefs in their founding fathers and traditional cultures, and the most prominent manifestation of this is the "living myths" that continue to be passed on to the Yi people. The most prominent manifestation of this is the Yi "Human Ancestors Temple" in Laole Village, which continues to pass on the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and the artistic materialization of this myth.

In addition, different natural geographic environments and modes of life and production have also had a significant impact on the inheritance of the myths of the Kaiyuan Yi. In terms of material production and science and technology, the importation of new production tools, the development of modern farming, and the dissemination of tobacco planting technology have all injected new factors into the culture of the Kaiyuan Yi. Taking the myth of the brother-sister marriage of the Kaiyuan Yi as an example, it is mainly distributed in the cultural circle of the native nationalities in the alpine mountains in the eastern part of Kaiyuan and the cultural circle of the Yi and Han intermingling in the remote areas in the northwestern part of the area, which is in line with the culture of the region. The remote areas in the northwest show the variability and intermingling of traditional Yi culture, where a mythological and cultural picture of interaction between Yi and Han cultures and the obvious influence of foreign civilizations is presented. The far eastern alpine mountainous groups show the originality and extension of the traditional Yi culture, inheriting more primitive religious beliefs and spiritual values, so the myths are inherited on the basis of the more traditional mountainous dry farming economy, and once this economic pattern changes, the form of the myths' inheritance and the chain of

inheritance will be broken. Even in the Yi settlements in the Greater and Lesser Liangshan Mountains of Sichuan Province and Ninglang of Yunnan Province, where the traditional culture of the Yi people has been preserved in a more systematic and complete manner, most of them have inherited the more ancient and profound native mythology of "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" of the Yi people (the ancestor of the marriage between gods and humans) rather than the myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" (the ancestor of the regeneration of mankind). which is a result of the influence of the primitive characteristics of the Dian culture.

The primitiveness of the Dian culture is mainly reflected in the traces of more obvious primitive cultural forms that remain. The pace of social development in Yunnan Province is relatively slow. The productivity of many nationalities is still relatively weak, and the socio-economy still remains in the hunting-gathering-oriented stage or the primitive farming (hoeing and digging)-animal husbandry-oriented stage. In terms of marriage and family structure, the Mosuo of Yongning in Yunnan Province has always preserved the more primitive pairing marriage system, the Azhu marriage. The "Azhu marriage" is a traditional walking marriage custom practiced by the Mosuo people residing near Lugu Lake, which entails a "no marriage, no divorce" practice where men and women do not marry. The Mosuo people refer to this type of marriage as "Axia marriage" ("Axia" meaning intimate couple). The brother-sister marriage myth circulated by the Kaiyuan Yi can also be traced back to primitive society's blood marriage family structure; blood marriage was the first form of marriage in human society. The development of human society has had a profound impact on the development of human society and is an important way for early mankind to solve the problem of survival and reproduction. In addition, the Yi area of Kaiyuan Beige Village (Beige Township) is still popular in the traditional Yi Pula language, preserving more complete original folk customs. "It is worth noting that there are still a large number of Beima (priests of the Yi ethnic group, southern Yunnan Yi people often called "Beima", Sichuan Liangshan and northeast Yunnan, central Yunnan, western Yunnan generally called "Bimo"), who still enjoy a special status in the area."(Wang, 2011). They are responsible

for conducting local primitive religious ceremonies, such as ancestor and dragon sacrifices, etc. They recite scriptures and tell myths, and they are the most important inheritors and preservers of Yi mythological culture and art. At the same time, the primitive characteristics of Dian culture are also reflected in the local atmosphere permeated in the culture, that is, the large group (ethnic) culture with regional characteristics will still occupy the mainstream position in the local, even though the influence factors of Han culture and other surrounding ethnic cultures have been strongly invaded for a long time. In the Kaiyuan Yi area, the process of passing down the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood", it also incorporates the Yi people's simple ethical values of truth, goodness, and ugliness, as well as their emotions and ideals for the pursuit of a better life. Through the corresponding folk culture ritual activities, the continuation of the myth is also accompanied by the continuation of the traditional Yi arts, such as music, dances, and costumes, which also carry elements of the Yi Aesthetics, belief in the ancestor, and national spirit.

Another characteristic of Dian culture is its marginality. As the king of Nanzhao, Yi Mouxun, said, "The land is low and inhabited by various ethnic groups. Their customs and rituals differ, and they are isolated from the central Chinese culture, cutting off the transmission of knowledge and teachings." (Fan, n.d.). It is very obvious to show a kind of Yunnan region typical of the marginal mentality of the nation; it is a set of inferiority and pride as one of the contradictory complexes. This marginal mentality of Dian culture mainly originates from two aspects: "From the perspective of the cultural circle, Dian culture is at the edge of the convergence of Han culture, Indian culture, and Southeast Asian culture; from the perspective of the political pattern, Yunnan has been located at the edge of the rule of the Central Plains dynasty for thousands of years. This marginal situation has resulted in the openness and diversity of Dian culture but also caused the attenuation of the spread and penetration of the culture of the Central Plains, so that the Dian culture has absorbed a large number of cultural factors but still retains a certain degree of closure and has failed to dissolve completely into the Han culture." (W. X. Zhang, 1992). Facing the strong invasion of foreign culture with Han culture as the

core, the Yunnan minority inevitably produced great psychological pressure. In addition, in the historical development of the Yunnan minority, the difference and imbalance of civilizational development also existed for a long time. Even the same ethnic group will still be affected by the different living and production environments and present a very different development situation. Relatively small and weak ethnic groups may have an inferiority complex of being remote and backward when creating myths, but the survival consciousness of the ethnic group requires the ethnic group to promote self-identity to balance the inferiority complex. Coupled with the objective geographic and cultural factors of transportation difficulties and information isolation in Yunnan, the creators of Dian culture have developed a sense of self-identity of the marginalized and the homogeneous mentality of the ethnic group that advocates harmony. These aesthetic values and marginality thinking patterns are usually reflected in the myths of Yunnan's ethnic groups about ethnic homology and the birth of mankind. For example, in a "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth of Yi nationality in Kaiyuan Beige Village, the plot of brother and sister giving birth to offspring after marriage is described in this way: "After the marriage of the two were born one after another small children, the first one is called Age, and later became Han; the second small child is called Amei, and later became a Miao; the third small child is called Ah, and later became a Pula(Yi); the fourth small child is called Aze, and later became the Baoluo; the fifth small child called Axian, later became Tulao (Zhuang); the sixth small child called Afei, later became a Hui". In the myth, the Yi did not put themselves in the role of the oldest (first child or authentic direct descendant), nor did they regard other ethnic groups as alien, but ranked the Yi as the third oldest among their siblings, preceded by their elder brother, the Han, and their second brother, the Miao, respectively. This marginal cultural mentality and ethnic harmonious atmosphere, in addition to the myth itself, is also reflected in the creation of myth and art in Dian culture which are also restricted by material and technical conditions. Whether it is the world-famous Dian culture of bronze art, colorful architectural art, or nationalities in a variety of clothing patterns, roughly all

present a certain potential consistency—not to the strong and majestic, not to the gorgeous and elaborate for the first time! and tend to be small, simple, and ancient.

The Influence of Yi Aesthetics on the Production of Kaiyuan Yi Myths

Myth, as a comprehensive ideology in the primitive society of mankind, is the source of mankind's primitive beliefs, which contain the spiritual roots of the nation and the germ of its consciousness, and it is the necessary way to find the roots of each nation's culture. If the most central and fundamental part of a culture is the language-thinking mode, then the aesthetic mode of a culture is the most sublimated and revealing part of that culture. It can be said that what kind of culture has what kind of aesthetics, and the aesthetic essence is to show the profound connotation of culture in the form of a clear appearance. The creation of the aesthetic culture of nationalities in Dian culture cannot be separated from the construction of Dian aesthetics. Each nation's aesthetics has its own unique cultural connotation and expression form. In aesthetic thinking, mythic thinking is its initial form of "metadiscourse.". Mythological thinking belongs to a way of thinking before the development of scientific and rational human thinking matured and retains many features of primitive thinking. It can be seen from many anthropological data points that mythological thinking, as a form of primitive human thinking, directly reflects the social characteristics of the mythological era. Among the various forms of human thinking, mythological thinking has the closest relationship with aesthetic thinking, and primitive-mythological thinking directly nurtures the occurrence of aesthetic consciousness (W. X. Zhang, 1999).Until today, the aesthetics of Yunnan's nationalities still retains more traces of primitive mythological thinking, and the practical value orientation of their aesthetic concepts is a reflection of the hard living environment and strong survival consciousness of the ethnic groups. At the same time, it also incorporates their simple ethical values of truth, goodness, ugliness, and evil, as well as their aspirations for a better life.

Men and the world have established an aesthetic relationship on top of the practical and cognitive relationship, and this aesthetic relationship has become

increasingly important in the social life of mankind, especially in the spiritual life, and contains deeper and broader contents. It can be said that the pleasure that human beings get from the practice of production labor in primitive society contains the primary form of aesthetics. The birth of myths undoubtedly contributed to the full development and rapid growth of human aesthetic consciousness, and the myths of a nation must have profoundly influenced their aesthetic perception, aesthetic outlook, and aesthetic way of life. Anthropologist Franz Boas mentioned in his book "Primitive Art" that "all human activities can have aesthetic value through some form of activity," and it is also mentioned in the book that the determined form and people's conception of beauty are the closest. The ancient myths of nationalities and their related ritual activities, including materialized products, belong to the so-called earliest form of determination. In their long history, the Kaiyuan Yi have created their own traditional culture and national aesthetics in their own specific natural and social habitats. In Kaiyuan's various Yi regions, different natural environments and social practices have not only shaped the distinctive national thinking patterns of the Yi ethnic groups in different Yi regions but also influenced the various psychological activities of an ethnic group, including aesthetic activities. In the process of inheritance, Yi myths also incorporate the simple ethical values and emotional ideals of Yi people in different Yi areas. The continuation of the myths is also accompanied by the continuation of the colorful Yi traditional arts, such as music, dances, and costumes, which also reflect the heavy Yi Aesthetics, the beliefs of their founding fathers, and the national spirit.

The core aesthetic tone of Yunnan's national myths is legend, not tragedy. The Yi creation myths, if told from the beginning of heaven and earth, tend to be mixed with the history of civilization and the development of the nation and eventually evolve into a synthesis of divine and human creation, ending in a harmonious and happy ending, which we can see not only from the more famous Yi myths "Meige" and "Axi's Xianji" (Xianji is the language of the Yi Asi people, meaning "song", and is the general name for the poems and tunes of this work), but also even from the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the different Yi districts in Kaiyuan. "The origin of the

flood; brother and sister of the survivors; divination or difficulties before marriage of brother and sister; multiply the human race - create life" is the main format of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth in Kaiyuan Yi Area. This narrative structure blends the aesthetics of the Yi nationality and expresses the basic value orientation and aesthetic ideal of Dian culture, which is not only the affirmation of the Yi people's creative work but also the identification of the existing way of life. For example, as depicted in the story of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth of the Yi ethnic group in Laole Village, Kaiyuan, "it is said that the people of that dynasty in ancient times did not respect heaven and earth when they had better days, and they used flour flatbread for diapers. The God of Heaven was so angry that he sent a flood and drowned the people of that dynasty." "After the flood receded, the two surviving siblings were lonely, so they decided to go to different places to look for someone. After three months of searching, the two siblings met again but found no one. At this time, the egret that saved them said to them, 'There are no people in the world. If we want to repopulate the human race, only you two siblings quickly get married'. Both my brother and sister were against it. Under the egret's guidance, the two siblings finally got married after going through the marriage ceremony of rolling a millstone and dustpan on the mountain and threading a needle on the other side of the river, etc.", "When the children grew up, the two siblings taught the children to learn how to build a house, learn how to use a fire, learn how to plant grains and learn how to raise livestock, and from then on, the world's population became more and more prosperous!" (Cao, 2007). In addition, from the point of view of aesthetic imagery, the universal archetype of Yunnan minority myths is the close connection between human beings and the natural world, and various images of the natural world occupy an exceptionally important position in the myths. As Engels said, the plots and characters easily seen in myths are "assimilating the forces of nature by means of personification. "People are convinced that they are descended from or have kinship to certain natural objects, or that these natural objects played a key role in the process of creation and human reproduction, such as the myth of the Yi people in Liangshan, Sichuan Province: "The white stone is my mother, the green pine is my

father," and the myth of the Xiaoliangshan Yi people in Yuanmou, Chuxiong: "Man comes from the stone,"(Wang, 2009). as well as the Kaiyuan Yi myth mentioned in the dog for humans to bring the grain seed, when the flood broke out, the remnants of the two siblings by the Duoyi fruit tree, sharp knife grass and egrets, and other plants and animals to save the plot, and so on. These natural images not only show the relationship between man and nature; they embody a certain ethnic origin and also have a strong color in the local scenery and objects. From totems and animistic spirits to mentors and friends, nature and the Kaiyuan Yi have formed a deep bond of affection and connection, which has been deposited in the depths of their consciousness as aesthetic archetypal imagery. Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1930) mentioned in "Primitive Mentality": "Primitive people see with the same eyes as ours, but think with a different consciousness than ours."(Lévy-Bruhl, 1981) Without exception, all kinds of archetypal images in the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi people show visual intuition, fuzzy, chaotic, good at marvelous imaginations and vivid metaphors, but lack of logical reasoning and abstract thinking, which are invariably revealed in the mountain songs, architecture, dances, costumes, and paintings of the Kaiyuan Yi people, so that these artistic creations are full of pure, simple, and natural mountain winds. This is a basic feature of the aesthetic way of thinking of the nationalities in Dian culture. For the civilized age, the myth of brother and sister marrying and reproducing their offspring is indeed against the norms of morality, but the myth itself reflects the attitude of the Yi forefathers towards the origin of mankind and is a reflection of the ancient society of the Yi people, which had gone through the stage of blood marriages. The survival techniques and knowledge involved in the myths are not realized through logical thinking, such as cultural transmission, but through aesthetics and are passed on through an aesthetic cultural exchange. For the Kaiyuan Yi, aesthetics not only plays a role in spreading and preserving traditional culture in social life, but also influences the construction of ethnic traditional culture in many ways.

A Comparative Study of Living Myths of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" of the Yi Ethnic Group in Kaiyuan City from a Socio-Cultural Perspective

Kaiyuan City in Yunnan Province has been a place where many ethnic groups gather since ancient times. The Kaiyuan Yi people are industrious, courageous, kind, and simple, and in their long history, the Yi people have transformed nature and society, which has vigorously pushed forward the process of Kaiyuan's history and civilization. As early as in the Neolithic Age, the Yi people began to create regional ethnic culture and thus formed the Kaiyuan Yi ethnic group, "archaeological discoveries show that, in the late Neolithic Age, In ancient China, Di Qiang, Bai Yue and Bai Pu, three primitive ethnic groups, all lived in the Kaiyuan region and had mixed living", "In 2011, Xiaolongtan discovered four cliff paintings in Hongshiyuan, Xiao Hongshiyuan, and Pianqing Cave, which were initially deduced to be primitive art in the late Neolithic period about 3,000 years ago. The cliff paintings were characterized by the culture of the Di Qiang ethnic group and showed mythological themes about the origin of mankind. They are in the same vein as the local Yi oral myth."(Kaiyuan Party History and Local History Office, Kaiyuan Yi Research Society, 2017). Since the Ming and Qing dynasties, with the immigration of Han Chinese into Yunnan and the spread of Han culture, the Yi and Han cultures have coexisted, exchanged, and mingled over a long period of time, contributing to the cultural transformation of the Yi themselves to a greater extent. This multiculturalism was established on the basis of a two-way structure of mutual cultural identity between the Yi and Han: the ethnicity of the Han can be transformed into the Yi, and the Yi can trace the Han back to their ancestors. The Yi in the Kaiyuan dam area and semi-mountainous areas have gradually integrated with the Han in terms of language, art, rituals, economy, culture, religion, festivals, etc., which is an example of the rounding of Yi and Han cultures. Prof. Li Zixian of Yunnan University has pointed out many times that "in the minority areas of Southwest China, there are two systematic mythological circles that are both connected and differentiated, i.e., the mythological circle of god-human marriage and the mythological circle of brother-sister marriage."(Li, 1986). In recent years, the author has gone to Kaiyuan City Yi District in Yunnan Province several times to carry out relevant field investigations. Although the

population of the three branches of the Yi nationality in Kaiyuan City Yi District (namely, Pula, Nisu, and Azhe) is less than 100,000 people (Working Group of Yi Ethnic Minority Settlement Area Special Construction in Kaiyuan, 2008), the typical myth of "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" and the myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" coexist here. This shows that in the multi-cultural development of Kaiyuan history, the inheritance of Yi Original myths not only retains its own archetypes but also realizes some kind of amalgamation and superposition according to the change of environment and cultural psychology, which is not to be underestimated, but also the cultural convergence and fusion originated in ancient times. Afterwards, the author planned to conduct a comparative study of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth system of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City. The investigation mainly focused on the village of Beige in Beige Township, the village of Zongshe in Yangjie Township, the village of Pipo in Zhongheying Township, and the village of Laole in Xiaolongtan Township.

Beige belongs to the eastern part of Kaiyuan City, Honghe Prefecture, Yunnan Province, where the mountains are soaring and stretching, and the transportation is inconvenient, but the old bird road passes through here, and the alpine azaleas bloom here. The Yi Pula language "Beige" means "the place where the rockymountains are a little bit past.". The total population of Beige Area is nearly 1,500 people, of which the Yi (Pula) account for about 94%. According to historical records, the Pula is the seedling Miao descendant of the ancient Gu Pu Na Jiu Long. The township has 41 natural villages, of which 38 are Yi villages, which belong to the typical Yi settlement area. The Yi Pula tribe has been living in the alpine mountainous area of Beige for a long time, Due to the small mobile population, rarely affected by external influences, Beige has always maintained a strong traditional cultural atmosphere, and most of the natural villages have preserved the original cultural heritage of the Yi Pula people to a large extent. In 2009, the Beige Yi (Pula Branches) Traditional Cultural Reserve was listed as a provincial intangible heritage protection list, is the only provincial intangible heritage list protection project of the Kaiyuan, and is one of the three whole township-based protected areas in Yunnan Province. Myths still have a

great charm for the Pula people in Beige. Not only are many elderly people familiar with the myths of their own people, but there are also a large number of Beima who enjoy a special status in the local area, in charge of presiding over a variety of primitive religious and sacrificial ceremonies, chanting or telling a large number of creation myths, human origin myths, genealogical myths, "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths, etc., is an important inheritor and preserver of the Yi myths, the locals say: "The government is not to be approached, and the Beima should not be far away", where the rather characteristic "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth is inherited: because the people on earth stole the Heavenly Emperor's horse (disrespecting the gods, bad hearts, and obtaining items from the heavenly deities are common themes in the myths of the Dian culture minorities), Caused the flood, and only two siblings survived The siblings were reluctant to marry, but eventually, after the guidance and testing of the sky god (an introspection on the primitive blood marriage family structure), brother and sister married, reproduced, created, and lived. In the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth of Beige, the plot is more complete and complex than that of the Flood Myth of Laole Village in Kaiyuan City, and in other Yi villages in Beige Area, there are also some different texts with different narrative contents. Even in the village of Jiaji in Beige Township, there is still a more primitive myth of "god-human marriage after the flood," and in the four branches of the Kaiyuan Yi people, only the Pula people of Beige have passed down the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood", at the same time, they also tell the story of the "god-human marriage after the flood." As a kind of living myth, it is inevitable that it will continue to constantly expand and change in folklore during the historical process of inheritance. The preaching of these myths about "gods" and the awareness of the existence of "gods" in their lives have largely influenced the daily beliefs of the local people and have been influenced and colored by the cultural context, reflecting the culture and ecological environment of the region.



Figure 1 Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan Beige Village

Source: Voices in Yunnan (SOHU). (2021). Quoted in WeChat Share (Beautiful Kaiyuan). https://www.sohu.com/a/499779431_120102830.

Zongshe Village, which belongs to Kaiyuan City, Yangjie Township, east of Masang Village, south of Mengzi County, Xibaile Township, west of Yangliu Village, and north of Beige Township, is a traditional village of the Pula people, a branch of the Yi ethnic group. The village population is nearly 3,000 people of the Yi people; the other ethnic groups have more than 380 people. Zongshe Village Pula people speak Yi and Han, women like to wear Yi clothing, and home enshrines "ancestor wood carving", i.e., ancestral spirit plates. The local Yi language called "Nashetang", used to enshrine ancestors, is a symbol of ancestors. "The village no longer has a Beima. Villagers said the brother and sister gave up the iron barrel and hid in a wooden barrel during the flooding. The wooden barrel touched the sky, knowing that the people on the ground were dead. They put an iron bar down and poked it into the ground and made several holes, so there were five or six drop holes in this place. The wooden barrel landed on the Duoyi fruit tree so that the two siblings did not fall into the holes, and from then on, the Duoyi fruit tree has become a symbol of ancestors." (Li & Feng, 2011). The "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth of Zongshe Village has lost its integrity and specific details in the process of inheritance due to the influence of foreign factors, especially the strong invasion of Han culture, but the influence of the myth has not disappeared. Here,

the Yi people associate the worship of ancestor spirits with the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood," and regard the Duoyi fruit tree as an the ancestor, and they make the "Ancestor Spirit Woodcarving" for enshrinement, integrating myths with the folk beliefs of the nation. This situation is also reflected in other Yi areas in Kaiyuan, which is also an important feature of the living myth.



Figure 2 Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan Zongshe Village

Source: Voices in Yunnan (SOHU). (2021). Quoted in WeChat Share (Beautiful Kaiyuan). https://www.sohu.com/a/499779431_120102830.

Zhongheying is the eastern gate of Kaiyuan City in Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture, as well as the eastern gate of Honghe Prefecture. Pipo Village in Zhongheying Town used to be a place where horse gangs and merchants gathered, and it is located in the depths of the Dahei Foothills of the East Mountain, where Zhongheying Township, Beige Township, and Dazhuang Township converge. The name "Pipo Village" comes from the Yi word "a stockade surrounded by stones." As an important ancient post station, this place was once noisy and bustling, and many cultures once collided and exchanged here. The nationalities with more than 1,000 people in the population statistics of Zhongheying Township are mainly the three ethnic groups, namely, Yi, Miao, and Zhuang, of which Among them, the Yi ethnic group has a population of nearly 20,000, accounting for more than 60% of the minority population, most of them are the Luoluo of the Yi ethnic group, and their language is widely used in

daily life. In Pipo Village, In Pipo Village, there also used to be the only script inheritor in the Kaiyuan area who was familiar with the Yi script, Li Caibao. As a representative of the intangible cultural heritage of the Red River State, he used his own efforts to pass on the traditional culture of the Yi people and the origins of the Yi people in Pipo Village. The villagers of Pipo Village maintain their primitive religious beliefs, and the inheritance of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is also very characteristic of originality. Along with it, there is also the worship of the ancestral spirits associated with the myth, and in the continuous development and change of the myths and nationalities, the Yi people of Pipo Village injected the blood of nationality into their production and life, folklore rituals, and other activities, and formed a set of rules for the integration of myths and real life. The myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Pipo Village is described as follows: "In ancient times, a flood occurred once every 60 years. The poor people made wooden barrels to hide, and the rich people made gold and silver barrels to hide. When the flood came, the barrel was blocked by a tree. The poor people climbed out to see the barrel was hanging on the edge of the cliff and then moved to fall off the cliff. At this time, the eagle flew over, and the poor man was placed on a clump of Daojian grass. From then on, the poor man will call that life-saving tree the ancestor tree. To this day, when a member of the clan dies, he or she has to cut down a piece of the ancestor tree to make an ancestral spirit. Split the tree, the east side of the front side of the carving, and the west side of the back; carve out the head, neck, and machine grass to wrap the head; use gold bamboo roots to do the heart; use nine male and seven female sections; and hang in the ancestor tree. The Daojian grass under the ancestor tree has to be picked to use when worshipping(Cao, 2011). Due to the differences in geo-culture, the Yi areas in Kaiyuan have different historical development and different degrees of mutual influence and communication with Han and Confucian cultures or other ethnic cultures, forming a pattern of cultural commonality and cultural differences among the Yi people in each settlement area. The myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Pipo Village is intertwined with the primitive beliefs of the ancestral spirits and other original elements. Prof. Li Zixian and Mr. Cao Ding'an, the

former director of the Cultural Relics Management Institute of Kaiyuan City, have said that the myths here are of an original nature and have been inherited in a subtle way.



Figure 3 Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan Pipo Village

Source: Cai,W.L.(2021). The official microblogging of the headline of culture and tourism- Kaiyuan Culture and Tourism. <http://www.wenlvnews.com/p/596039.html>.

Laole Village belongs to Kaiyuan City, Xiaolongtan Office of Zejiu Administrative Village, and belongs to the semi-mountainous areas. The village has 45 households, with a total population of less than 200 people. In addition to a few Han Chinese households, more than 90% are Yi. The Yi people in the village belong to the Gaisu branch and call themselves Gaisupo and Luoluopo. Its ancestors can be traced back to the Western Han period of the Aning barbarians, to the Tang and Song dynasties, belonging to the Wu barbarians "thirty-seven parts" of the Quzhong parts. Until the Ming Dynasty, here has been the implementation of the Tusi system: After the Ming Dynasty, the Han immigrants and the Han Chinese culture began to incorporate, one after another, the multicultural coexistence of the mixed state of ethnic minorities (in China) and Han Chinese, and it is this kind of ethnic cultural intermingling that finally gave birth to the crystallization of the material culture of Laole Village folk beliefs—the Human Ancestors Temple—which made Laole Village a village full of "sacredness" in the minds of the Yi people. According to Mr. Cao Ding'an's investigation, the story of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth circulating in Laole Village is as follows: In

ancient times, the people of that dynasty did not respect heaven and earth, which angered the God of Heaven and then flooded and drowned them. After the disaster, two siblings were helped by a white heron (another theory is that the two siblings were holding a piece of wood) to escape the catastrophe. However, the two siblings felt very lonely, so they decided to go to different places to look for people, and after three months of searching, they did not find anyone. At this time, the egret that saved them began to persuade the two siblings to get married quickly and reproduce, which was strongly opposed by the two siblings. Eventually, with the help of the egret, the two siblings went through the marriage rituals of rolling a millstone on a hill, rolling a dustpan, and threading a needle on the other side of the river, and gave birth to a freakish ball of meat. The elder brother cut the meatball into a hundred pieces and hung them on branches and stones, and the next day they became 50 men and 50 women, and the world began to bustle with activity. The siblings were so happy that, in order to distinguish them, they gave them surnames. Hanging on the plum tree, surnamed Li; hanging on the cypress tree, surnamed Bai; stretching on the stone, surnamed stone; hanging on the horn of the ox, surnamed Niu...So a hundred sons and daughters have a hundred surnames; that's where the hundred surnames come from. As the children grew up, the two siblings taught them how to build houses, learn how to use fire, grow grains, and raise livestock. From then on, the human world became more and more prosperous, and the two siblings became "the first ancestors of mankind." The Laole Village Human Ancestors Temple, which was built on the basis of this myth, is perhaps the only surviving "Human Ancestors Temple" in the minority areas of Southwest China, dedicated to the two siblings who survived the flood. It was built in the Qing Dynasty Daoguang years by the local Yi people to commemorate and worship the flood myths that survived in the brother-and-sister marriage to recreate human beings. They built it based on their unique belief culture, they build temples to worship and statues to honor. Every year on the 19th day of the winter month of the lunar calendar, "Sun Ceremony", and the first day of the lunar calendar, the 15th, the second day of the first month of the lunar calendar, the local people will go to the "Human

Ancestors Temple" for worship. Laole village Human Ancestors Temple covers an area of only 20 square meters, reconstructed in recent years, showing a typical Chinese classical architectural style, which is extremely rare in China's southwest region of an ethnic minority living mythological art physical form and multi-cultural value show, since the Ming Dynasty, the Yi, Han primary-level cultural, folk culture sublimation of the rounded and crystallization, but also the branches of the Yi ethnic group in the city of Kaiyuan in the unique and precious artistic and cultural refraction, has an important academic value and practical significance. From the perspective of folk myth and folk belief, the temple is undoubtedly a rare ecological carrier in terms of ethnocultural science and human sociology. In this study, the researcher will also compare and contrast the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and related cultural events carried out by the Human Ancestors Temple of the Huaiyang People in Henan Province, China, and the Human Ancestors Temple of the Yi People in Laole Village, Kaiyuan. In the Huaiyang region of Henan Province, the local myth is that Fuxi and Nuwa, as brothers and sisters, had to marry in order to repopulate the human race after the flood. This cultural phenomenon has a similar legacy in other parts of the Central Plains. In Laole Village in Kaiyuan City, the Human Ancestors Temple Festival is held on the 19th day of the winter month every year, which has basic similarities with the Nuwa and Fuxi temples in the Central Plains. In addition, in Huaiyang and nearby areas of Henan Province, there is a cluster of myths about Fuxi and Nuwa marrying as brother and sister to reproduce human beings after a flood, which is also very similar to the dense distribution of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in the Kaiyuan Yi area. These cultural phenomena show that the myth of brother-sister marriage among the Yi people in Kaiyuan is deeply influenced by the mythic culture and religious beliefs of the Han people in Central China.



Figure 4 Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan Laole Village

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2023), Photographed by the researcher herself.

To sum up, Kaiyuan has been a place of multi-ethnicity since ancient times, with a long history and culture of the Yi people and a deep influence of the Central Plains culture on them. In daily life, production, and folk activities, the mutual identification of Yi and Han folk cultures has reached the realm of blending, and a diversified and blended culture has appeared, including festivals, temples, beliefs and customs, songs and dances, and so on. Ethnic culture is the root and soul of the nation. The ancient creation myth of the Beige Pula people is passed on by means of oral songs, while the Pula people of Zongshe connect the ancestor spirit worship with myths and make "ancestor spirit woodcuts" for worship. The mythology of the Luoluo people in Pipo interwoven with the original elements of ancestral belief, and the Human Ancestors Temple in Laole transformed the oral mythology into idol worship. These are the protective means of Kaiyuan Yi culture's self-growth and rejection of decline. And these means of self-protection and the farming civilization on which it depends for survival, reflecting the true meaning of survival of the fittest. With the development of science and technology and the evolution of human civilization, human beings have gradually stepped out of the childish and clumsy childhood, including many ethnic minority areas in Yunnan Province, and have also stepped into the "post-mythical era." People's worship of myths and deities has obviously weakened, and the era of myths has been declared to have come to an end in many civilizations in the world. The logic of market

and capital began to transform this ancient yellow land in an omnipotent way; money began to become the only standard for weighing the value and meaning of everything; consumerism through the bombardment of advertisements seemed to level the traditional virtues of thrift and simplicity; and the traditional concept of 'unity between man and nature' was replaced by the concept of 'enemy of nature', resulting in the self-inheritance of the traditional culture and its preservation encountering an insurmountable obstacle(Kaiyuan Party History and Local History Office, Kaiyuan Yi Research Society, 2017). But the spirit of myths has not faded away, and the human beings' passions of exploring the unknown, interpreting the world, understanding the world, and transforming the world have not receded, and the spirit of myths has not faded. The history, religion, philosophy, science, art, and culture of a nation can be traced to its mythological culture, and even the collective unconsciousness accumulated in the myths is deeply embedded in the psychology of the modern nation. In Yunnan, China, the myths of nationalities have not been completely frozen in ancient books and records and sealed in art, but to a large extent have survived in the real life of society. Through comparative study of these still existing Yunnan minority living myth, we can get a glimpse of their rich culture of creation, integration, and inheritance over a long period of time and of their submerged national psychology and unique aesthetic consciousness, which is also an important component of Dian culture that has a long history.

Research Objectives

- (1) To analyze the historical reasons for the formation of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City;
- (2) To comparatively study the similarities and differences in the living myths of Yi "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and their related cultural traditions in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City.

Main research question

- (1) What kind of cultural and ecological contextual foundation did Dian culture lay for the creation of the Kaiyuan Yi myths?

(2) How does Yi Aesthetics influence the creation of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myth among the Kaiyuan Yi?

(3) How to conduct a comparative study of the myths of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" among the Yi in different Yi districts in Kaiyuan City and the myth of Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" among the Han Chinese in Huaiyang, Henan Province, which is based on the myths of Nuwa and Fuxi?

Definition of Terms

Dian Culture

In order to avoid the narrowness and fuzziness of the definition of "Dian culture," the Dian culture discussed in this paper is slightly equivalent to the culture created and integrated by various ethnic groups on the Red Earth Plateau in today's Yunnan Province, which is complex and varied and possesses distinctive cultural qualities such as plurality, primitiveness, localism, and marginality.

Yi Aesthetics

Until today, the aesthetics contained in the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City, Yunnan Province, still retains more traces of primitive mythological thinking, and the practical value orientation of its aesthetic concepts is a reflection of the hard survival environment and the strong sense of survival of the Yi forefathers, while also incorporating their simple ethical values of truth, goodness, ugliness, evil, and the desire for a better life. The survival techniques and knowledge involved in the myths are passed on through aesthetics and an aesthetic-cultural exchange. For the Kaiyuan Yi, aesthetics not only plays a role in spreading and preserving traditional culture in social life, but also influences the construction of traditional ethnic culture in many ways.

The Myth of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood"

As two typical motifs of human origin myths, the myth of brother-sister marriage and the flood myth (the flood myth studied in this article does not include the myth of water control) can be said to be widely distributed among the world's various ethnic civilizations, and each of them has its own complex chain of narrative motifs and corresponding narrative structure. The flood myth shaped the special creation background of the myth of brother-sister marriage, the content of which is nothing more than the extinction of all things after the Great Flood left only two siblings, who went through the trials or instructions of the gods and then reproduced their offspring and created a living. As a typical developmental composite myth, the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of Yi people in different Yi areas of Kaiyuan not only reproduce the early social living environment of human beings, the primitive family marriage structure, but also play a specific explanatory function for the traditional ethical and moral concepts as well as the daily rituals and customs of different ethnic groups and carry rich cultural connotations.

Living Myths

The living myth, in short, is the myth that is not "dead." In this study, it refers to the living myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in the Kaiyuan Yi area, which, as an object of belief of the Yi, exists according to the rituals of sacrificing to heaven and the ancestors of the local Yi and various folk rites and rituals such as funerals, marriages, and other ceremonies. It is a typical primitive form of myth that has sanctity and authority. Up to now, the living myths of the Kaiyuan Yi people still maintain a close and organic connection with the specific social organization structure, production and life style, religious and spiritual beliefs, and cultural traditions and customs.

The Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village

The investigation shows that historically, the Yi area in Kaiyuan City once continued the belief that the two siblings of the flood survivors were regarded as the

originators of mankind, and the corresponding "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths were also widely circulated. The vast majority of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths, especially in China, belonged to the oral myths. In the traditional culture of the Yi ethnic group, there was no ancestral temple and no idol. However, in Laole Village, the local Yi people let this myth survive in the form of art and cultural entities and temple rituals, which is obviously the result of the exchange, interaction, absorption, and integration of the long-established folk beliefs and art and culture of the Yi and Han peoples in Laole Village since the Ming Dynasty. The existence of the Human Ancestors Temple of the Yi people in Kaiyuan Laole Village intuitively sustains the traditional creation myth of an ethnic group, and the cultural and artistic aspects of the myth are also passed down from generation to generation with the help of temple fairs or folk rituals.

Kaiyuan Yi Area

The Kaiyuan Yi area involved in this study mainly refers to the four main Yi gathering places in Kaiyuan City, namely Beige Village in Beige Township, Zongshe Village in Yangjie Township, Pipo Village in Zhongheying Township, and Laole Village in Xiaolongtan Township. These Yi villages, because of their long history, relatively complete mythological material, and strong Beima culture, not only have the only provincial intangible heritage protection list in Kaiyuan-Beige Yi (Pula Branch) Traditional Cultural Reserve, but also have ancient Yi scriptures, a specialized Yi study institute. In addition, there is the only "Human Ancestors Temple", which is dedicated to the two siblings of the flood survivors in Southwest China, and therefore it becomes the main research scope and the main research object of this study.

Main Research Object and Research Scope

Main Research Object

The Yi myths that have been brewed in the diversified cultural atmosphere are the root of the culture of the Yi ethnic groups in Kaiyuan. Therefore, the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and their myth-related folk beliefs and folklore in

Beige Village, Zongshe Village, Pipo Village, and Laole Village (the Human Ancestors Temple), which are the major Yi settlements in Kaiyuan, have become the main scope of this paper and the main object of research.

Geographic Scope

The villages in Kaiyuan City where the Yi ethnic group gathered, of which four villages, namely, Beige Village of Beige Township, Zongshe Village of Yangjie Township, Pipo Village of Zhongheyang Township, and Laole Village of Xiaolongtan Township (the Human Ancestors Temple), are the main geographical areas of study.

Population Scope

An in-depth interview survey will be conducted on the inheritors and principals of major myths and related culture and art of different branches of Yi nationality in Kaiyuan City:

Beige 1 person (Native representative of Yi culture, over 40 years old).

There's no more Beima in the village, 1 villager will be selected from Zongshe village (over 40 years old), who still passes down myths orally and is familiar with and offers "ancestral woodcuts".

2 local villagers from Pipo Village, Zhongheyang Township, who are aware of their native-type myths and traditional Yi culture (1 person 20–40 years old, 1 person over 40 years old).

Xiaolongtan Township, Laole Village, targeted at the person in charge of the protection of The Human Ancestors Temple and the myth inheritors of 2 person (over 40 years old).

3 relevant persons in charge of the cultural relics management department of the Kaiyuan Municipal Government and the Kaiyuan Yi Society (over 40 years old).

5 minority college students in Kunming University of Science and Technology (20 to 40 years old).

Research Significance

China's Yunnan Province is the most typical and representative place for the study of mythological art and culture in the world. As a mythological kingdom in the world that has not yet collapsed completely, in the past 30 years, not only have many domestic scholars of mythology gone to Yunnan to carry out fieldwork, but they have also cited a lot of mythological literature or oral recordings of the nationalities of Yunnan in their respective scholarly writings and drew a lot of new ideas and conclusions of value from them. Since the 1980s, foreign scholars, especially Japanese scholars, have also come to Yunnan to conduct field investigations in this mythological kingdom in an attempt to dig out more new mythological materials (among them, the famous Japanese mythologists Taira Oobayashi, Seiji Ito, and Hisako Kimijima, etc., have visited Yunnan many times), and in recent years, more and more national mythological researchers have begun to pay attention to Yunnan. In recent years, more and more researchers from other countries have begun to pay attention to Yunnan, which is of special significance for the preservation of traditional myths in Yunnan. The interaction of myths and cultures among different countries and ethnic groups must show a two-way or even multi-directional trend, learning from each other and absorbing and integrating them, in order to achieve the purpose of cultural development of multiple symbiosis and coexistence, as well as to improve oneself without losing oneself. Nevertheless, despite the objective reality that China's mythological resources, especially the mythological resources of ethnic minorities (including living myths), are extremely rich, there still exists an urgent task for us, which is to carry out an all-round and systematic research on the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi area. We should not only discover and interpret the myths from ancient texts but also, and more importantly, search for and explore the myths in the folk production and life of the different Yi areas in Kaiyuan, especially to discover and explore the myths in living forms that still exist today.

Among the fifty-six ethnic groups in China, the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Yi are extremely rich and unique, and almost all of them are related to

the national primitive belief in the regeneration of human beings. Studying the inheritance of the myths of the Kaiyuan Yi in the current cultural context is a very fascinating and challenging task. Here, both the transmission field and the carrier of myths have changed considerably. Although myth will not disappear in a short period of time, the social and cultural functions of myth have been restricted by many factors. Fortunately, the entire Yi region of Kaiyuan still retains a folk environment conducive to the continued transmission of myths. We can only actively explore how to protect traditional mythological culture in modern society by carrying out field surveys, organizing texts, comparative studies, inheritance, and innovation. From Kaiyuan Yi myth concept in the existing folk customs left over from, especially the functional forms, to analyze the different evolution of myths in different cultural and historical environments. Whether it is the native mythological inheritance of the Beige Pula people or the composite mythological accumulation in the Human Ancestors Temple of the Laole Yi people, all of them have become a kind of symbolic representation of the integrated development of the Han Confucian culture and the local Yi culture after the Ming Dynasty. Myths play an indispensable role in people's production lives, sacrificial activities, and folk art, as well as in the composition of national spiritual beliefs and worldviews. The myths of the Kaiyuan Yi have condensed the wisdom and sweat of the Yi and Han ancestors from generation to generation, and they are the important carriers and important witnesses of the art and cultural history of the Kaiyuan Yi, and the comprehensive protection of the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths is the inevitable requirement for the inheritance of the excellent traditional Chinese culture.

It should be noted that nowadays, and even in the future, in different forms of social culture, political culture, national culture, and other constructions, myths have always been an organic component of cultural resources and an important "intangible cultural heritage" of China. Reinventing the value of myths not only gives full play to the advantages of Chinese mythological resources but is also a historical responsibility that the mythological community must assume. Based on the comparative study of the living

myths of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in different Yi areas of Kaiyuan, this research comprehensively examines the circulation and application of ancient myths in local Yi culture, continues to protect the myths and cultural arts of the Yi people in Kaiyuan, fully explores the value of this piece of cultural treasure, and lets the spiritual wealth of the nation that it contains be carried forward and flourish.

Research framework



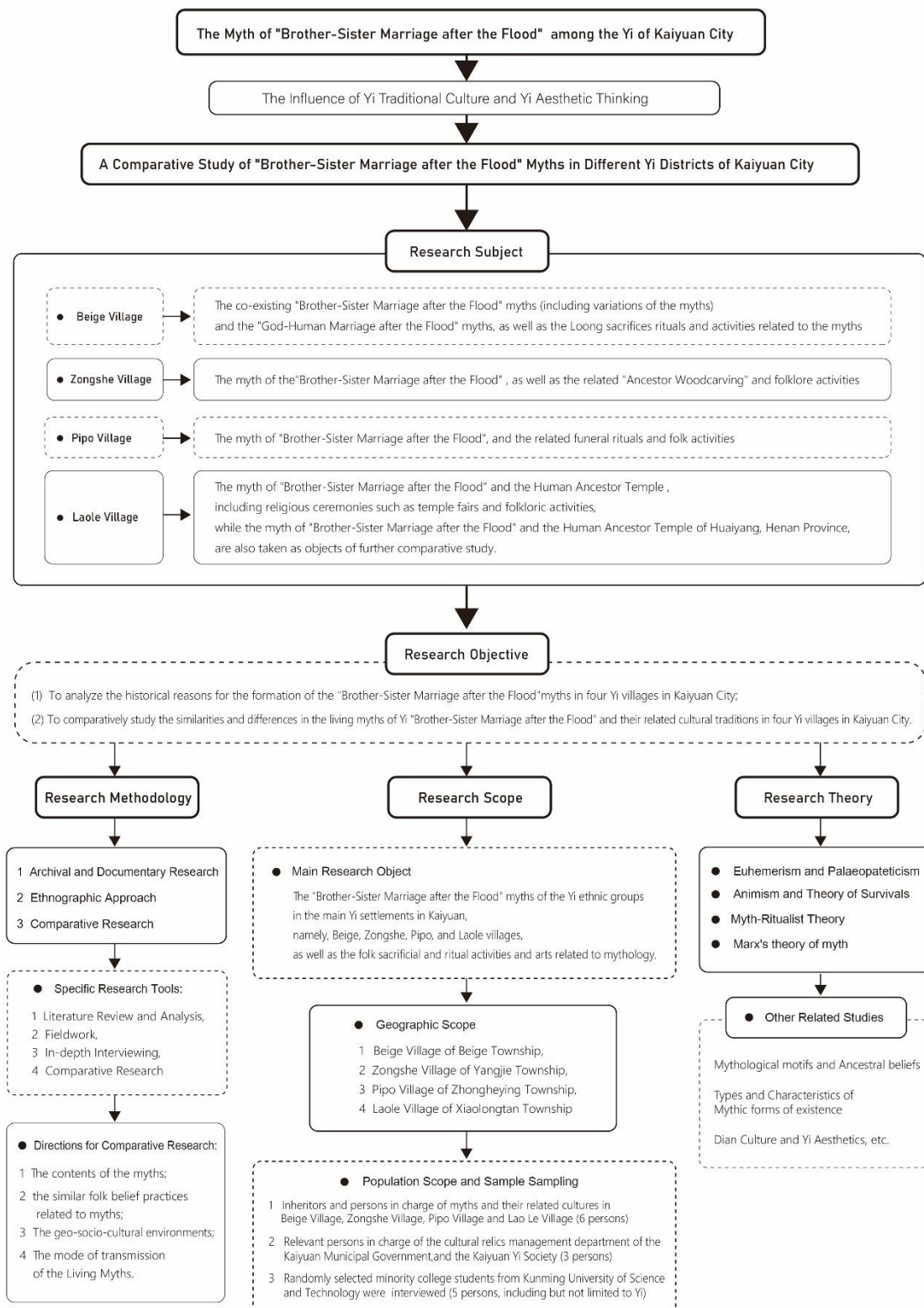


Figure 5 The Research framework

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2024), drawn by the researcher herself.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to comparatively study the historical reasons for the formation of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths, including the "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" myths in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City, and to comparatively study the differences in myth content, myth-related folklore and religious culture, cultural contextual changes, and myth transmission patterns in the living myths of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Yi ethnic group in different Yi districts of Kaiyuan City, the author has done the following related theoretical and conceptual research.

Theories and concepts related to mythology

Human beings have created a long history of myths, and it can be said that when human beings entered clan society and gradually awakened their consciousness from the chaotic state of indistinguishability between the material and the self, myths were the crystallization of their thinking wisdom and creative ability. While exploring the world, human ancestors also tried to record and depict the world they imagined in their own way. When this imagination and inspiration collided with each other, it escalated into a kind of Collective consciousness and Behavior to worship supernatural deities, and thus a set of self-explaining mythological systems was constructed in the early human civilization, which ultimately left us the traces of the gods in our spiritual beliefs.

What exactly is a "MYTH"? This is a complex question. Mythology is a discipline with an extremely long history, and it is no exaggeration to say that there are as many definitions of myth as there are scholars who have studied this issue. The many definitions and theories about myth in history are valuable knowledge assets for mythology, but it is undeniable that these concepts and theories also show certain limitations at certain levels, which we should pay attention to identify in the process of research and exploration of myth.

The Chinese people have a long tradition of myth, but the word "MYTH" is not recorded in China's ancient books. China's ancient books are divided into the four categories of Jing, Shi, Zi, and Ji (Jing: Classics; Shi: Historical Records; Zi: Philosophical Texts; Ji: Collected Works). Mythological materials are scattered among them, and it has not yet formed a complete mythological system. Until the twenty-ninth year of Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty (1903), Jiang Guanyun published an article in the Xinmin Series Newspaper titled "Myth: People formed by history." In this article, which is known as the first mythological paper in the history of modern Chinese folklore, Jiang Guanyun, who is a poet, adopted the new word "MYTH," which had been adopted by Liang Qichao before him. He looks at myths from the perspective of the ancient Chinese saying that "literature is the way of the road" and considers myths to be literature, "powerful" and "important" in "stirring up people's hearts," fully recognizing the importance of myths. He fully valued the positive role of myths in benefiting the people of the world, which was the progress of his academic thinking (X. C. Liu, 2007).

In fact, mythology has occupied a prominent place in human scholarly inquiry for more than 2,000 years, and it has thus become an important branch in the humanities and social sciences. Like many disciplines, we began our early studies of mythology as early as the ancient Greek period. Jan deVries, professor emeritus at Leiden University in the Netherlands, wrote in his book *A History of Mythological Studies*: "If we summarize the arguments that have been elucidated in the field of mythological studies from the Hellenistic period up to the present day (with a few exceptions), what is particularly striking is their continuity. The creative genius of the Greeks is particularly evident in the point that almost all the hypotheses of mythological interpretation had already been formulated at that time and that they are still recurring up to the present time, in spite of more or less subsequent changes in form." (Oobayashi, 1966). And this passion for inquiry that began in ancient Greek times did not stop there. " On the contrary, the rise of the study of myth in the modern academic sense came after the 18th century, especially in the second half of the 19th century. Prior to this, the various theories about myth tended to be speculative and abstract'. " After this time, the field of

human research on myth continued to change and evolve, adopting new methods, ideas, or techniques that advanced the field, opened new horizons, and continued to raise new questions and solutions to those questions, making it "more based on accumulating data." (Segal, 2015).

As society advances, people's awareness of science and technology increases, and mindsets change, most civilizations around the world have inevitably entered a "post-mythological era.". Nevertheless, to this day, myths still play an important role in the lives of many nationalities in China. Myths are an important part of human civilization, and the narrative structure and connotations of myths usually involve the moral and ethical concepts and value tendencies of specific cultures or ethnic communities, conveying an understanding of concepts such as goodness, evil, courage, justice, etc., which not only influence people's ideology and code of conduct but also have far-reaching effects on social and cultural development. This not only affects people's ideologies and behavioral norms but also has a profound impact on social and cultural development. Through myths, people are able to build their own unique national spirit and identity. Before there were scientific explanations, people used myths to explain natural phenomena, the origin of mankind, the structure of the universe, etc. Myths provided people with a framework for understanding the world and the meaning of life in order to cope with the complex and changing objective world. In addition, the imagery in myths was often full of fantasy and mystery, which undoubtedly stimulated human imagination and creativity. In today's modern civilization, music, dance, painting, design, literature, film, and other fields of art often use traditional myths as a source of inspiration for their creations. Bronislaw K. Malinowski (1884–1942), a renowned British social anthropologist, once commented, "Mythology has always been the meeting point of various disciplines: classical humanists had to determine whether Zeus was the moon or the sun... Then, archaeologists have to study the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, etc. And the mythological stages of different tribes to revisit these questions. Historians, sociologists, literary researchers, grammarians, specialists in Germanic and Roman culture, Celtic scholars, and Slavic scholars also explore them in their own

circles. Logicians, psychologists, metaphysicians, and epistemologists likewise have to dabble in mythology, not to mention people like the Thomists, modern astrologers, and Christian scientists. Finally, there are the psychoanalysts, anthropologists, and folklorists." (B. K. Malinowski, n.d.).

Euhemerism and Palaeopateticism

"Euhemerism, named after the ancient Greek philosopher Euhemerus, is often referred to as "the theory of mythological historical fact," which holds that the gods were ethnic tribes, chiefs, or emperors who were worshipped as heroes after their deaths. The main idea of this theory is that mythological gods and demigods were initially real emperors or heroes in history, and that myths are distorted histories; therefore, the roots of myths should be found in real history. In other words, the gods of myth and the narratives about them are ultimately derived from historical figures and their deeds, and the gods or specific persons in religions and myths are deified persons, and, accordingly, the stories about them are exaggerated representations of actual deeds (Zhao, 2019).

In China, scholars have historicized myths through various interpretations that exclude the magical elements of myths. This approach is regarded by the American classical mythologist William Hansen as "Palaeopateticism," which can be said to be different from but complementary to Euhemerism, which can be said to be different from but also complementary to Euhemerism." The term 'Palaeopateticism' comes from the method of interpreting myths used by the ancient Greek writer Palaiphatos. His book *On Unbelievable Tales*, written in the late 4th century BC, is the earliest visible book on myth interpretation in the Western world. Palaeopateticism attempts to rationalize mythic narratives, arguing that the magical narrative elements of myths and legends are due to misunderstandings of various external phenomena as well as linguistic usage. For example, Greek legend has it that the Amazons, a group of warrior women who inhabited eastern Greece and mated with men from other groups but still lived in their own community and raised their children, are often depicted in Greek heroic epics.

Palaiphatos argues that the imagery of Amazonian female warriors is actually a misunderstanding of male warriors, as in his own time, male warriors wore robes, shaved their faces, and tied their hair, and thus perhaps looked like women. Since no female warriors were captured in the time in which he lived, Palaiphatos therefore asserts that there would have been no female warriors in antiquity either, and that the legend of the so-called Amazonian female warrior therefore stems from a misunderstanding of an external phenomenon." (Hansen, 2005).

The interpretative perspectives and methods of Euhemerism and Palaeopateticism are more commonly used in the field of Chinese mythological research and have become an important way to "historicize myths" in China. According to Chang Jincang, a famous Chinese historian: " In ancient China, those characters who had conflicts with the nature gods and had more or less miraculous stories, such as Jiu Ji, who tried to fill up the flood because of flooding, Yu, the emperor who ruled over the water in ancient China, Yi, who shot down nine suns to protect the earth, and Qi, who became an immortal and ascended to the nine heavens, etc., were the heroes who had done the good and the bad for the people in history, but became half god and half immortal under the rendering of the magic of Fonzui, which was popularized in the Warring States period. " (Chang, 2000). Famous scholar Meng Fanren has also suggested more than once that the "sky" in the Nuwa myth refers most probably to the "roof" of the caves in which human beings lived during the primitive period. Due to the unprecedented scale of the earthquake disaster in ancient times, which caused flooding, the "roofs" of the caves inhabited by human beings cracked and collapsed, triggering the great fears that "the pillars of the sky were broken and the ground cracked" and that "the ground sank in the southeast and the sky tilted to the northwest, which gave rise to Nuwa's great act of "refining the five-colored stones to mend the sky." The Taihang Mountain area in Shanxi Province is the "place of origin" of the historical fact of "Nuwa's mending of the heavens," and Nuwa is not only the great mother of the Chinese nation but also a historical figure who actually existed, and the area where she engaged in the important activities of mending the heavens and creating human beings

was on the Loess Plateau in Shanxi Province (F. R. Meng, 2005). In addition, the temple fair of Taihao Mausoleum in Huaiyang, Henan Province, which started in remote ancient times, is also called "February Fair," and the folk tend to sacrifice Fuxi through the form of the temple fair. The Book of Rites: Month Rites records: "In the month of mid-spring, the son of heaven and the people would offer sacrifices to the Gaomei." The 'Gaomei' here refers to Fuxi and Nuwa. Myths and legends say that Fuxi and Nuwa, after the flood, because of the status of brother and sister, could not bear to get married, so they rolled a millstone from the top of the mountain and came down, and the millstones merged and did not separate at the foot of the mountain, so they got married, reproduced human beings, and became the 'ancestors of the people' of the Han Chinese people. The 'February Meeting' is a good time for men and women to meet, which may also be related to this. " (Xia, 2020). The two main themes in this "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth are flood and blood marriage. The flood myth is a type of myth that exists in different cultures around the world, and it should also refer to the tragic floods that have really happened in the history of human development, leaving an indelible mark on the human mind and becoming a collective image that is passed down from generation to generation along with the myth, reminding people to maintain a fearful attitude towards natural disasters. There are traces of primitive blood marriage in the myth, which seems to be a reflection of the transition from group marriage to dyadic marriage in primitive Chinese society. Due to the constraints of the natural and socio-cultural environments, the myths of the later period are often in a process of development and compounding in the process of transmission.

"Because of this, exploring the historical reality reflected in myths has become an important way to recognize the origin and nature of myths and then to explore the path of human social and cultural development and change. To this day, research from the perspective of the connection between myth and history, especially from the perspective of human cultural history as reflected in myth, is still a commonly used perspective and method." (Yang, 2009). However, there is ultimately a difference between myth and the objective world. The limitations of Euhemerism and

Palaeopateticism are reflected in the lack of a full understanding of this point, and as Taira Oobayashi points out in his Introduction to Mythology, not all the gods and heroes appearing in myths are actual historical figures, and while their deeds as told in the myths may have contained elements of certain historical events, this can only be verified through careful study (Oobayashi, 1966).

Mythological Anthropology: Animism and Theory of Survivals

Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917), a British anthropologist, is honored as the "father of anthropology" by the anthropological community. As a representative of the classical school of evolution, he is the most influential classic anthropologist who used evolution as the theoretical basis to examine and analyze many cultural phenomena of primitive peoples as well as the process of cultural development in human beings. In his classic masterpiece *Primitive Culture* (1871), he put forward two famous concepts: Animism and the Theory of Survivals.

Taylor suggests that the development of culture is "a movement from one stage to another according to the ladder of obscurity, barbarism, and civilization." that "high culture develops or spreads gradually from the primary culture of mankind" and that "animism forms the philosophical basis of obscurantist peoples as well as the philosophical basis of civilized nations." (Tylor, 1992). According to Taylor, people at the lower cultural stages deduced the existence of the soul in the course of contemplating the difference between human life and death, the state of wakefulness and sleep, the causes of health and disease, and what they saw in their dreams, and further deduced that the soul was able to leave the physical body and enter other objects, dominating and influencing them. Taylor found that the animism view consists of two major tenets, which form a complete system. First, there is the belief that the souls of all living things can continue to exist after the death or annihilation of the physical body. Second, there is the belief that various gods can ascend to the ranks of the powerful gods and that deities can influence and control the material world and the present and future lives of

people. This belief naturally develops into worship of them. Accordingly, Taylor also proposed an animistic view of the origin of religion (Yang, 2009).

In addition, in order to grasp the historical connection between various cultural phenomena of mankind, Taylor believes that old cultural phenomena, such as certain tools, equipment, art forms, rituals, customs, concepts, etc., will be transferred from one primary cultural stage to another later stage due to the force of habit and that they are the vivid witnesses or living documents of the primary cultural stage and examples of the evolution of new culture from the old culture. This existing phenomenon of the old culture is "Survival in Culture". Through it, one can trace the old cultural structure and, thus, the whole development history of human culture. He mentioned in *Primitive Culture*: "In the atmosphere of modern civilization, ethnologists will eventually find that the value of studying ancient myths does not lie in the content of the myths themselves, but in their style, or, in the main, in the provision of artifacts for the identification of evidence for the ideas of the mythological era." "My purpose is to compare some of the most important stages in the development of the myths of the various peoples of mankind and, in particular, to determine the general relationship between the myths of the obscurantist tribes and those of the civilized peoples" in order to re-explore the historical process of the evolution of human thought. It is for this reason that Taylor emphasizes the importance of the myth of the "obscurantist peoples". He believed that the existing obscurantist peoples were representative of human childhood and that, as the closest modern representatives of primitive cultures, they could assist scholars of civilized eras in tracing back to the original concepts of human mythology. To this end, Taylor emphasized the use of comparative research methods, in which similar sources from all parts of the world, from ancient and modern peoples, are organized and arranged into comparative clusters, and the underlying ideas and evolutionary processes are then explored (Yang, 2009).

Although mythological anthropology also has one-sidedness and limitations, with obvious marks of cultural hierarchism, it only emphasizes the use of the myths of obscurantist peoples to explain similar "Survival in Culture" existing in civilized peoples,

thus neglecting the social and cultural functions of myths. However, the research method of understanding and restoring the face of ancient myths by collecting and examining the myths, beliefs, and customs of the existing so-called "primitive" peoples (tribes) in an attempt to explore and rebuild the history of human thought and culture is relatively common in the field of mythological research nowadays. In this research, a comparative approach was adopted to interpret the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of different Yi districts in Kaiyuan City in a more in-depth manner in terms of ethnic culture and ideological content.

Myth-Ritual Theory

The Myth-Ritual Theory is a theory that emphasizes the dependence of myth on ritual for its existence. The theory sees myths as explanations and elucidations of rituals, while rituals dramatize and act out myths; myths are seen not only as simple statements that are written or spoken but also as something that is put into action. "To put it mildly, myths and rituals may also exist independently of each other, but that is because they originally functioned together and then went their separate ways, or they may have arisen independently of each other but were eventually joined together." (Segal, 2015). In a word, the myth-ritual theory emphasizes the crucial connection between myth and ritual.

James George Frazer, a social anthropologist and pioneer of mythology and comparative religion, specialized in the fields of mythology and religion. As an important founder of the Myth and Ritual School, his primary sources for conducting his research were a vast array of historical documents as well as questionnaires from around the world. Frazer presented the results of his life's research in the book *The Golden Bough*, one of the main theoretical contributions of which was the establishment of the principles of sympathetic magic. The book states: "The principles of thought on which witchcraft is founded may be reduced to two: one class is based on the principle of the 'law of resemblance,' or that things similar to one another can produce the same result; the other class is based on the 'law of contact. The other is based on the 'law of contact',

i.e., the belief that "once objects come into contact with each other, they will continue to interact at a distance after the physical contact is broken". Spells based on the former are called 'homeopathic witchcraft' or 'simulated witchcraft', and those based on the latter are called 'contact witchcraft'." (Frazer, 1987). "On this basis, the author suggests a general process of development of the witchcraft-religion-science way of human thought. Primitive man, believing that nature could be mastered by his own symbolic activity but to no avail, turned to faith in the power of the gods in place of sorcery, and thus came religion, characterized by prayers and sacrifices; and when belief in the gods waned, true science came into being."(Yang, 2009).

It is worth noting that, in addition to the study of myths and rituals, the Myth and Ritual School has also been widely used in the study of artistic and cultural phenomena, such as music, dance, and drama, which draws the attention of researchers from the search of myths themselves in their relationship with history and nature to the various religious rituals and cultural activities in daily life and production that are closely linked to myths. For example, the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and the corresponding religious ceremonies and artistic activities inherited from four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City, Yunnan Province. namely, the Loong Sacrifice Ceremony in Jiaji Village of Beige Township; the "Ancestor Woodcarving of the Zongshe Village of Yangjie Township; the Funeral Ceremony in Pipo Village of Zhongheying Township; and the "Human Ancestors Temple" Festivals in Laole Village of Xiaolongtan Township.

Of course, the Myth and Ritual School also seems to have failed to accurately grasp the "dynamically interacting process" between myth and ritual by overemphasizing "traceability" and the one-sided, mechanical connection between myth and ritual (Yang, 2005). The American anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn has also commented that: "In short, there are no facts that can be summarized in a general way about rituals being the cause of myths, or conversely about myths being the cause of rituals. Their relationship is more like a complex interdependence, varying in structure from one cultural system to another and perhaps also from one culture to another at different times (Kluckhohn, 1995).

Marx's Theory of Myth

Karl Marx, the principal founder of Marxism, the organizer and leader of the First International, and the main pioneer of the international communist movement, is known as the revolutionary teacher of the proletariat and working people all over the world, even though Marx had no monographs on mythology. He embodied his understanding of mythology mainly in the Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy.

In China, the more common definitions of myth are basically inspired and influenced by Marx's theory of myth and Western anthropological theories of myth. Generally speaking, Marx's theory of myth mainly contains the following aspects: First, Marx thinks that myth is "the childhood of mankind," and the innocence of children always makes people "feel happy." Moreover, Marx also affirms the great aesthetic value of myth, which gives people artistic enjoyment. In addition, Marx also affirmed the great aesthetic value of myths to give people artistic enjoyment. He once said that "Greek mythology is not only the arsenal of Greek art but also its soil.". The "soil" mentioned here contains rich and deep historical and cultural content. Greek mythology is vast in content, forming a huge system of gods and goddesses and embracing the deep and rich understanding of nature and society of the ancient Greeks, so that later Greek art creations often get creative inspiration and creative materials from it. "This analysis certainly contributes to a deeper understanding of Marx's theory of myth. First, myth is the source and mother of the development of later art and, in the words of some, the forerunner of human art. This orientation is an important revelation for uncovering the value of myth in the history of art. Secondly, myth is always the myth of the nation, and its influence on the art of later generations is usually not transposable. 'Egyptian mythology can never be the soil or mother-birth of Greek art', and similarly, Greek mythology can never be the soil or mother-birth of other national arts, including the art of the Chinese nation. In this sense, the national characteristics of a people's art may have been laid down very early in the mythology of that people. The results of the study of

Chinese mythology have concluded that Chinese Strange Tales, legends, and novels of gods and devils are all intrinsically causally related to the Chinese 'myths of the imperial lineage' rather than to the Greek 'myths of the divine lineage'. According to Jung's theory of 'archetypes', the collective unconscious of human beings retains a large number of 'archetypes' of various kinds of experiences inherited from the ancestors, which, as inner forces lurking in the deeper layers of the psyche, will always be manifested in the spiritual activities and their products of later generations. The theories and results of these theories and results can be considered to be the most important ones. With the help of these theories and results, it can be argued that the mythology of a people preserves the archetypal imagery of a people's consciousness and that the literature of later generations is always divorced from this archetypal imagery or collective unconscious of the people." (Luo, 2004).

Secondly, Marx believed that myth is a mixture of various concepts and consciousnesses of early mankind, which contains early human interpretations of the natural universe, human society, and their own origins, as well as the germ of modern scientific consciousness, of which aesthetics is only one factor. In long history, human ancestors in hard production and labor practices continued to understand and transform the objective world and gradually formed the original worldview, which was usually in the form of myths passed down from generation to generation. "Any myth is the use of imagination, or the use of imagination to conquer and dominate the forces of nature, to visualize them," "that is to say, the forms of nature and society themselves, which have been worked out through the fancies of the people in an unconscious and artistic way." (Marx, 1972).

Finally, Marx's understanding and knowledge of the ontology of myth are primarily considered from a literary perspective, "and thus, with these forces of nature to be practically dominated, myth disappears." (Marx, n.d.). Such a perspective is more appropriate for the study of primitive myths but is no longer compatible with the myths produced by class society. Over time, given the depth of our research on myths, especially the excavation and exploration of the myths of the nationalities in Yunnan,

China, we have discovered some new problems. We believe that we need to take a further step forward in the rational understanding of myth on the basis of Marx's theory of myth.

The following is the framework of the research theory:

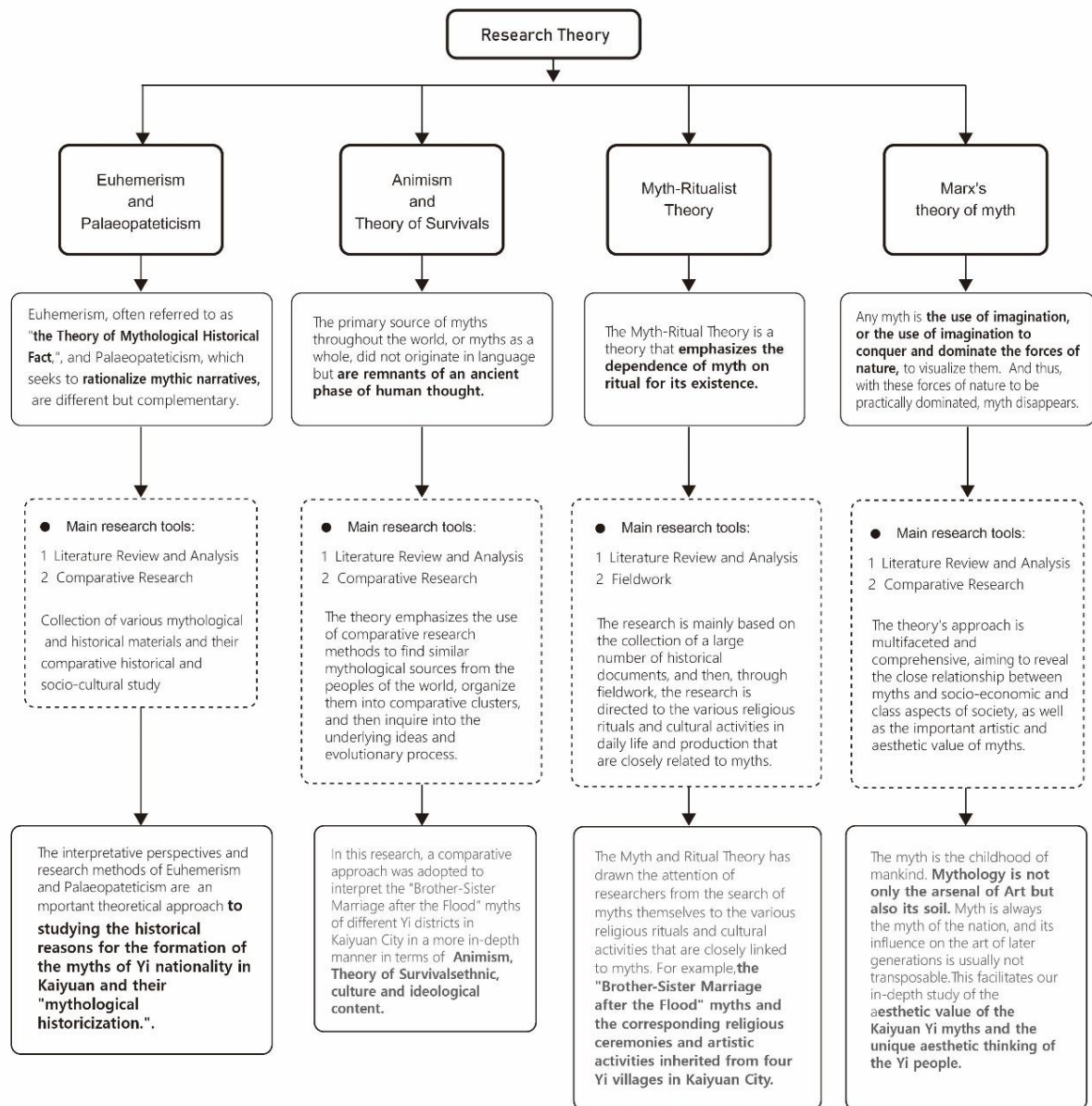


Figure 6 The Framework of The Research Theory

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2024), drawn by the researcher herself.

Mythological Motifs and Ancestral Beliefs

Mythological Motifs Concept

The word "myth" originally comes from the ancient Greek language, which means "legendary story." As a huge story system, myths are extremely rich in motifs, forms, and forms of existence. The mythic motifs mentioned here, i.e., the most natural and fundamental elements of the mythic narrative process, refer to the elements, themes, or plots that recur in the myths of different cultures." These elements can exist independently in the various channels of transmission of myths, or they can be reproduced or recombined in other literary styles or cultural products. As a specific unit of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the myths of various peoples, the motifs have an obvious methodological function." (Wang, 2009). These motifs span time, space, and culture and not only appear in ancient myths but can also be found in modern literary and artistic creations. It can be said that the existence of mythological motifs reflects the common thinking and emotional needs of human beings and becomes an important window for human beings to know themselves, explore nature, and interpret the world. Mr. Chen Jianxian also mentioned the independence of mythic motifs in "Myth Interpretation, Exploring the Method of Motif Analysis," pointing out that mythic motifs can be extended into infinite possibilities through the form of arrangement and combination, and they can also be fused with the literary factors of various subjects, mapping out the collective consciousness of an ethnic group, a nation, a culture, or the whole of mankind. Some of the mythic motifs can even be sublimated to become the typical cultural identifiers of a group by virtue of their own distinctive and unique natures (e.g., typicality, historicity, etc.). (Chen, 1997).

Among them, the mythological motifs about the origin of mankind are specifically reflected in myths all over the world. As to the major proposition of how the earliest mankind came into being, due to the differences in historical and cultural psychology and social and living environments, different ethnic groups have different understandings of the origin of mankind. "There exists a wealth of mythological motifs in the myths of the human origins of various ethnic groups in China. Through the study of mythological motifs, i.e., starting from the 'mythological motifs' which are the basic

elements or units of the whole structure of the work, it will make the comparison of human origin myths of various ethnic groups more direct and convenient, and then gain insights into the trajectory of the development and change of myths occurring in various ethnic groups, further understand the relationship of the same mythological motifs among the peoples, and discover the ethnic characteristics, cultural differences, and inter-ethnic interactions or ethnic origins of the human origin myths of the peoples."(Wang, 2009). Yunnan Province has a large number of rich ethnic minority human origin myths, which are mainly related to the creation of human beings by the gods, the regeneration and reproduction of human beings after the flood disaster, as well as the plants or animals that give birth to humans, etc. Among them, most of the myths have the phenomenon of multi-ethnicity homologation and common ancestor, and most of the myths have the artistic "expressive form," so it can be said that ethnic minority mythological motifs in the Yunnan culture are borrowed from and penetrated into each other, and they have intrinsic commonality in terms of content and form as well as in terms of casting a firm sense of community of the Chinese nation as a core of the spirit. The distribution of nationalities in Yunnan Province is characterized by "large-scale mixed settlement and small-scale clustered settlement" and "staggered mixed settlements," and due to the geographical proximity, there are more similarities and commonalities in the mythological motifs and mythological narratives. In terms of the human origin motifs of the mythological research, God created man, God and man created together, earth created man, oviposition, etc. are often used as important components of human origin myths, and there are even cases of superposition and fusion of the primordial ancestor myths, the myth of brother-sister marriage, and the myth of the flood (this article does not focus on the myth of the flood that was used to control the water), which constitutes "a memorable and recognizable component" of the mythological culture in the Dian culture, and it can make people have a clearer and rational cognition of the original "memory" of the nationalities in Yunnan culture (Fang, 2023).

As we all know, the origin of myth is reality. With regard to the myth of the rebirth of mankind after the flood, the *Encyclopaedia of Chinese Literature—Chinese Literature Volume—Folk Literature* interprets "it as a kind of 'eschatology' and 'myth of destruction' on a worldwide scale. It reflects the major issue of regeneration and development of mankind by a pair of young blood mates after devastating floods, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions during a specific period of time in the ancient world.". (Shanghai Branch of the China Folk Literature and Art Research Association, 1983) The phenomenon of brother-sister consanguineous marriages in ancient mythological systems can also be traced back to the blood-marriage family structure of primitive societies. As the first form of marriage in human society, blood marriage has had a profound impact on the development of human society and was an important way for early humans to solve the problems of survival and reproduction. Mr. Wen Yiduo, a famous poet in modern China, once researched the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and called it "the story of brother-sister spouse-type flood survivors recreating human beings" and believed that this type of myth is a combination of two myths of different times and connotations, namely, the myth of the flood and the myth of the origin of human beings, which is a combination of two different myths. In fact, it also emphasizes that the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth is a typical developmental composite myth.

It is worth noting that the myth of human rebirth after the flood also often involves the mythological motif of the birth of a freak; that is, the first child born after the marriage of a brother and sister is some kind of alien (gourd, leech, lump of flesh, faceless monster, etc.). Although there are narrative units of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and then reproduction of human beings in different mythological systems around the world, there are very different values behind such blood marriage myths. Even in a multicultural environment of nationalities such as Yunnan Province, this kind of union based on kinship is still obviously against social order and morals. We can see from the attitude towards brother-sister marriages in the myths of the Yi ethnic group in

Laole Village, Kaiyuan City, that our ancestors who entered the civilized era already had scruples about sibling marriages:

"Legend has it that in ancient times, the generation of people who felt that life was getting better began to disrespect heaven and earth, not respecting the old and loving the young, and trampling on money and goods, which angered the God of Heaven, who then sent out a great flood and drowned that generation to the extent that only the two siblings were left. Feeling quite lonely, the two siblings split up to look for a companion who could still talk, but after three months, they couldn't find any. Suddenly, the egret that had saved their lives flew down from the sky and said, 'There are no more human beings in the world, so if you want to continue to reproduce, you two siblings must get married as soon as possible'. The brother objected to marrying his sister; he thought it was unethical, so the white heron proposed, 'Well, then, you each carry a millstone and roll it down from the top of the mountain, and if the millstones come together at the end, you'll get married. Is that okay?' The siblings thought this was impossible and agreed."

Rooted in the research results of modern genetics, based on the cognitive level of human beings at that time, it can be speculated that: when the ancestors of human beings found that a considerable portion of the children born from consanguineous marriages had genetic defects, they might treat this as an attributed to some unknown divine action or punishment, such as giving birth to a strange fetus and deal with the fetus accordingly. From a certain point of view it did promote the development of the concept of non-blood marriages, but of course, this is not the only explanation for the myth of the siblings' marriage and giving birth to a strange fetus, which can be seen from the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Yi ethnic group of Laole Village:

"When the sister became pregnant and ended up giving birth to a big lump of meat, the brother was so scared that he cut the lump into a hundred pieces with a knife and hung the pieces in different places. Who would have guessed that these one hundred pieces of meat, after the sunshine and morning dew, the next day became 50

men and 50 women, and the world began to bustle. The siblings were so happy that, in order to distinguish them, the siblings gave each one a name based on the place where they were first hung up. The one hanging on the plum tree was surnamed Li; the one hanging on the cypress tree was surnamed Bai; the one stretched on the stone was surnamed Shi; and the one hanging on the bull's horn was surnamed Niu. So one hundred sons and daughters had one hundred surnames, and that's how the hundred surnames came to be.". This description also seems to be the local Yi ancestors plainly explaining through myths some of the similarities and differences that existed between themselves and other ethnic tribes in the neighborhood and between different surnames in the villages. All in all, it is a very interesting process to study.

Mythological Motifs and Ancestral Beliefs

Myths, as an important cultural heritage of early mankind, have survived through generations of cultural inheritance, especially growing strong in the oral tradition of folklore. Not only do they express the long history and cultural memory of a nation or country, but they also play an important role in carrying out excellent cultural traditions and cultivating the spirit of national culture. Although there are different types of myths in Dian culture, they are not isolated from each other in a parallel relationship; on the contrary, each particular myth may be integrated into the historical facts of unity and mutual help, cultural exchanges, and common struggles among different regions and ethnic groups in Yunnan, expressing their common adaptation to the world, understanding the world, transforming the world, and promoting the development of human civilization. Among the various nationalities in Yunnan Province, in addition to the survival of many of the same mythological motifs and elements, there also exist many similar or identical beliefs about the originators, and myths are usually the central component of these primitive belief systems. Ethnic ancestor beliefs are religious or mythological concepts that usually involve belief in and worship of the origins of a particular ethnic group, and this kind of ethnic spirituality usually involves veneration of a divine or supernatural ancestor.

Indeed, the mythological motifs of human origins and ancestral beliefs have specific and diverse manifestations in the mythological systems of cultures in all regions of the world. These themes and beliefs are not only concerned with the origins of ethnic groups but also include an understanding of nature, social order, and moral norms. The role of the mythological ethnic ancestor is usually characterized by extraordinary power and wisdom, as they create human beings and teach them culture and survival skills, laying the foundations for the development and prosperity of ethnic groups. For example, Nuwa in Han mythology, whether as the original goddess who created the world alone, as the primordial ancestor god of the couple (Nuwa and Fuxi have a divine nature), or as the first ancestor of the rebirth of humankind in the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood," plays an important role in shaping the identity of the Han culture and the structure and values of the Han society. Another example is the story of the origin of clans in the mythology of the Lisu people in the Nujiang area of Yunnan Province. A young girl married a tiger that turned into a boy and gave birth to children who grew up to become the Tiger clan; a widow's daughter married a big male bear that turned into a boy and her children and grandchildren became the Bear clan; a young couple married for a long time and had no children, and it was only when the wife dreamed of embracing a female monkey in her arms that a daughter was born, and the daughter escaped into the woods and married a monkey that was the king of the beasts' child, and had a lot of children, and her offspring became the Monkey clan, and so on and so forth (Wang, 2009).

Types and Characteristics of Mythic forms of existence

Sergei Sergeevich Averintsev (1937–2004), a distinguished Russian cultural scholar, once commented on the definition of myth: "The difficulty with the study of myth in literature is that an accepted definition of the category of myth has not yet been finalized. Its boundaries often depend on whether or not the work involves supernatural ('divine-fantastic') beings such as gods, elves, demons, etc." ("Myths", 1981). Prof. Li Zixian of Yunnan University puts forward a clearer point of view that when defining the

category of myth, the most crucial point of reference still lies in the vision of the researcher in defining the category of myth, whether it is limited to the scope of pure literature and pure chapters and sentences, or whether the myth is placed in the examination of a certain social and cultural background. All in all, myths can survive in people's religious beliefs, folklore, and collective memory.

The differentiation of the form of mythic existence should not only present the differences of myths themselves but also grasp the cultural elements coupled with myths from the inside. In this way, the definition of mythic forms of existence should be clear about two main aspects of mythological form: one is the definite external manifestation form, and the other is the structural change of each element within the myth." Mr. Li Zixian, on the basis of a large number of field investigations, established a set of theoretical systems centered on the living myths, in which the living myths act as the 'main body' and the other myths are the 'variations'; if the living myth is the 'living body', the cultural ecosystem on which it depends is the 'mother body', and this system shows us the wholeness, comprehensiveness, and dynamics of myths."(Gao, 2016). He believes that according to the difference in the form of existence, myths can generally be divided into three categories: Literary myths, Oral myths, and Living myths, of which living myths are regarded as "bibles" and have the sanctity and authority of typical primitive forms of myths, which are still closely linked to the specific social organization structure, mode of production and life, and religious and spiritual beliefs, cultural traditions and customs, and other elements(Li, 1987). It must be pointed out here that myths are not limited to these three forms of existence. The different forms of existence, the carriers to which the myth is attached will also have differences. "Some myths are told (sung); some myths are performed in rituals through physical movements and related artifacts; some are implied through paintings, carvings, and other objects and various symbols, and their expressions exist only in the inner world. Therefore, the existence of myths and carriers can be roughly categorized into two categories: latent myths and explicit myths. The so-called latent myths refer to those myths that only exist in the inner world and live in the 'collective appearance'; in other words, they are only

carried by the souls of members within the clan or ethnic group or attached to a certain symbol. Thus, the myths are known only to the people within the clan or community and are not necessarily told to the outside world." (Li, 2006). Now, we will briefly discuss and analyze the characteristics of the three mythological forms of existence:

Literary Myths

Literary myths refer to those myths that were recorded in ancient times in the form of written "works" as their form of existence. "For example, the myths recorded in Classical Chinese texts: 'Zhuangzi', 'Chu Ci' (Songs of Chu), 'Shan Hai Jing' (Classic of Mountains and Seas), and 'Huainanzi', as well as in the ancient literature written in Tibetan, Dongba script (Naxi), Yi, and Dai languages among the ethnic minorities (in China). In foreign countries, myths are recorded in ancient Indian classics such as the 'Vedas', the great epics 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata', the 'Homeric epics' of Ancient Greece, the 'Bible' of the ancient Hebrews, and the 'Kojiki' and 'Nihon Shoki' of Japan. The Greek myths and legends compiled and edited by modern scholars also belong to the literary myths because they are collected from the relevant ancient documents, categorized into the Greek myths, and compiled. Most of the above myths, which are written down in the form of written 'works', have become 'dead'. Because they have been lost in folklore, their organic connection with social life has been severed, leaving only the chapters and sentences of the stories themselves. Only the researcher, with the help of cultural anthropology, cultural history, folklore, religion, and other materials of evidence, can 'restore' its original appearance—living myths. It can be said that the literary myths are like a plant specimen that has been carefully made by biologists to survive; although it is still a certain kind of plant, it is no longer a living organism; it is no longer able to photosynthesize under the sunlight; and it is no longer able to grow by drawing nutrients from the soil where it used to be rooted. In a sense, literary myths are a special form of myth that survives after special treatment. Therefore, the characteristics inherent in living myths, which are their original appearance, can no longer be fully displayed in literary myths. It is true that literary myths are not purely

literary works. It should be seen that, as far as the contents of articles and sentences are concerned, most of them have certain non-literary elements, always embodying the characteristic that they were once a synthesis of various social consciousnesses (such as primitive philosophy, science, morality, religion, psychology, literature, history, etc.) of the primitive clan societies or ancient societies, and always accumulating a specific cultural connotation. "(Li, 1987).

Oral Myths

"It is well known that the origins of oral culture go back to before mankind formed writing and that it implies a human discursive practice and a legitimately recognized right to discourse. In ancient times, human beings began to offer the knowledge, experiences, and beliefs they had learned to the next generation by oral transmission (Laba, 2005). " Myth is one of the "oldest" cultural forms of human. The oral myths, i.e., those myths that are mainly transmitted through oral language and passed on by word of mouth and that are still alive in real life and serve a variety of practical functions, have been passed down from generation to generation in the long course of history through the narratives of one generation after another. "Although the social conditions (such as primitive religion, customs, psychology, and mythological thinking) on which the myths of this form of existence are based are gradually dying out, they have not yet reached a point where they have lost all connection with social life and social psychology. It is like a plant that has begun to wither but has not completely died; it can still photosynthesize to some extent in the sunlight, and it still absorbs nutrients to some extent from the soil in which it is rooted. Thus, oral myths retain some of the characteristics of living myths. This is mainly manifested in the following ways: it is a collective creation, preserved in the collective memory through oral transmission; although it is a story told, it maintains a certain degree of connection with the primitive beliefs, mentalities, and customs that still exist today; it has mutated in the process of transmission and has formed a pattern in which there are many ways of describing the actions of a particular deity or interpreting a particular thing, and thus there are many

different versions of the same myth. Its descriptions of the behavior of the gods or its explanations of various things have a certain irrationality or non-scientificity; the performance of the gods (including totem gods, animal and plant gods, nature gods, ancestor gods, hero gods, etc.) that it describes or celebrates still exerts a different degree of psychological influence in folklore. This kind of myth, which still lives on in the oral tradition of the peoples, is an intermediate state between the typical living myth and the literary myth. As mentioned earlier, since it still retains some of the characteristics of the living myths, we can regard it as a late form among the living myths." (Li, 1987).

Living Myths

Living myths, in short, are myths that are not "dead"—myths in their typical or primitive form. According to Meng Huiying, a famous Chinese scholar of ethnology and religion, the so-called living myths are "characterized by the existence of myths as objects of belief.". Among the ethnic minorities in China, "myths that exist according to rituals are typical manifestations of living myths," which are mainly preserved in the rituals of sacrificing to the heavens and ancestors and in the rituals of funerals, marriages, and other ethnic folklore rites and ceremonies (Meng, 1990). According to Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski, such "myths that exist in barbaric societies, myths in their primitive, living form, are not just stories to be told but entities to be lived. They are not fictions, as we have seen in modern fiction, but facts that are believed to have taken place in ancient times and to have continued to influence the world and the destiny of mankind ever since.". So this myth "lives in life, not on paper, and to write it on paper without being able to perceive it is to cut a small piece of an entity out of it and show it to us."(Malinowski, 1986). In fact, the living form of myth is a kind of "living" entity that is born, attached to, and survives in the specific social life and cultural environment of this big organism, which can only be generated and survive in the period of primitive clan society and the early stage of civilized society, but due to various reasons such as the unevenness of the social development, this kind of living form of myth has not yet been extinct in some areas.

Since the end of the 19th century, the Yi myths of Yunnan, as an important component of the mythology of Southwest China, have received attention and research for different purposes and to different degrees. In the first half of the 20th century, scholars of Chinese mythology began to study the Yi myths from the perspectives of anthropology and folklore, applying the theories and methods of Western anthropology and focusing on the characteristics of field research. In addition to focusing on language and writing, "they recognize the interactive relationship between Yi myths, rituals, and Bimo from the perspective of the relationship between myths and folklore, i.e., Yi myths are the main content of the scriptures recited by Bimo in the rituals, the rituals are the important carriers of Yi myths, and Bi Mo is the intermediary between Yi myths and the rituals, and the three form a close and interdependent relationship. This research perspective and results provide an important reference for the study of Yi studies in China." "Classification and Characteristics of Yunnan Minority Myths" and "A Comparative Study of the Daughter Country Myths of the East and the West - Focusing on the Myth of the Daughter Country of the Yi Ethnic Group" in Li Zixian's treatise, "Exploring a Mythic Kingdom That Has Not Yet Collapsed - A Study of the Myths of the Minority Groups of Southwest China", classified Yunnan minority myths. They are divided into eight categories: creation, human origin, nature, civilization invention, heroes, customs, plants and animals, and totem myths, and summarize four characteristics. " 'Classification and Characteristics of Yunnan Minority Myths' and 'A Comparative Study of the Daughter Country Myths of the East and the West - Focusing on the Myth of the Daughter Country of the Yi Ethnic Group' in Li Zixian's treatise, 'Exploring a Mythic Kingdom That Has Not Yet Collapsed - A Study of the Myths of the Minority Groups of Southwest China', classified Yunnan minority myths. They are divided into eight categories: creation, human origin, nature, civilization invention, heroes, customs, plants and animals, and totem myths, and summarize four characteristics. These views are inspiring for the study of the classification and characterization of the mythology of the Yi ethnic group in Yunnan. In *Multiculturalism and Ethnic Literature - A Comparative Study of Minority Literature in Southwest China*, the author suggests that the study of Yunnan

folklore literature should grasp minority folklore literature as a whole from the perspective of folklore culture, seek its intrinsic qualities, and constantly expand research ideas. Specifically for the study of Yi myths in Yunnan, he pointed out in *Ancestor Worship and Myths of the Yi--Centering on Meigu County, Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province*: 'It is this relative consistency amidst the pluralistic differences, or the rich diversity amidst the relative consistency, that constitutes the rich connotations and distinctive features of the Yi culture.' In *Re-exploring the Kingdom of Myths—A New Theory of Living Myths*, the author puts forward the concept of 'living myths', takes the case of the 'Human Ancestors Temple' of the brother-sister marriage type of the Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan, Yunnan Province, as a case study, and argues that the Yi ethnic group's living myths are rich and that the study should focus on the cultural accumulation field and inheritance field, which include myths, religions, and folklore. In contrast, scholars represented by Fu Guangzi and Li Zixian study Yi ethnic folk literature from the perspective of folklore studies, examine in depth the cultural ecosystem on which Yi myths depend and the intrinsic connection between the two, and finally accurately describe the three-dimensional and dynamic structure of Yi living myths, which is very beneficial to the development of the vision of the study of Yi myths and the innovation of the research method."(Liu, 2022). In particular, Mr. Li Zixian's insights into the locality, uniqueness, and diversity of the Kaiyuan Yi myths are undoubtedly important results for the study of the Kaiyuan Yi myths.

Dian Culture and Yi Aesthetics

The Influence of Cultural Forms and Cultural Characteristics of Dian Culture on the Myths of the Kaiyuan Yi People

Cultural forms refer to the manifestations and external features of culture, including both tangible and intangible forms of culture. Specifically, the material forms of culture include tangible cultural heritage such as tools, artworks, and implements, while the intangible forms of culture include intangible cultural heritage such as language, religion, and folklore. No matter what kind of cultural form is divided, what it embodies is the specific unfolding of cultural content from a particular perspective, and there is no

culture that transcends time and space, while what can truly reflect the difference between a culture and other cultures lies in its fundamental characteristics. In the fields of anthropology and sociology, it is only by recognizing and grasping the temporal and spatial boundaries and fundamental characteristics of a certain cultural form that we can better explore the differences and links between the different social groups within that cultural form.

In order to study the influence of Dian culture on the myths of the Kaiyuan Yi, it is necessary to first define the spatial and temporal boundaries and cultural characteristics of Dian culture. " Nowadays, Yunnan Province, which is located in the southwest border of the motherland and covers an area of 383,000 square kilometers and looks like a rooster on the map, is called Dian for short, but it is not the same as the ancient Dian State during the Warring States period when the Chu general Zhuang Qiao entered the country, and it is certainly not the same as Yongchang County, which was set up during the Eastern Han Dynasty and which had an area of 3,000 kilometers from east to west and 4,600 kilometers from north to south, or the Nanzhao and Dali States during the Tang and Song Dynasties, or the Yunnan Province, which was established in the Yuan Dynasty. In terms of time, each of the above divisions has its own duration, and what we call Yunnan Province today has a very short history. In this way, our so-called 'Dian culture' is in the dilemma of the narrowness of the definite reference and the vagueness of the generalized reference. However, in the midst of difficulties, there seems to be hope. Throughout history, although the world has changed, the physical-geographical environment of the Yunnan plateau has not changed, and the activities of many ethnic groups (tribes) have not been interrupted as they have migrated, multiplied, and created a living on this ancient land. Also, Yunnan has always been at the edge of the Chinese cultural circle; perhaps it is in some way a base point to define the spatial and temporal extension of Yunnan culture. " (Zhang et al., 1992). Yunnan culture is complex; it is not easy to say that these cultures are absolute Yunnan or Dian culture. The only way is to make the geographical boundaries of Dian culture a little fuzzy, but

more important is to explore enough to constitute what we call the common cultural traits of Dian culture.

Looking at Yunnan culture, it is easy to see that the first cultural trait of Dian culture is diversity. On the whole, Dian culture itself is a pluralistic composition; "although it has a certain degree of continuity, it seems to be more heterogeneous...This is different from the Central Plains, where a clearer and clearer cultural tradition has been gradually formed since the pre-Qin period. In addition, even in the same historical period, in addition to one dominant culture, there were many different types of cultures coexisting in different regions. At the level of different types of cultures, it is also diversity." (W. X. Zhang, 1992).

The second cultural characteristic of Dian culture is primitiveness. Yunnan's social development is relatively slow, the localization of Dian culture is relatively strong, and there are still obvious traces of primitive cultural forms. The differentiation between elegant and popular culture is not yet obvious. "The culture of large groups (ethnic groups) with regional characteristics still occupies a mainstream position. The nobles reflected on the bronzes of the ancient Dian State unearthed at Shizhai Mountain in Jinning were nothing more than chiefs or supervisors in production and religious ceremonies. The princes and nobles of the Nanzhao Dali State were also barefooted like the common people. The priests (such as Dongba, Bimo, Moba, etc.), who were the main executives of the cultures of the various ethnic groups, had not yet been differentiated from the productive labor (only the Dai are the exceptions here, roughly). In addition, the socio-economics of some ethnic groups still remain in the hunting and gathering-oriented stage, such as some Wa, De'ang, Brown, Dulong, Lahu Kucong people, Yi Shansu people, etc.; and some remain in the primitive farming (hoeing and digging) or livestock-raising-oriented stage, such as some Wa, De'ang, Brown, Jingpo, Hani, Lahu, Jinuo, Miao, Yao, and other ethnic groups. In terms of marriage-family forms, the Yongning Mosuo have always preserved the more primitive dyadic marriage system, the 'Azhu marriage'. In terms of customs, the Wa's head-hunter custom was abolished only after liberation. In terms of conceptualization, the remaining traces of

primitive nature worship, totem worship, witchcraft, etc. can be seen everywhere." (Zhang et al., 1992).

The third cultural characteristic of Yunnan culture is its marginality. "From the theory of cultural circle, Dian culture is in Han culture, Indian culture, and Southeast Asian culture at the edge of convergence; from the political pattern, Yunnan for more than two thousand years is located on the fringe of the rule of the Central Plains dynasty. With successive dynasties in the Central Plains and policy changes, Yunnan's local authorities have had intermittent, large or small, independence. This marginal situation caused both the openness and diversity of Dian culture but also the spread of the culture of the Central Plains and the attenuation of the penetration of the culture, so that the Yunnan culture absorbed a large number of cultural factors but still retained a certain closure and failed to dissolve into the Han culture... Perhaps it was the psychological pressure of facing a strong cultural force or the reality of Yunnan's dangerous mountains and rapid waters, the isolation of large and small dams, and the difficulty of transportation that filled the creators of Yunnan culture with a sense of self-identity of being confined to a single corner. We call it the marginal culture of marginal mentality or marginal consciousness. It is a contradictory unity of inferiority and pride. If the Han culture tradition in the Central Plains has a sense of self-righteousness that considers itself to be the leader and the only one who can pass on the so-called orthodox culture, then there is a mentality in the Yunnan culture that considers itself to be a marginalized people...On the other hand, Dian culture consciousness of the reverence for tradition and the color of the national identity is also very strong, so that on the whole, each ethnic group maintains the cultural inheritance of the nature of the culture. Interestingly, not only the culture of the Yunnan minority but even the Yunnan Han culture, successive generations of Han people moved into Yunnan, and even the dynasty officials sent to Yunnan are often infected by this marginal consciousness...Because of this marginal culture of the mentality and atmosphere, and, of course, there are also material and technical constraints, the style of the Dian culture is often not strong and majestic, not gorgeous and elegant as yet, but tends to be small,

simple, and ancient. Carefully savor Yunnan's bronze, Yunnan's architecture, Yunnan's stone carvings, and Yunnan's clothing. It seems to be roughly so." (Zhang et al., 1992).

This study summarizes the characteristics of Dian culture into three aspects: plurality, primitiveness, and marginality, and uses them as a basis to analyze the important influence of Dian culture on the myths of Yunnan's nationalities, especially on the birth, development, and inheritance of the Kaiyuan Yi's "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth. Kaiyuan City is a county-level city in Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefectures, Yunnan Province. It is a county-level city with a multi-ethnic population. There are five main ethnic groups living in Kaiyuan: Han, Yi, Miao, Hui, and Zhuang, and most of them live in mountainous and semi-mountainous areas. Among them, the Yi ethnic group has the largest population, accounting for 67.5% of the city's ethnic minority population. Different production and life styles in different Yi areas in Kaiyuan have a certain impact on the inheritance of myths, and the brother-sister marriage myths for the Yi are mainly distributed in the alpine mountains in the eastern part of Kaiyuan and remote areas in the northwestern part of the city, which present a state that coincides with the geo-culture. The groups in the alpine mountainous areas in the eastern part of Kaiyuan show the extension of traditional Yi culture, while the remote areas in the northwestern part of the country show the variability of traditional Yi culture. In addition, the contact between the Kaiyuan Yi and the Han or other nationalities has been very frequent, and the mutual recounting of their lives or production contents has become a special phenomenon in the myths. Alongside the mythology, there are also related primitive beliefs, sacrificial rituals, dances, music, architecture, and other cultural contents have also been passed down, and most of the myths also reflect the marginal mentality and the sense of ethnic identity in the Yunnan culture.

The Influence of Yi Aesthetics on Kaiyuan Yi Myths

"In a culture, if the language-thinking mode is its most basic and central part, then the aesthetic mode is its most sublimated and revealed part. The aesthetic mode includes the peculiar ways and peculiar objects of aesthetic emotion, aesthetic

outlook, aesthetic ability, and aesthetic activities. When a nation's cultural pattern is formed, it is already accompanied by its aesthetic pattern...What kind of culture has what kind of aesthetic. The essence of aesthetics is to express the deep meaning inherent in a culture in a definite form of appearance. In the process of meaning being formalized, it is elevated, not only utilitarian, but also non-utilitarian; not only concrete, but also abstract. It is also these definite forms of appearance that create the aesthetic externality."(Zhang et al., 1992). In their long history, the Kaiyuan Yi people have created their own traditional culture and national aesthetics in their own specific natural and social habitats. In the various Yi regions of Kaiyuan, different natural environments and social practices have not only shaped the unique national thinking patterns of the Yi people in different Yi regions but also influenced the various psychological activities of a nation, including aesthetic activities. In the process of inheritance, Yi myths are also integrated into the simple ethical values and emotional ideals of the Yi people in different Yi areas and are presented through their unique religious ceremonies and artistic activities. Therefore, the continuation of the myths also accompanies the continuation of the rich and colorful Yi traditional arts, such as music, dances, and costumes, which also reflect the profound Yi aesthetics, belief in the ancestors, and national spirit.

As early as ancient times, the Yi people created a simple and primitive concept of ecological wholeness. They respect that "everything has a spirit" and regard man and nature as an interactive and organic ecological whole. The Red Earth Plateau in Yunnan, with its rolling hills and gullies, has a special and complex natural climate and geographic environment, coupled with the fact that the living environment of the Yi people is relatively closed and their production and life are more dependent on nature. Therefore, from the point of view of aesthetic imagery, the universal archetype of Kaiyuan Yi myths is the relationship between human beings and nature; "the various images of nature occupy an exceptionally important position in the myths. This is what Engels called 'assimilating the forces of nature by means of personification'. First of all, there is the rich totemic mythology. People were convinced that they were descended from, or related to, some natural object." (Zhang et al., 1992). "The Yi people are a nation

with special aesthetic consciousness and aesthetic pursuit. Most of the Yi people's aesthetic consciousness is not based on the practice of some abstract theory but is more expressed as an aesthetic intuition, which originates from the perception of nature and from the imitation and refinement of nature and life, and their aesthetic culture is mainly expressed in texts, activities, and physical images. The Yi are good at getting inspiration from nature, full of imagination and passion, and their aesthetic culture is highly harmonious with nature. Under the domination of the idea that everything has its own spirit, many magical and romantic myths have been created, and their native religion has also been formed. The religious beliefs of the Yi people have deeply influenced all aspects of their culture, and many cultural events and activities can be regarded as the products of the evolution or derivation of their religious rituals. The "culture of the Yi is not a 'purely aesthetic' culture, which is art for art's sake. Many of their cultural texts have not yet been completely separated from religious, ethical, and utilitarian concepts, and some of their cultural events and activities are directly or indirectly dependent on certain religious or other activities. The aesthetic culture of the Yi is to a large extent a mixture of aesthetic and practical utilitarian nature." (Peng, 2013). It can be said that the natural world and the Kaiyuan Yi people have formed a deep bond of affection and connection, which has also turned into aesthetic archetypal imagery deposited in the depths of their mythological, religious, and aesthetic cultural consciousness. In addition, the myths of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in different areas of the Kaiyuan Yi can also be seen as aesthetic thinking as national identity and full of legendary tones, expressing the basic values and aesthetic ideals of the Dian culture, which are not only an affirmation of creative labor but also an identification with the existing way of life. Various archetypal images in the myths show the characteristics of intuitive image, vague and chaotic, good at marvelous imagination and vivid similes, but lacking in logical reasoning and abstract thinking. These archetypal images are also one of the basic characteristics of the aesthetic way of thinking of the nationalities in Yunnan culture. The survival techniques and knowledge involved in the myths of the Kaiyuan Yi are not realized through logical thinking, such as

the transmission of knowledge and culture, but are passed on through aesthetic thinking and an exchange of aesthetic culture. For the Kaiyuan Yi, aesthetics not only plays a role in spreading and preserving traditional culture in social life, but also influences the construction of ethnic traditional culture in many ways.

A Comparative Study on the Myth of Yi "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" among the Kaiyuan

Comparative Mythology

Comparative mythology, also known as mythology, is an international emerging discipline and interdisciplinary discipline that was born in the late 19th century and flourished in the 20th century, serving a variety of scholarly purposes and consisting primarily of the study of cultural anthropology, comparative literature, comparative religion, and comparative linguistics from multidisciplinary perspectives. Anthropologist Covington Scott Littleton defines comparative mythology as "the systematic comparison of myths and mythological themes from a wide range of cultures," with the aim of identifying their common mythological themes and characteristics. At some level, almost all theories of myth follow a comparative approach: As religious scholar Robert D. Siegel points out, "By definition, all myth theorists are looking for similarities in myths." (Segal, 1999). Chinese scholar Chen Jianxian has clearly defined the position and significance of the "mythological motif research method" in comparative mythology, and his representative work, "The Study of the Myth of Human Repopulation after the Flood in China—A Case of Motif Analysis," has become one of the important achievements of the "Mythological Studies Library." "Chen Jianxian's research has been mainly influenced by the historical-geographical school of comparative mythology, and he has utilized the mythological motif research method. With the help of computers and databases, he has carried out an in-depth exploration of the matriculation of Chinese flood myths and made comparative analyses with the world's flood myths, which has advanced the study of Chinese flood myths and is of great scholarly significance."(Sun, 2023).

The Comparative Study on the Myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" among Yi nationality in different Yi areas of Kaiyuan

In the Chinese ethnic mythological system, the Yi brother-sister marriage myths are very distinctive because almost all of these myths are associated with the beliefs of the Yi patriarchs, which is not common among the ethnic minorities in China. Even so, different Yi myths have their own characteristics of originator beliefs. A subtype of a single-type brother-sister marriage myth of the Yi people in southwestern Guizhou is described as follows: "In ancient times, a man burst out of an orchid bamboo scroll and later united with an ape-like macaque to give birth to "Luoluo" (a branch of the Yi people)"(Wang, 2009); Yunnan Xinping Yi's "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth: "After the flood, Lao Chajue (a human being) married a Celestial Maiden (the Little Celestial Maiden hatched from the Heavenly Egg). The celestial maiden has given birth to another celestial egg, and human beings have reproduced again." (Wang,2009). It is worth noting that most of the Yi settlements in Sichuan's Greater and Lesser Liangshan Mountains and Yunnan's Ninglang, where the Yi traditional culture has been preserved in a more systematic and complete manner, have inherited these more simple and deeper myths of the Yi's native "God-Human Marriage after the Flood", such as the Yi myth of "A'heixi nimo", which reads: "The heavenly gods assigned the daughters of the four heavenly gods, Muzhe, Mufa, Muge and Mutie, and the sister of the god Shasheng, came to the mortal world to marry and breed human beings, and the offspring they gave birth to went to different places and formed various clans, tribes and groups, etc., and human beings have flourished on the earth ever since, forming human society."(Fang,2023).

The "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi are an important part of Dian culture and have an irreplaceable role in satisfying people's spiritual and cultural needs. However, in different Yi regions of Kaiyuan, such myths have been different and transformed. This paper will conduct a comparative study on the typical situation of the intersection and coexistence of the two major systems of Kaiyuan Yi "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths and "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" in Kaiyuan. The "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths inherited

from the Nisu and Aze branches of the Kaiyuan Yi "basically have such constituent elements as 'the cause of the flood', 'the preview of the flood', 'the water-avoidance tools of the two siblings', 'the marriage ceremony of the two siblings' marriage, 'the marriage of the two siblings and the birth of a freak', and the 'origins of the various ethnic groups or hundreds of family names', etc.", "The origin of the grain seed is not mentioned in the 'brother-sister-marriage after the flood' myths of many ethnic groups outside of Kaiyuan, including the Yi. But the narrative of the dog bringing the grain seed to human beings appears in some of the different texts of the 'brother-sister-marriage after the flood' myths of the Kaiyuan Yi, which is obviously related to the realization of some kind of convergence of 'God-Human Marriage after the Flood' myths and 'Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood' myths among the Kaiyuan Yi. "In addition, in the Kaiyuan Yi area, there is also a situation of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myth into a "God-Human Marriage after the Flood": "The sister of the two flood survivors was firmly opposed to the marriage of brother and sister, so the sister was married off in heaven to the god of the heavens, while a celestial maiden from the heavens came down to the earth to marry the older brother. Another term for this is: The elder brother of the two siblings of the flood survivors was favored by the heavenly maiden and allowed to go up to heaven to marry the heavenly maiden, and then a man from heaven came to earth to marry the younger sister." (Li, 2012). Even the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths and the "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" myths of the Yi' Pula people of the Kaiyuan region involve a narrative of the cause of the flood, which is rarely seen in other Yi regions.

The following are the contents of myths and related religious ceremonial activities inherited from different Yi districts in Kaiyuan:

Myths of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and Loong Sacrifice Ceremony of the Yi Ethnic Group in Kaiyuan Beige Area.

In ancient times, there was an emperor in the sky (Pula language called "Gule," referring to the sky god; see below). He had a good horse, and a group of thieves in the mortal world saw the emperor of this horse trying to steal.

The first night, they saw someone guarding and could not get started; the second night, they came again, still guarded, heavily guarded, and still couldn't get started. The third night, the group of thieves came up with a trick: they brought three pockets of fleas and three pockets of wall lice and put them into the guard's residence; the guard was made strangely itchy and could not sleep the whole night; the guard's The fourth night, because the first day was very tiring, the guards all fell asleep. The thieves succeeded in stealing the horse. So that the horse's owner would not find the horse even if he woke up, the thieves dragged the horse by its tail and made it walk backwards, so that no one who came looking for it would find its footprints. After the thieves had carried the horse away for a long distance, they took a few of the horse's droppings, pierced some of them with branches, and buried them in the ground.

The people of heaven never gave up their search, and when they saw the horse dung buried in the ground, they exclaimed, "The horse has been stolen for nine years!" Following the place where there was horse dung, they continued their search. They saw a grasshopper, but its head had been stepped on, the grasshopper's mouth was full of blood and saliva and they asked the grasshopper, "Did you see someone leading a horse through here?" Look, my head was stepped on by the horse you are talking about, and until now, my mouth is still bleeding!" From then on, when the Yi Minority people saw the lighted candles "shedding tears," they would think of the blood in the grasshopper's mouth.

As they continued their search, they saw an earthworm whose neck had been torn off and who could only stick his neck with a glutinous rice cake, so they asked the earthworm, "Did you see someone leading a horse through here?" The earthworm said, "Look, the horse you are talking about stepped on my neck, causing me pain." They helped the earthworm to reattach the severed neck, and from then on, there was always a white section in the middle of the earthworm's neck.

They continued their search and came upon a pine tree, which they asked, "Did you see anyone leading a horse through here?" The pine tree did not answer. So they went on their way and met a cypress tree and asked, "Did you see

anyone pass by here with a horse?" The cypress tree said, "Yes, but I don't know if it is the horse you are looking for." The people who were looking for the horse thought that the pine tree had a bad conscience and wanted it to be terminated without descendants, while the cypress tree had a good conscience and wanted it to be filled with children and grandchildren. From then on, when a pine tree is cut, it cannot sprout, and then it dies, and only the cypress tree can sprout again.

The emperor's horse, after searching for nine years, did not find it. He was so disappointed that the world has no one with a conscience that he decided to renew the generation. So, he got the two immortals in charge of rain and thunder, one called Zhuniwei (female) and the other called Zhugasuo (male), and said to them, "I'll let you keep on raining and drowning all the people in the world, and I want a new generation of human beings!"

And so it kept raining, and the people on earth were drowning.

The floodwaters kept going upward and reached the Heavenly Court. The emperor thought, "Although most of the people were drowned, they could not be extinct from then on." So he sent people to drop four barrels to the earth: three solid barrels made of iron and a hollow barrel made of wood. The bad guys went into the solid iron barrels; all drowned; only the brother and sister got the hollow barrels made of wood; they drilled into them and survived.

The barrel they sat in kept floating and floated to the ridge of the dam in the court of heaven. The people of the Heavenly Court thought that the people on earth were dying clean and wanted to keep these two. So they took some sticks and poked them into the ground; the water level on the ground was lowered, and these places where they had been poked became caves.

The two siblings who survived were a male named "Duo'a Mude"(in the Pula language, "Duo'a means human ancestor and "Mude "means alone, solitary) and a female named "Ni Lushengde"("Ni "is the name given to the little girl). The emperor in heaven said to the two of them, "The world is extinct, so you must be husband and wife and multiply the human race!" But the two siblings thought they were brother and sister and said they would not agree to marry, saying, "You can't drape sheepskin on

your body, and you will be struck by lightning for incest!"(Yi Pula people believe that the sheepskin is sacred, can only be worn, and cannot be draped.) The emperor said, "This is the will of heaven. If you don't believe it, try it, and if you pass the test, you have to be husband and wife.

Two people climbed up the two mountains far apart; from the mountain roll dustpan, dustpan rolled to the foot of the mountain merged together; and then rolled from the mountain grindstone, grindstone also at the foot of the mountain merged together; so brother and sister began to stand on two mountain peaks, they threaded the needle, but also really through the past. three times the test has achieved the perfect "combination." The siblings eventually married. They said to the emperor. Our parents are dead; just recognize the emperor as a father. There were no more crops and livestock on the land, so they had to ask the emperor for them. So the emperor sent a dog to them; the dog's tail has buckwheat seeds and words; since then, the earth has food and civilization. The siblings married and had six sons. The oldest, called Aji, is later Han; the second, called Amei, is later Miao; the oldest three, called Abo, are the Yi Pula people; the oldest four, called A Zhe, are the Yi Luoluo people; the oldest five, called A Xing, are the Zhuang; and the oldest six, called A Fei, are the Hui. The emperor said, "From now on, the siblings who married and reproduced this generation will stay alive; there is no need to die."

Long days passed; there were more and more people in the world, but the old people still wouldn't die. One day, the Ahang family's old father went to the mountains for a long time and did not come back. The family was anxious to look for him, looking for dizziness, but did not find him. The family saw a dead monkey—that is their father—so they brought him back to be buried grandly. On the day of the funeral, the gongs and drums were beating, and it was very lively. The sound of the drums reached the heavenly court and caught the attention of the emperor, who became very angry and exclaimed, "Didn't I say that people wouldn't need to die in the future? They like death so much; let them still die in the future."

From then on, the Zhuang would turn into monkeys after death, and the Hmong into leopards after death. Originally, the emperor's decree was transmitted to

the earth by a bird called "Qixiduoma" (the Tickbirds, which still exist in Beige.), which was meant to be: seventy or eighty years old, with white hair and old age, could be allowed to die, but small children and middle-aged people did not have to die. But the bird delivered the wrong decree, and it became: All people can die. The emperor was so angry that he tore its beak with great force and then casually threw it onto the buckwheat pile. From then on, "Qixiduoma" was born with a big beak, and the color of the buckwheat turned red because it was stained with blood from the beak (Li & Feng,2011).

At the same time, some different texts with different narratives have been passed down in the Beige Area:

When the flood reached the sky, there were two pairs of siblings left: two men and two women. One pair of siblings sat in an iron bucket and did not survive; the bucket fell to the ground, so there is a bottomless pit on the ground. The other pair of siblings hid in a wooden bucket because it could float; this pair of siblings survived after the flood. But there is no food, and finally, they found buckwheat seeds on the tail of a dog, so mankind can survive (Li & Feng,2011).

In another flood myth of the Yi Pula people of Beige, it is said that:

When the flood waters receded, the barrel in which the two siblings were hiding fell next to a cave. When the two siblings emerged from the barrel, they observed that it had not fallen into the cave, as two trees had blocked its path. One of them is called the "Samashi" tree, and the other one is called the "Shishi" tree. Because the trees saved their lives, these two trees are known as the trees that bring good luck and happiness. Later, the "Loong Gate" in the Loong ceremony of the Pula people had to be constructed with these two types of trees, and the Loong tree for the dragon ceremony had to be selected from these two types of trees (Li & Feng,2011).

Yangjie Township, Zongshe Village, and Pula people enshrine the ancestral spirit tablets, "ancestral woodcut," which is a symbol of ancestors. Every year on the

second of the second month or the third day of March of the lunar calendar to sacrifice the dragon, the tenth day of October to worship the fire temple (Yi and Han cultural mingling type of altar). The village no longer has a Beima. The content of the myths circulating in folklore is roughly as follows:

The two siblings abandoned the iron barrels and took refuge in the wooden barrels during the flood. The barrels were almost touching the sky, and they knew that all the people on the ground had died. So the two siblings plunged an iron bar into the ground and poked out several holes, whereupon five or six caves appeared. "The barrel got stuck in the Duoyi fruit tree so that the two siblings didn't fall into the holes, and from then on, the Pula people used the Duoyi fruit tree to make the 'ancestral woodcut.'" Ancestor wood carvings are used to enshrine ancestors, and if one of the two parents or older siblings passes away, they are required to carve a spirit tablet for enshrinement. The "ancestral woodcuts" cannot be accumulated, and descendants of the next generation will take the spirit cards to the graves of their ancestors and burn them so that they can be with their ancestors. Ancestral woodcuts enshrined in the home are sacrificed on July 15th, December 27th in the lunar calendar, and the spring festival, when pigs are slaughtered, so as to "bless us with no calamities and no difficulties." "This is a habit passed down from generation to generation." (Li & Feng, 2011). In addition, in Kaiyuan City, Haicaitang village, which circulated in the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth, also has a similar plot because the Niuweiba tree and the golden bamboo blocked the boat in the flood so that the boat landed on the ground smoothly, so that the brother and sister could be saved. Since then, people have recognized the Niuweiba tree as the ancestor tree, and the golden bamboo as the life-saving bamboo, which is taken as an ancestor spirit to worship (L. Li et al., 2010).

In Pipo Village, Zhongheying, elements of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth are also reflected, either directly or indirectly, in the funerary rituals of the Yi people.

"In ancient times, there was a flood. Poor people had wooden barrels to escape, and the rich had gold and silver barrels to escape. When the flood came, the barrel was blocked by a tree. The poor man climbed out to see that the barrel was stuck in a tree on the edge of the cliff, and if it moved again, it felt like it was going to fall off the cliff. At that moment, the eagle flew over, picked up the poor man, and put him on a field of 'Sharp Knife Grass'. From then on, the poor people will be that tree to save their lives as the ancestor tree. Until today, when the Yi people died, they had to cut a section of the ancestor tree to make the ancestral spirit statue. Split the tree, the east side of the carving front, and the west side of the carving back; carve out the head and neck, 'Ji Grass' is used to wrap around the head; with the root of the golden bamboo as the heart, the man made nine sections, and the woman made seven sections, hanging in the chest of the ancestral spirit statue. The 'Sharp Knife Grass' that grows under the tree, when making the statue of the ancestor spirit, should also pick off a handful to be used for sacrifice." In the funeral rituals of the local Yi people, the production of "Pujida" is the fulfillment of this mythical episode. The whole process is divided into looking for the ancestral spirit tree (Yi language "Shimishi"), looking for the "Ji Grass" (Yi language "Yeshe"), looking for the "Sharp Knife Grass" (Yi language "Luoshi"), looking for wild bamboo roots (Yi language "Ye"), making "Pujida," and other programs. In the process of practicing, the Pipo Yi people mixed a lot of ethnic spirit and beliefs, forming a set of rules to make the myths and real life more compatible (Cao,2010).

Here is worth paying attention to, located in Kaiyuan City, Laole village, relying on the local Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and the establishment of the "Human Ancestors Temple.". The Human Ancestors Temple of Laole village was built in the Qing Dynasty Daoguang years. The local Yi people commemorate and worship the flood myths survived in the brother-and-sister marriage to recreate human beings, and built it based on their unique belief culture, building temples to worship and statues to honor. Every year, on the "Sun Festival," the first and

fifteenth days of the lunar calendar, and the second day of the first month of the lunar year, the local people will go to the "Human Ancestors Temple" to make sacrifices.

The mythology of the village is roughly as follows:

Legend has it that a generation of people in ancient times, as their lives became more and more comfortable, began to disrespect heaven and earth, disrespecting the elderly and the young, and trampling on money and goods, thus angering the heavens, which sent a great flood that drowned all the people of that generation, with only a brother and sister left to survive. The two siblings escaped the disaster by tying themselves to the feet of an egret and being carried to the sky. After the flood receded, the two siblings felt quite lonely, so they split up to look for partners who could still talk to each other, but after three months, they could not find any. Suddenly, the egret that saved them flew down from the sky and said, "There is no one left in the world. If you want mankind to continue to reproduce, you should get married." But the brother thought it was unethical and was strongly against it. The egret then proposed, "How about you each carry a millstone on your back and let it roll down from the tops of two mountains, and if the millstones come together at the foot of the mountains, you will be married?" The siblings thought this was something that simply could not work and agreed. So the brother embraced the millstone and climbed up the north mountains, and the sister also climbed up the south mountains. The brother and sister rolled the two millstones down to the foot of the mountains, on the seamless merged together, with the brother's millstone in the upper and the sister's in the lower. The egret said, "Now that the millstones are together, you can get married." But the sister insisted that there was no such rule in the world and still did not agree to be married. The egret then suggested, "How about you each take a sieve and a dustpan to the mountain and let them roll down the hill, and if they merge, you will be married?" The siblings wondered where in the world such a coincidence would occur, so they nodded and agreed. So the brother took the sieve and climbed up the south mountains, and the sister took the dustpan and climbed up the north mountains. This time their dustpan and sieve rolled down to the foot of the hill and merged together. The dustpan tightly set the sieve. The egret said, "Now that the dustpan and sieve are

merged together, you should be married." The two siblings still said that there was no such rule on earth and still did not agree to be married. The egret proposed again: "You try again, brother, take the thread; sister, take the needle; stand on both sides of the river; and put the thread through the needle hole. If you succeed this time, you will have to get married. How about it?" The brother and sister agreed, as they thought this was totally impossible. So the brother took the thread and stood on the east bank of the river, and the sister took the needle and stood on the west bank of the river. The brother threw the thread to the west bank, and the sister threw the sewing needle to the east bank. The thread and needle seemed to be guided by a divine force as they reached the center of the river, with the thread passing smoothly through the needle's eye. Brother and sister no longer have anything to say, only to be married.

A year later, the sister became pregnant but ended up giving birth to a large mass of flesh. The brother was afraid, so he cut the mass of flesh into a hundred pieces with a knife and took them to various places to hang them. The next day, after being cleansed by the sun and morning dew, these chunks of meat transformed into 50 men and 50 women, and the world began to bustle with activity. The two siblings were so happy that they gave their children surnames in order to distinguish them from each other. Hanging on the plum tree, surnamed Li; hanging on the cypress tree, surnamed Bai; placing on the stone, surnamed stone; hanging on the ox horn, surnamed Liu...So a hundred children have a hundred surnames. That's where the hundred surnames come from. Later, the siblings taught their children to build houses, build fires, raise animals, farm, make clothes, and do business. The world is increasingly prosperous and eventually evolved into today's various ethnic groups, brothers and sisters. After a hundred years, the children, for the brother and sister sculpture of the image, built a temple, enshrining them as the ancestors, for generations to enjoy the children's and grandchildren's incense offerings (Zhang & Chen, 2011).

In China, the "Human Ancestors Temple" is generally referred to as the site where Nuwa and Fuxi, the originators of human regeneration, are worshipped in the myths of the Han Chinese people. The Yi "Human Ancestors Temple" in Laole Village of

Kaiyuan, although covering an area of only 20 square meters and rebuilt in recent years, presents a typical Chinese classical architectural style, but it is an extremely rare form of living mythological art materialization of nationalities in the southwest region of China, which is a display of multicultural values and a sublimation and crystallization of the grassroots culture and folk culture of Yi and Han since the Ming Dynasty. It is also a unique and precious art culture of the Yi's Nisu branch in Kaiyuan City, which has important academic value and practical significance.

Other Related Studies

The Inheritance and Change of the Myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" among the Kaiyuan Yi People

In the present-day inheritance of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth of the Kaiyuan Yi ethnic group, both the form and the content of the inheritance have inevitably been innovated and mutated, which can be summarized for the following reasons:

First of all, the geo-culture, economic development level, and corresponding sacrificial customs and production patterns of different Yi areas in Kaiyuan have had a certain impact on the transmission of myths. The myths of the Kaiyuan Yi are mainly distributed in the alpine mountainous areas in the eastern part of Kaiyuan and the remote areas in the northwestern part. The alpine mountainous groups in the far eastern part of Kaiyuan show the extension of traditional Yi culture, while the remote areas in the northwestern part of Kaiyuan show the variability of traditional Yi culture, and at the same time, the phenomenon of Human Ancestors Temple about the Yi in the northwestern part of Kaiyuan is not very common in the other Yi areas. Secondly, the cultural intermingling between the Yi and other ethnic groups in Kaiyuan has had an impact on the transmission of local myths today. Especially in the northwestern Yi area of Kaiyuan, where the Yi people accepted the Han culture earlier, transportation was relatively convenient, and foreign economic activities were more frequent, the local Yi myths and Han myths also appeared to integrate with each other. Finally, the cultural

context of Dian culture, especially in the Kaiyuan area, is also an important reason for the influence of the inheritance of Yi myths in Kaiyuan.

For example, the myths of the Yi people in the alpine mountains of eastern Kaiyuan are tightly integrated with some of the daily rituals. They're related to the more primitive geo-culture, life, and production patterns of the area. In the funeral rituals associated with the flood myth in Pipo Village in Zhongheying Township, the mythological elements are indirectly expressed through various details in the rituals. "Among them, there is a paper cutting about an ancestral spirit tree, which resembles a human figure; it's called 'wailu' in Yi, which indicates that after the death of the dead, there is a tree to cool off in summer and to hide from the wind and rain in normal times, which is a direct representation of the continuation of human life. The whole process of making the ancestral spirit tree contains various meanings of the flood myth. For example, the tree that is used to make the ancestral spirit is the one that saved the ancestors in the flood, called 'simisi'; there is the grass (called 'losi') and bamboo (called 'yesi') that saved the siblings in the flood; and there is also a relatively tiny grass called 'yemo'. So, a great deal of mythology and folklore seep into the whole process of the ceremony, resulting in a greater integration of mythological elements with real life ... The above mythological inheritance is built on the basis of the more traditional farming economy in the alpine mountains of eastern Kaiyuan, and once this economic pattern changes, the form of mythological inheritance and the chain of inheritance will be broken...And in Kaiyuan Jiaji Village, Beige Township, the Loong Ceremony on the activities of the ceremony by the Bimo sings a certain number of myths. Jiaji Village, Beige Township, belongs to the eastern mountainous area of Kaiyuan City, Honghe Hani, and Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, which is located near the Tropic of Cancer, and the Yi ethnic group as the main ethnic group is, accounting for 97.3% of the total population. Among them, Pula people, a branch of Yi nationality in China with a unique language. On August 25, Jiaji Village, Beige Township, held the 'Loong Sacrifice' activity. According to the introduction, the Loong Sacrifice Ceremony is not only a walled village thing but also an important activity in the whole Yi area... In the process of 'Loong

Sacrifice,' the priests hosted the ceremony with words in their mouths, speaking the ancient Yi language, but what he read, he could not translate word by word, saying that it was passed down from generation to generation orally, and he only knew that the general idea was to say that some of the deeds of the Loong God and sometimes also sang some of the myths of the ancestors of the Yi people. In this way, the Loong Sacrifice Ceremony has become a very good activity to popularize the myths of the Yi people."(Wang,2011).

In addition to this, the deeper interpretation of the Yi Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village, Kaiyuan City, and the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth on which it is based, "must also be systematically compared with related myths and beliefs of gods and goddesses in the central plains of China. In China's Henan, Shaanxi and Gansu provinces, folklore has been passing down myths that include the marriage of brother and sister Fuxi and Nuwa after floods and other calamities to repopulate the human race. Among them, Huaiyang and Xihua counties in Henan Province are the most typical...There are a large number of myths about Fuxi and Nuwa marrying and reproducing human beings after various disasters. These myths all have a common motif, that due to some kind of catastrophe (collapse of the sky and earth, floods), human beings became extinct, and with the help of the gods or some kind of spiritual beings, Fuxi and Nuwa survived, and through some kind of divination rituals (rolling a millstone, blending smoke, threading a needle, and so on), they became husband and wife, and reproduced human beings again. Among them, there is also a 'brother-sister-marriage after the flood' myth similar to that of Laole Village in Kaiyuan City. When we compare the 'brother-sister-marriage after the flood' myths and sacrifices to human ancestors in Laole Village, Kaiyuan, with the same type of myths and sacrifices to Fuxi and Nuwa in Henan Province, we find that there are some noteworthy cultural events in common between them...Mythological gods have always existed in people's folk belief systems and have been worshipped in the form of clan temples. In Xihua County, Henan Province, a temple fair is usually held at Nuwa City in Sidugang from the 13th to the 20th day of the first month of the lunar calendar every year...In Laole

Village, Kaiyuan City, the custom of worshipping the ancestors of man in the form of a temple fair at the Human Ancestors Temple on the 19th day of the winter month of the year has long been established. This cultural phenomenon is basically the same as the Nuwa temple fair in Xihua County in the Central Plains. Of course, the earliest temple fairs sprang up in the Central Plains and gradually became popular in the areas of Jianshui and Kaiyuan with the entry of a large number of Han Chinese immigrants into Yunnan...In Henan Province, 'in the nearby counties centered on Huaiyang, the mythological cluster of Fuxi and Nuwa siblings recreating mankind after the flood was formed again!'. As mentioned above, the 'brother-sister-marriage after the flood' myths are also densely distributed in and around Laole Village in Kaiyuan City. This cultural phenomenon is also completely similar between the two...Through the above analysis, we can observe that the myths of 'brother-sister-marriage after the flood' among the Yi ethnic group in Laole Village of Kaiyuan City, as well as the beliefs in human ancestors and their related manifestations, are indeed deeply influenced by the religious folk culture originating from the Central Plains. However, they still retain certain characteristics of the Yi ethnic group."(Li, 2010).

Finally, after the research, it was found that in the Yi gathering area in Kaiyuan, the cultural context of myth transmission has also changed quite obviously. In terms of the survival form of myths, they are mainly in the form of living myths passed on orally in the production life, traditional religious ceremonies and folk beliefs of the local Yi people. "Although myths in oral traditional culture have a long history, they are very fragile in terms of survival environment. With the acceleration of the modernization process of mankind, on the one hand, these works are faced with the great impact of foreign cultures and the commodity economy, from the oldest and the most primitive oral medium, to the written medium, the modern printing medium, the modern electronic medium, and up to today's Network media. All this means that the context of oral culture has changed dramatically, resulting in oral cultural products gradually being written or audio-visual text influences, such as myths that rely mainly on human memory and oral tradition, which will face a huge challenge, resulting in the disappearance of myths,

which means the loss of information, but also the loss of national cultural traditions. On the other hand, due to the popularization of scientific consciousness, those seemingly absurd myths will gradually lose their market in people's cultural inheritance. Not only is the soil for myths changing under the new circumstances, but many folk singers, artists, narrators, storytellers, and other inheritors are experiencing a break in their generations for various reasons, which will also make the inheritance and protection of myths difficult...Certain parts of the traditional cultures of the various ethnic groups are being continuously lost. It is even more difficult to truly understand the systematic and complete traditional culture of the various ethnic groups, especially the hidden culture."(Wang,2011).

Reinventing the Value of the Myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" among the Kaiyuan Yi People

The myths of the nationalities in Dian culture are an important part of human culture, containing the aesthetic culture and national spirit of a people. Although the vast majority of ethnic groups in China have not been able to retain their own traditional mythological textual records due to problems with their writing systems, mythology continues to persist in modern society through oral traditions, religious rituals in the form of "living" ceremonies, and folk arts, among other methods, reflecting the ethnic psychology of the people. Myth is "an inevitable product of human cultural processes and a complex cultural phenomenon of dynamic development. But it is by no means a leisure creation of mankind, but a cultural achievement with obvious social utilitarianism. As far as the nature of myth is concerned, what it mainly illustrates or reveals may not be the truth or law, but it can be an allegory or symbol. What the myth explains originates from people's sensory perception of daily experience, and to a certain extent, this perception is a kind of conception that avoids the contradiction between man and nature, man and man, and these conceptions cannot and do not need to be put to the test in practice. Because the premise of the circulation of myths is that people are first of all unconditionally convinced, as if the myth of the 'emperor of heaven' itself is an imagined idea, real life simply cannot go to prove it. But this is not to say that myths are

entirely the dreams of human beings in their childhood, or that they are dream stories created by human beings by their imagination or fantasies. On the contrary, myth is the best and most direct cultural carrier for human beings to solve the problems of their own survival and development. It is undeniable that these non-renewable cultural heritages are rich in 'rationality' that is conducive to national unity and national development. Such as the interpretation of the rules of human existence in myths, the grasp of the relationship between human beings and nature, the expression of reverence for human beings, and the expectation of a harmonious environment for human beings, in a sense, this can be regarded as a concept in line with the development of human beings."(Wang,2011). Therefore, if the inheritance of myths is not protected in a timely and effective manner and if the social, artistic, and economic values of myths cannot be realized, these cultural messages may die out completely.

As we know, in the protection of intangible cultural heritage in China, the living myths of nationalities are often regarded as a kind of feudal superstition and excluded from the scope of cultural protection because they involve some religious beliefs and sacrificial rituals. Therefore, it is important to correctly recognize the inheritance of ethnic minority myths in the present day and do a good job in the protection and development of intangible cultural heritage. In the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi, the core values of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation are also reflected. "Among them, what is of particular practical significance is the idea of harmony between man and nature, between man and man, as well as the spirit of pioneering, traditional morality, etc., embodied in these myths...One of the fundamental psychological motives for the creation of myths by the forefathers was to establish their own ethnic origin, the relationship between human beings and nature, and the position of human beings in the whole natural world. The myths of the southern peoples reflect more the idea of harmonious coexistence between man and nature and the spirit of pioneering. This is first manifested in the relationship between the symbols of human beings and the symbols of nature...Another fundamental deep psychological motive for the creation of

myths by the forefathers is to establish the relationship between their own ethnic group and the other ethnic groups, and the myths of the southern ethnic groups also reflect a kind of thinking on the harmonious coexistence of the ethnic groups."(Liu, 2008).

Summarizing the previous discussion, the living myths of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Kaiyuan Yi people not only provide psychological and spiritual support for the local Yi people at the spiritual level but also convey cultural wisdom and values through the functions of inheritance and education. The rich connotation and unique value of these myths are of great significance in reality. With the rapid development of modern science, technology, and social economy, the traditional cultures of many ethnic groups around the world are at risk of disappearing, which makes the living myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Kaiyuan Yi people even more precious and its value and significance to Chinese culture and global civilization even more prominent. The value of reshaping the mythology of the Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan lies in safeguarding the profound cultural connotations and unique symbolic values carried by mythology and inheriting and promoting the outstanding cultural traditions of nationalities in Yunnan, which has become an important perspective in the construction of the theoretical framework of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The research used in this study was primarily qualitative in nature, and its purpose was to analyze the historical reasons for the formation of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City and to comparatively study the similarities and differences in the living myths of Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and their related cultural traditions in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City. The study aims to ensure the reliability of the study through detailed Archival and Documentary Research method, Ethnographic Approach method and Comparative Research to ensure the reliability and validity of the research.

This study is mainly divided into three stages:

(1) The first phase of the study began with the Archival and Documentary Research method, in which historical archives and documents were reviewed to understand the evolution of the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths, the history of inheritance, the cultural context, and the relevant cultural protection policies.

(2) Based on the results of the first phase, the researchers conducted the second phase of the study. In the second phase, using the Ethnographic Approach method, the researchers collected the experiences, stories, and insights of the inheritors of the intangible cultural heritage, related community cultural protection workers, and university students through field research and in-depth interviews in order to obtain rich information about the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi people and to explore the revelations about their inheritance and protection.

(3) In the third stage, through Comparative Research conducted to compare and analyze the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myth of the Yi ethnic group in different Yi districts of Kaiyuan City, the "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" myth of the Kaiyuan Yi ethnic group, and the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myth of the Han ethnic group in Huaiyang, Henan Province, so as to explore the

commonalities and differences, as well as the mutual influences and exchanges that existed in these myths. This chapter will study the problem from a holistic, comprehensive, and detailed perspective so as to obtain more comprehensive research results, and we will find out the cultural and ecological contexts that Dian culture has laid down for the creation of myths of the Kaiyuan Yi and the influence of Yi aesthetics on the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Kaiyuan Yi.

Research Methods

Archival and Documentary Research

Ethnographic Approach

Comparative Research

Population and Sample

Main Research Object

Geographic Scope

Population Scope and Sample Sampling

Research Tools

Literature Review and Analysis

Fieldwork

In-depth Interviewing (Unstructured Interviewing)

Comparative Research

Data Collection

Data Analysis and Synthesis

Research Methods

The nature of this research is mainly qualitative, and the following research methods will be adopted to study "The Value Reconstruction of Yi Myths in Dian Culture, A Comparative Study on the Myths of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of Yi people in Kaiyuan City.".

Archival and Documentary Research

Archival and Documentary Research is an important research methodology. "This research tradition has arisen from a specific set of historical, disciplinary, and institutional conditions. The very emergence of 'documentation' is predicated upon a set of long-term processes in which humans have developed the capacity to use symbols and store knowledge such that it can be exchanged and inter-generationally transmitted." (Hughes & Goodwin, 2014). This research method is typically used to collect, analyze, and interpret historical documents, archival materials, and other written materials, often in the humanities, social sciences, history, and cultural studies, in order to gain insight into a particular topic, period, or event. The advantage of the archival and documentary research methods is that they can provide a wealth of historical and cultural information on the myths of the Kaiyuan Yi, helping researchers to deeply understand the social background, inheritance dynamics, and cultural impacts of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi in a specific period of time or region. However, archival and documentary research also has its own limitations, such as the possible lack of documents, archival destruction, the restricted nature of documents, etc. Therefore, researchers need to deal with them cautiously and analyze them comprehensively with other research methods.

Ethnographic Approach

The Ethnographic Approach, originating in the fields of anthropology and sociology in the early 20th century, is a research method based on fieldwork and in-depth interviews that aims to describe and analyze in detail "the social and cultural life of a particular ethnic group...The ethnographic approach covers three main areas: (i) cultural behavior, i.e., what do people living in a certain culture do? (ii) Cultural crafts and arts, which refers to what people living in a certain culture use, appreciate, or have habits of? (iii) Cultural language, which refers to the language and ways in which people living in a culture communicate, convey information, and hold beliefs?" ("Ethnographic Research", 2019). The Ethnographic Approach method lies in its ability to provide in-depth, comprehensive, and specific data and information to help the researcher gain an

in-depth understanding of the historical reasons for the emergence of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi, as well as the similarities and differences of the mythological contents, myth-related folklore and religious cultures, the changes in cultural contexts, and the modes of mythological inheritance of the living myths of the Yi people in the local area. However, the limitations of the ethnographic method may also be reflected in the subjective biases of the researchers and ethical issues in the research process.

Comparative Research

Comparative research has been widely used in various disciplines, and the research method aims to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships, changes, and influences between different objects, groups, cultures, regions, etc. by comparing their similarities and differences. Lin Juren, a professor of the Department of Sociology at Shandong University who has been engaged in teaching and researching research methods for many years, points out that a comparative research method refers to an analytical method of comparing two or more things or objects to find out the similarities and differences between them (Lin, 2017). It can be seen that the advantage of the comparative research method is that it can provide a cross-cultural, cross-regional, and cross-period research channel, which not only helps to discover the general rules of minority myth transmission in Dian culture but also facilitates the exploration of the similarities and differences in the cultural transmission of the "brother-sister-marriage after the flood" myths including the "god-human marriage after the flood" myths in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan and the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" among the Han Chinese in Huaiyang, Henan Province." Similarly, the comparative research method needs to pay attention to the problems of ethnic and regional cultural bias and bias in the selection of research subjects.

Population and Sample

Main Research Object

The Yi myths brewed in a diversified and coexisting cultural atmosphere are the root of the cultures of the various Yi ethnic branches in Kaiyuan. Therefore, the myths of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Yi ethnic groups in the main Yi settlements of Beige Village, Zongshe Village, Pipo Village, and Laole Village (Human Ancestors Temple) and the folk rituals and ceremonies related to the myths and their arts. Because of its long history, relatively complete mythological material, and strong Beima culture, there is not only the only provincial intangible heritage protection list in Kaiyuan, the traditional cultural protection zone of the Beige Yi (Pula people), but also the only surviving "Human Ancestors Temple" in Laole village, which enshrines two siblings of the flood survivors in southwestern China, and therefore it has become the main scope and main object of the study of this paper.

The specific research objects are as follows:

(1) The co-existing "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths (including variations of the myths) and the "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" myths in Beige Village, Beige Township, Kaiyuan, as well as the Loong sacrifices rituals and activities related to the myths;

(2) The myth of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" in Zongshe Village, Yangjie Township, Kaiyuan, as well as the related "Ancestor Woodcarving" and folklore activities;

(3) The myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" in Pipo Village, Zhongheyang Township, Kaiyuan, and the related funeral rituals and folk activities;

(4) The myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" in Laole Village, Xiaolongtan Township, Kaiyuan, and the Human Ancestors Temple built on the basis of the myth, including religious ceremonies such as temple fairs and folkloric activities, while the myth of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and the Human Ancestors Temple of Huaiyang, Henan Province, are also taken as objects of further comparative study.

Geographic Scope

The villages in Kaiyuan City where the Yi ethnic group gathered, of which four villages, namely, Beige Village of Beige Township, Zongshe Village of Yangjie Township, Pipo Village of Zhongheying Township, and Laole Village of Xiaolongtan Township (the Human Ancestors Temple), are the main geographical areas of study, and the fieldwork will be conducted here.

Beige Area belongs to the eastern part of Kaiyuan City, Honghe Prefecture, Yunnan Province, where the mountains are soaring and stretching, and the transportation is inconvenient, but the old bird road passes through here, and the alpine azaleas bloom here. The Yi Pula language "Beige" means "the place where the rocky mountains are a little bit past.". The total population of Beige is nearly 1,500 people, of which the Yi (Pula) account for about 94%. According to historical records, the Pula is the seedling Miao descendant of the ancient Gu Pu Na Jiu Long. The township has 41 natural villages, of which 38 are Yi villages, which belong to the typical Yi settlement area. The Yi Pula tribe has been living in the alpine mountainous area of Beige Village for a long time, Due to the small mobile population, rarely affected by external influences, Beige has always maintained a strong traditional cultural atmosphere, and most of the natural villages have preserved the original cultural heritage of the Yi Pula people to a large extent. In 2009, the Beige Yi (Pula Branches) Traditional Cultural Reserve was listed as a provincial intangible heritage protection list, is the only provincial intangible heritage list protection project of the Kaiyuan, and is one of the three whole township-based protected areas in Yunnan Province. Myths still have a great charm for the Pula people in Beige Area. Not only are many elderly people familiar with the myths of their own people, but there are also a large number of Beima who enjoy a special status in the local area, in charge of presiding over a variety of primitive religious and sacrificial ceremonies, chanting or telling a large number of myths, is an important inheritor and preserver of the Yi myths.



Figure 7 Kaiyuan Beige Village

Source: Li,H.Q.(2020). Kaiyuan melting media center official microblog: Beautiful Kaiyuan. <https://weibo.com/ttarticle/p/show?id=2309404520017822613816>.

Zongshe Village, which belongs to Kaiyuan City, Yangjie Township, east of Masang Village, south of Mengzi County, Xibaile Township, west of Yangliu Village, and north of Beige Township, is a traditional village of the Pula people, a branch of the Yi ethnic group. The village population is nearly 3,000 people of the Yi people; the other ethnic groups have more than 380 people. Zongshe Village Pula people speak Yi and Han, and women like to wear Yi clothing. The village no longer has a Beima. The "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth of Zongshe Village has lost its integrity and specific details in the process of inheritance due to the influence of foreign factors, especially the strong invasion of Han culture, but the influence of the myth has not disappeared. Here, the Yi people associate the worship of ancestor spirits with the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and regard the Duoyi fruit tree as an ancestor, and they make the "Ancestor Spirit Woodcarving" for enshrinement, integrating myths with the folk beliefs of the nation. This situation is also reflected in other Yi areas in Kaiyuan, which is also an important feature of the living myth.



Figure 8 Kaiyuan Zongshe Village

Source: Liu, J.Y. (2021). The official microblogging of the headline of culture and tourism- Kaiyuan Culture and Tourism. <http://www.wenlvnews.com/p/590795.html>.

Zhongheyang is the eastern gate of Kaiyuan City in Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture, as well as the eastern gate of Honghe Prefecture. Pipo Village in Zhongheyang Town used to be a place where horse gangs and merchants gathered, and it is located in the depths of the Dahei Foothills of the East Mountain, where Zhongheyang Town, Beige Township, and Dazhuang Township converge. The name "Pipo Village" comes from the Yi word "a stockade surrounded by stones." As an important ancient post station, this place was once noisy and bustling, and many cultures once collided and exchanged here. The ethnic minorities (in China) with more than 1,000 people in the population statistics of Zhongheyang Township are mainly the three ethnic groups, namely, Yi, Miao, and Zhuang, of which Among them, the Yi ethnic group has a population of nearly 20,000, accounting for more than 60% of the minority population, most of them are the Luoluo of the Yi ethnic group, and their language is widely used in daily life. In Pipo Village, there is also a Kaiyuan region's only familiar with the Yi text inheritor, Li Caibao. As a representative of the intangible cultural heritage of the Red River State, he used his own efforts to pass on the traditional culture of the Yi people and the origins of the Yi people in Pipo Village. The villagers of Pipo Village

maintain their primitive religious beliefs, and the inheritance of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is also very characteristic of originality. Along with it, there is also the worship of the ancestral spirits associated with the myth, and in the continuous development and change of the myths and nationalities, the Yi people of Pipo Village injected the blood of nationality into their production and life, folklore rituals, and other activities, and formed a set of rules for the integration of myths and real life.

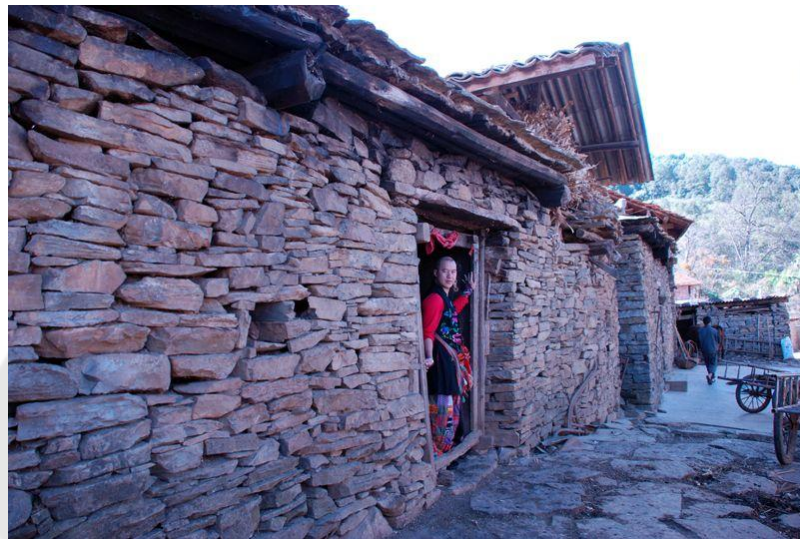


Figure 9 Kaiyuan Pipo Village

Source: Cai,W.L.(2021). The official microblogging of the headline of culture and tourism- Kaiyuan Culture and Tourism. <http://www.wenlvnews.com/p/596039.html>.

Laole Village belongs to Kaiyuan City, Xiaolongtan Office of Zejiu Administrative Village, and belongs to the semi-mountainous areas. The village has 45 households, with a total population of less than 200 people. In addition to a few Han Chinese households, more than 90% are Yi. The Yi people in the village belong to the Gaisu branch and call themselves Gaisupo and Luoluopo. Its ancestors can be traced back to the Western Han period of the Aning barbarians, to the Tang and Song dynasties, belonging to the Wu barbarians, "thirty-seven parts" of the Quzhong parts. Until the Ming Dynasty, here has been the implementation of the Tusi system: After the Ming Dynasty, the Han immigrants and the Han Chinese culture began to incorporate,

one after another, the multicultural coexistence of the mixed state of ethnic minorities and Han Chinese, and it is this kind of ethnic cultural intermingling that finally gave birth to the crystallization of the material culture of Laole Village folk beliefs—the Human Ancestors Temple—which made Laole Village a village full of "sacredness" in the minds of the Yi people. The Laole Village Human Ancestors Temple, which was built on the basis of this myth, is perhaps the only surviving "Human Ancestors Temple" in the minority areas of Southwest China, which is extremely rare in China's southwest region of an ethnic minority living mythological art physical form and multi-cultural value show, since the Ming Dynasty, the Yi, Han primary-level cultural, folk culture sublimation of the rounded and crystallization, but also the branches of the Yi ethnic group in the city of Kaiyuan in the unique and precious artistic and cultural refraction, has an important academic value and practical significance. From the perspective of folk myth and folk belief, the temple is undoubtedly a rare ecological carrier in terms of ethnocultural science and human sociology.



Figure 10 Kaiyuan Laole Village

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2023), Photographed by the researcher herself.

Population Scope and Sample Sampling

In order to ensure the credibility and rationality of the research, it is necessary to develop detailed interview guidelines, so as to improve the comparability and consistency of data. In addition, the integrity and accuracy of the research data can be ensured by means of audio recording, notes or video recording, and provide a basis for subsequent text analysis.

This comparative study will conduct an in-depth interview survey on the protectors and inheritors of major myths and related culture and art of different branches of Yi people in Kaiyuan City. They are active and influential in the field of myth culture, have in-depth understanding and research experience of the inheritance and protection of Yi people's myths in Kaiyuan City, and can provide rich information and insights. Especially those inheritors or practitioners who have lived in the village almost all their lives and are directly engaged in the inheritance and protection of myths. In addition, the selection of subjects for this interview was divided into two main age groups: 20–40 years old and over 40 years old. The main reason for choosing over 40 years old is that Yi villagers in this age group usually have lived in the village for a long enough period of time, and they have a deeper understanding of and respect for the village's national mythological and cultural heritage as well as national spirituality. In addition, senior Yi cultural experts have accumulated rich experience through long-term field research and academic studies. For the age group of 20–40 years old, especially young college students, we also conducted a survey to understand their knowledge of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan. This will help explore new ways to promote ethnic culture and provide a reference for more targeted academic and socio-cultural research.

Table 1 The Population Scope and The Sample Sampling

Places and persons interviewed	Total interviewees and their age range	Criteria for Sample Selection
Beige Village, Beige Township, Kaiyuan City Myths and their associated cultural inheritors	1 over 40 years old	Interviews were conducted with myth-bearers or persons in charge (including Beima) who have lived in the village since childhood and have a deep knowledge of the village's mythological and cultural traditions.
Zongshe Village, Yangjie Township, Kaiyuan City Myths and their associated cultural inheritors	1 over 40 years old	There are no more Beima in Zongshe Village, Yangjie Township, and villagers who have lived in the village since childhood, have a deep understanding of the village's mythological and cultural traditions, and still pass on myths orally and make and worship "Ancestral Woodcarvings" will be selected.
Pipo Village, Zhongheyang Township, Kaiyuan City Myths and their associated cultural inheritors	2 1 person 20–40 years old 1 person over 40 years old	<p>The villagers of Pipo Village have maintained their primitive concepts of religious beliefs. The inheritance of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is also highly primitive. Along with this, there is also the ancestral spirit worship associated with the myth.</p> <p>The interviewees are mainly myth inheritors or persons in charge of the village who have lived in the village since childhood and have a deep understanding of the village's mythological and cultural traditions.</p>

Table 1 (Continued)

Places and persons interviewed	Total interviewees and their age range	Criteria for Sample Selection
<p>Laole Village, Xiaolongtan Township, Kaiyuan City (Human Ancestors Temple) Myths and their associated cultural inheritors</p>	<p>2 over 40 years old</p>	<p>The interviewees are mainly myth inheritors or persons in charge of the village who have lived in the village since childhood and have a deep understanding of the village's mythological and cultural traditions, as well as persons in charge of the protection of the Human Ancestors Temple.</p>
<p>Relevant persons in charge of the cultural relics management department of the Kaiyuan Municipal Government and the Kaiyuan Yi Society</p>	<p>3 over 40 years old</p>	<p>Cao Ding'an, former director of the Cultural Relics Administration of Kaiyuan. Li Yanbo, secretary of the Cultural Relics Management Institute of Kaiyuan. Pu Tongmei, Vice President of Kaiyuan Yi Association</p>
<p>Minority college students in Kunming University of Science and Technology</p>	<p>5 20–40 years old</p>	<p>This interview will be conducted with four randomly selected minority college students from Kunming University of Science and Technology (including but not limited to Yi)</p>

Research Tools

In this study, the researchers will use the following research tools:

Literature Review and Analysis

The researcher first defines the purpose of the study and the research questions and finds relevant archives, literature, and other written materials related to the Kaiyuan Yi myths. These materials include, but are not limited to, local records and ethnographies of Kaiyuan, historical documents of Yi mythology literature in Kaiyuan, relevant documents of the government for the protection and inheritance of Yi myth culture and art, all kinds of related reports, journals, theses, books, image resources, and so on.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is a common qualitative research method. Through field visits to Beige Village, Zongshe Village, Pipo Village and Laole Village in Kaiyuan City, the researcher observes and participates in the religious ceremonies and folkloric activities of the local Yi people related to the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood", conducts in-depth interviews and exchanges with the main inheritor of the myth, Beima, the practitioners of the traditional culture of the local Yi ethnic group and the conservation workers, establishes intimate relationships with them, and collects their experiences, stories, insights, and opinions, in order to obtain a rich amount of information and data, and to better understand the environment for the inheritance of the myths of the local Yi ethnic group, the family-social structure of the Yi ethnic group, the aesthetic psychology, and the behavioral patterns.

In-depth Interviewing (Unstructured Interviewing)

Through the in-depth interview method, we obtained the most direct and authentic amount of original data and had a clearer understanding of the research object and research purpose from a systematic perspective with intricate details. In-depth interviewing is a task that requires care and respect. Prior to conducting an interview, it is crucial to establish a relationship of trust with the interviewee, respect their

beliefs and culture, and conduct in-depth research and understanding of the cultural content associated with local myths, as this will allow you to better understand the perspectives and contexts of the local people and will help you to ask more meaningful questions. During the interview process, respect the privacy of the interviewees, make sure that you do not disclose information that they are not willing to share, ask open-ended questions to gain more information, encourage the local people to share their stories and insights, and finally, take and archive appropriate notes and express your appreciation to the local people and provide feedback at the end of the interview.

Comparative Research

The researcher first needs to identify the subjects or groups to be compared, understand their context and characteristics, and ensure that they have some similarity or relevance in order to make a valid comparison. The comparative objects of this study are the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and the corresponding religious ceremonies and artistic activities inherited from four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City, Yunnan Province, namely, the Loong Sacrifice Ceremony in Beige Village of Beige Township; the "Ancestor Woodcarving of the Zongshe Village of Yangjie Township; the Funeral Ceremony in Pipo Village of Zhongheyang Township; and the "Human Ancestors Temple" Festivals in Laole Village of Xiaolongtan Township. On this basis, further comparative studies will be conducted on the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi and the "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi, as well as the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi and the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths of the Huaiyang Han. We will explore the ethnic, aesthetic, and cultural differences contained in the myths and analyze the socio-historical and cultural background reasons for the differences.

This comparative study focuses on four directions of comparative analysis: the contents of the myths; the similar folk belief practices related to myths; the geo-socio-cultural environments; and the mode of transmission of the living myths.

Data Collection

(1) Data collected by literature review and analysis methods is organized and categorized for subsequent analysis and use, which may include such tasks as digitizing files, creating abstracts or annotations, etc.

(2) Fieldwork collects data through observation and in-depth interviews, including direct observation of behavior, oral interviews, and recording daily activities.

(3) Collect and sort out the files and documents of the comparison objects, and establish a systematic comparison framework to help organize and analyze the similarities and differences between the comparison objects. The comparative framework consists of four main directions: the contents of the myths; the similar folk belief practices related to myths; the geo-socio-cultural environment; and the mode of transmission of the living myths.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

(1) Information obtained from literature reviews and analysis methods is first analyzed. This includes identifying key information, assessing reliability and credibility, and comparing differences between sources. Finally, the researcher will present insights, perspectives, or conclusions about the research topic based on the results derived from the analysis. This may involve writing thesis materials, producing comparative charts of the study, or developing a scientifically sound research framework, among other things. It is important to note that throughout the research process, the researcher will need to constantly verify and validate the accuracy and reliability of the information to ensure the credibility of the findings.

(2) Secondly, the fieldwork provides an opportunity to directly observe the current status of the local Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth transmission by penetrating into different Yi gatherings in Kaiyuan. The researcher will record and organize the collected data, including written records, audio records, video records, etc. Patterns, trends, and relationships will be discovered, and theoretical or descriptive conclusions will be formed.

(3) Again, based on the previous research materials and analysis results, the information obtained from the in-depth interviews will be systematically recorded, organized, analyzed, and interpreted.

(4) Finally, based on the research framework of the comparative study, an in-depth analysis of the comparative objects is carried out to compare all the data obtained in order to identify the similarities and differences between the different objects. Based on the results of the comparative analysis, conclusions and insights are presented to explain the causes and implications of the similarities and differences between the different objects.



CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the data obtained using the research methods described in Chapter 3. It aims to present and interpret the research results in relation to the main research objectives set out in Chapter 1. In addition, the chapter will discuss the significance of these research results within the theoretical framework established in Chapter 2.

The main objectives of this study are: (1) to analyze the historical reasons for the formation of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City; (2) to comparatively study the similarities and differences in the living myths of Yi "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and their related cultural traditions in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City.

According to the above research objectives and corresponding research methods, the data analysis of this study is divided into three stages:

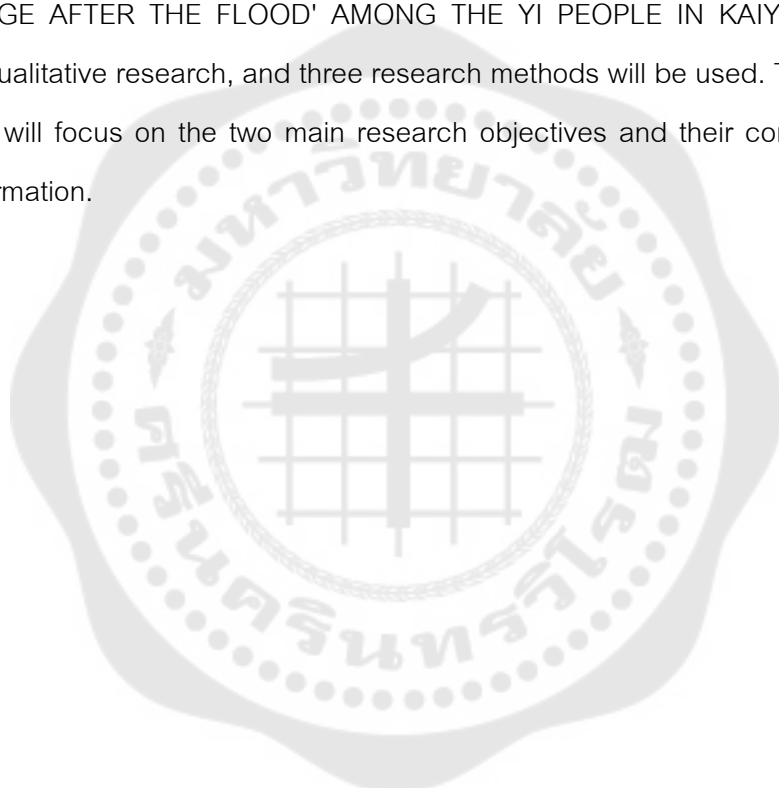
(1) The first stage began with archival and documentary research, in which historical archives and literature were consulted to understand the evolution of the Kaiyuan Yi myths, their transmission history, cultural context, and related protection policies.

(2) Based on the research results of the first stage, the second stage of research was carried out. In the second stage, the ethnographic approach methods were used. Fieldwork and in-depth interviewing were conducted to record the experiences, stories, and insights of inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, cultural protection workers in related communities, college students, etc., in order to obtain rich information about the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and explore its inheritance and protection.

(3) The third stage is comparative research. A comparative analysis is conducted of the myths of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" among the Yi people in different areas of Kaiyuan City, the "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" myth of the

Kaiyuan Yi people, and the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myth of the Nüwa and her husband Fuxi in Huaiyang, Henan Province. The commonalities and differences, as well as the mutual influences and exchanges are explored. The problem is studied in depth from a holistic, comprehensive, and meticulous perspective so as to obtain more comprehensive research results.

The essence of this research is "THE VALUE RECONSTRUCTION OF YI MYTHS IN DIAN CULTURE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE MYTHS OF 'BROTHER-SISTER MARRIAGE AFTER THE FLOOD' AMONG THE YI PEOPLE IN KAIYUAN, CHINA." is mainly qualitative research, and three research methods will be used. The research and analysis will focus on the two main research objectives and their corresponding data and information.



The historical reasons for the formation of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City

Table 2 Data analysis of the historical reasons for the formation of the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in the four Yi districts of Kaiyuan City

Research Channel	Literature Review and Analysis	Fieldwork	In-Depth Interviewing	Data summary
Historical Background	In-depth understanding of local historical documents, ethnographies, and folklore of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City, especially the origin and development of the myth "brother-sister marriage after the flood."	Field trips to the village included interviews with elders of the Yi ethnic group, bearers of mythological culture, as well as observation of or actual participation in local myth-related sacrificial rituals, etc., to explore the history and methods of transmission of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in the village and collect oral historical materials and image data.	In-depth interviews were conducted with myth transmitters or persons in charge with a deep understanding of the village's mythical cultural traditions, village elders, and experts on folk Yi culture research to gain an in-depth understanding of the villagers' memories and interpretations of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood," the way in which mythical culture is passed down, and to obtain more in-depth cultural information.	<p>The influence of cultural characteristics such as the diversity, marginality, and primitiveness of the Dian culture, coupled with the development history of the Yi ethnic group in Kaiyuan City and the influence of its unique geographical and cultural context, has created a unique mythological and aesthetics model for the Kaiyuan Yi people based on nature worship and ancestor worship. In the myths of the Kaiyuan Yi people, the social order that was reborn after the flood is based on brother-sister marriage. This setting shows the Yi people's worship of gods and ancestors and their awe of natural forces, as well as the resilience of the Yi people in difficult situations. At the same time, through the symbol of brother-sister marriage, it shows the importance the Yi people attach to family and blood ties.</p> <p>These cultural elements are still passed down in the cultural traditions of the Kaiyuan Yi people today and are shown in the diversity and profundity of the mythological stories in different villages and versions.</p>

Table 2 (Continued)

Research Channel	Literature Review and Analysis	Fieldwork	In-Depth Interviewing	Data summary
Geographical Environment	<p>A deeper understanding of the natural landscape, climate, and other ecological environments of different Yi districts in Kaiyuan City, as well as the similarities and differences in the living and production methods of the Yi people, and the important influence of geographical environmental factors on the transmission of Yi mythology.</p>	<p>The Kaiyuan Yi District is mostly surrounded by mountains, and the terrain is characterized by a combination of mountains and basins. It is rich in natural landscapes and biodiversity, and these natural resources provide the basis for the traditional agriculture, folk culture, and way of life of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City. In particular, the traditional belief in the sacred place of "Loong Forest" has greatly contributed to the ecological and environmental protection of the Dahei Mountains area of Kaiyuan.</p>	<p>Gain an in-depth understanding of how the ancestors of the Yi people developed the unique ethnic aesthetics and beliefs of the Kaiyuan Yi people in the unique geographical climate and other ecological environments of Kaiyuan City, as well as the unique mythological culture of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in the mythology system of the ethnic minorities in Southwest China.</p>	<p>Despite being influenced by the borderline and relatively closed culture of the Dian culture, the geographical environment of Kaiyuan City has provided the Yi people with abundant natural resources and a unique living space for their lives and culture. The topography and climatic characteristics of the mountainous area have profoundly influenced the Yi people's agricultural production methods, living patterns, social structure, and even aesthetics. Natural disasters such as floods and flash floods have also shaped Yi cultural symbols and aesthetic beliefs, especially the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood." As modernization progresses, the geographical environment and resources of Kaiyuan City will continue to play an important role in the social, economic, cultural, and artistic development of the Yi people, while also facing the challenges of ecological protection and sustainable development.</p>

Table 2 (Continued)

Research Channel	Literature Review and Analysis	Fieldwork	In-Depth Interviewing	Data summary
Social Structure	<p>Kaiyuan City is a multi-ethnic region. With the development of society and the continuous penetration of external culture, the social structure of the Yi ethnic group has undergone significant changes. From the traditional tribal structure to the integration of a more mobile and diverse modern society. In addition, the Kaiyuan Yi's myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is an important part of their culture and has profound ethnic symbolism.</p>	<p>Observe and record the social structure of the village, understand kinship and marriage systems, and the Beima culture within the social structure.</p>	<p>From the interview data, it is clear that in modern society, the traditional Yi extended family is gradually changing to a nuclear family, and the traditional collective lifestyle is gradually changing to an individual-centered family model. As external economic pressures increase, attitudes towards marriage, education, and other aspects are also changing. Most Yi villagers have begun to accept and practice modern concepts of marriage and family.</p>	<p>The myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is closely related to social change and the evolution of marriage systems. Blood marriage, also known as the "bloodline family," is one of the forms of marriage and family during the transition from primitive groups to clan communes. The Yi myth of the brother-sister marriage after the flood" not only serves the functions of cultural inheritance, moral education, and religious belief in modern society but also plays a role in cultural adaptation and innovation when facing the challenges of modernization and globalization. As society develops further, the Yi myth will continue to play its unique social functions in Yi society and adapt to the changing times.</p>

Table 2 (Continued)

Research Channel	Literature Review and Analysis	Fieldwork	In-Depth Interviewing	Data summary
Religious Belief	Collect various documentary materials on the traditional religious belief system of the Yi ethnic group and its impact on the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" for data analysis	Investigate the mythological elements in religious rituals through communicating with local villagers or observing local traditional sacrificial activities.	Conduct in-depth interviews with mythological inheritors or persons in charge who have a deep understanding of the mythological and cultural traditions of the Yi village to understand the gods or ancestor worship in the myths, sacrificial rituals, etc., and the intrinsic connection between the traditional religion of the Yi people and the myths.	The mythological system of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City is closely related to religious factors, especially the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood." These myths not only reflect the historical heritage of Yi culture but are also closely linked to their religious beliefs, sacrificial rituals, and folk beliefs. Religious factors in these myths are usually manifested in the worship of natural forces, ancestor worship, and sacrificial rituals to gods and Loongs.

Table 2 (Continued)

Research Channel	Literature Review and Analysis	Fieldwork	In-Depth Interviewing	Data summary
Cultural Heritage	Gain an in-depth understanding of the protection of the Yi ethnic group's mythological culture by the relevant government cultural heritage protection departments in Kaiyuan City, as well as the current situation and main methods of passing on the mythological culture in different Yi areas.	Through on-site visits, communicating with villagers or participating in the observation of local festivals, traditional performances, sacrificial activities, etc., analyze the transmission of the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in different Yi villages	Conduct in-depth interviews with mythological inheritors or persons in charge who have a deep understanding of the mythological and cultural traditions of the Yi village to explore how to protect and pass on traditional Yi mythology in an era of rapid technological and cultural development	The preservation and transformation of myths reflect adaptation and innovation in cultural inheritance. In the face of the many difficulties encountered in the inheritance of traditional Yi mythology, we must respond positively and use new technologies and new methods, as well as flexible and diverse methods such as multimedia and data networks, to achieve a new transmission of traditional culture.

Table 2 (Continued)

Research Channel	Literature Review and Analysis	Fieldwork	In-Depth Interviewing	Data summary
Foreign Influence	Analyze the influence of foreign cultures (Han or other nationalities) on the many variations of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in the four Yi villages in Kaiyuan.	Conduct a comparative study through field research to analyze the powerful penetration and influence of foreign cultures, especially Han culture, on the traditional mythological culture, aesthetic ideals, modes of life and production, social structure, family values, and even spiritual beliefs of the Yi people	Study the important influence of foreign cultures, especially Han culture, on the narrative structure of the Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths, the way the myth is passed down, and the myth-related sacrificial culture.	The influence of Han culture on the Yi people's myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Kaiyuan City is mainly reflected in multiple aspects such as religious beliefs, language expression, social customs, artistic expression, and sacrificial rituals. The traditional beliefs, literature and art, historical background, and social structure of the Han people have gradually merged with the cultural elements of the Yi people, forming a unique cultural phenomenon. This is especially true of the sacrifices at the Human Ancestors Temple, oral transmission, and social and cultural exchanges.

Data analysis of Archival and Documentary Research

First, according to the main purpose of this study, an in-depth understanding of the relevant materials on the cultural traditions of the Yi people in Kaiyuan was conducted through archival and documentary research. These materials include, but are not limited to, Kaiyuan's local chronicles, ethnographic materials on the Yi people in Kaiyuan, historical documents on the mythological literature of the Yi people in Kaiyuan, relevant government documents on the protection and inheritance of the mythological culture and art of the Yi people, various related reports, periodicals, papers, books,

image resources, etc. According to the purpose of this research, the researcher also selectively focused on relevant book materials provided by the Kaiyuan Yi Society and Kaiyuan Yi cultural researchers, offline physical written materials such as libraries and archives, and cooperated with various online official databases and online resources to collect information to ensure the high quality and reliability of the selected literature sources.

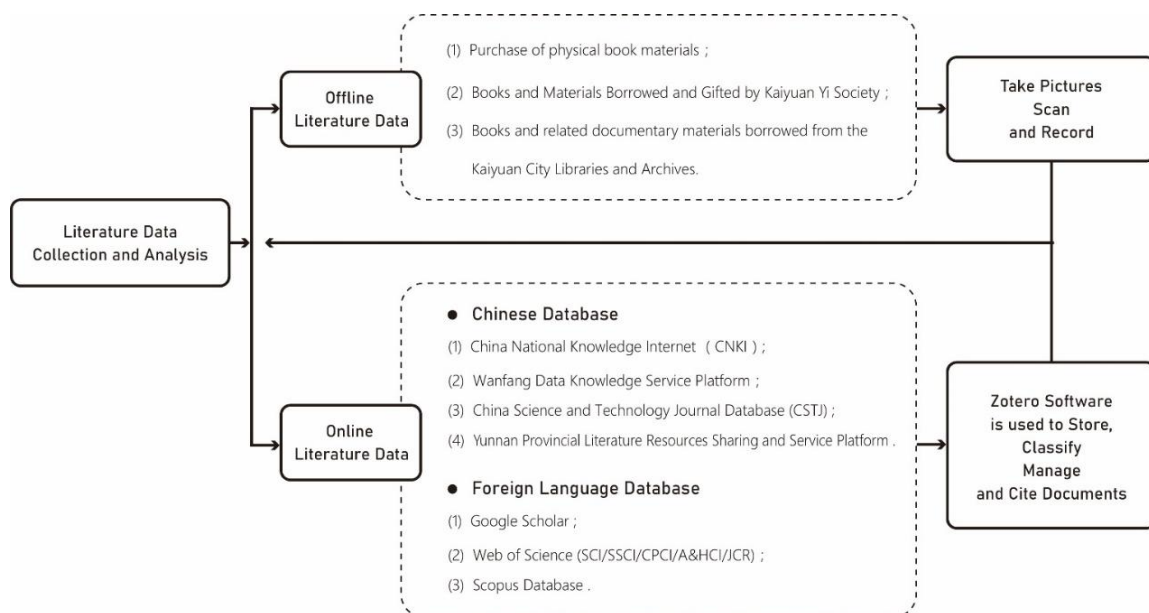


Figure 11 Archival and Documentary Research

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2024), Photographed by the researcher herself.

Second, the researcher will conduct a thematic analysis or text mining of key content in the literature and archives to identify and extract key themes, research trends, or important ideas, and then analyze them according to specific categories or themes. For example, they can be classified according to factors such as time, region, and theme to facilitate subsequent comparison and summarization. Finally, the literature or archive data will be analyzed using association rules or other pattern recognition methods to explore the correlations and patterns in the data, such as correlation analysis and causal analysis. Specific content includes digitizing documents, creating

abstracts or annotations, identifying key information, assessing reliability and credibility, comparing differences between different sources, and other tasks. For example, the basic definition of Dian culture and its influence on the cultural context of the Kaiyuan Yi myth, the traditional aesthetics and mythological thinking of the Yi people, the study of living myths, and the cultural value of The Human Ancestors Temple in Kaiyuan.

Finally, based on the results of the analysis, the researcher will provide insights and conclusions on the research topic. The advantage of the archival and documentary research method is that it can provide a wealth of historical and cultural information on the myths of the Kaiyuan Yi people, helping researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the background of the Kaiyuan Yi people's "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in specific periods or regions, their transmission dynamics, and their cultural influence.

The survival of myth must depend on a specific cultural ecosystem. The Yi's Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village of Kaiyuan City, Yunnan Province, might be the only one of this kind in southwest China that worships the surviving brother and sister after the flood. In the Kaiyuan Yi region, the mythic culture, which contains the national historical memory and the ancestral belief concept, is not solidified in ancient books or art but survives in the social life of the local Yi people in the form of "living form culture" to a large extent. Through a comparative study of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths in different Yi districts of Kaiyuan City, we can get a glimpse of the unique national culture and national aesthetics created by the ancestors of the Yi people over a long period of time and try to reshape the value of national mythology in the form of art and culture. It's an important historical responsibility for Dian culture to have a long history.

Regarding the origin and development of the myth of the Yi ethnic group's "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Kaiyuan City, research shows that the embryonic form of this type of myth can be traced back to the primitive mythological plastic arts of the nomadic hunting economy period as reflected in the Xiaolongtan Hongshiya Cliff Paintings. Field research further confirms the antiquity of this

mythological form. From a geographical perspective, the natural environment of Yunnan has been stable for a long time, and many ethnic groups have migrated, reproduced, and created here, forming the cultural characteristics of Dian, which are diverse, primitive, and marginal. The myth of the Kaiyuan Yi brother and sister marriage is mainly distributed in the original ethnic minority cultural circle in the high alpine mountains in the east of Kaiyuan and the Yi - Han mixed cultural circle in the remote northwest, showing a state that coincides with the regional culture. The remote northwest region shows the variability and intermingling of traditional Yi culture. Here, the mythological cultural landscape shows the interaction between Yi and Han cultures and the obvious influence of foreign civilizations. The groups in the high-altitude mountainous areas in the far east show the primitiveness and extensiveness of traditional Yi culture, inheriting relatively primitive religious beliefs and spiritual values. Therefore, the transmission of myths is based on the more traditional dry farming economy of mountainous areas. Once this geographical environment and economic form change, the form and chain of myth transmission will break.

Kaiyuan City is a multi-ethnic area, and the Yi are one of the main ethnic groups. With social development and the infiltration of external culture, the social structure of the Yi has undergone significant changes, from the traditional tribal model to a more diverse modern social form. The myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" marriage is an important part of Yi culture, not only carrying a wealth of historical and spiritual value but also strengthening the Yi's ethnic identity and sense of belonging. In the intergenerational transmission of oral and living forms, this type of mythical tradition has helped the Yi retain their unique cultural characteristics. In addition, the mythological system of the Yi people in Kaiyuan is closely related to religious beliefs, sacrificial rituals, and folk beliefs. The myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is not only an important vehicle for cultural inheritance but also reflects the religious concepts and aesthetics of the Yi people. Although with the progress of science and technology, the minority areas of Kaiyuan have gradually entered a "post-mythological civilization" and the worship of myths has weakened, the spirit of myths has never

disappeared. It carries the enthusiasm of human beings to explore and understand the world while also providing profound insights into ethnic history, philosophy, and culture.

It is worth mentioning that in Kaiyuan's Laole Village there is a Human Ancestors Temple related to the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood." Built during the Daoguang period of the Qing Dynasty, the temple was built by the local Yi people to commemorate the myth of the brother and sister who recreated humanity after the flood. It has now been rebuilt in the style of classical Chinese architecture. Rituals held in the temple include festive ceremonies such as the "Sun Ceremony," which demonstrate the unique integration of the living mythological art of nationalities and the value of multiculturalism. This cultural relic provides important evidence for the study of the mythological system of the Yi people in Yunnan, their ethnic aesthetics and beliefs, and is of great academic and practical significance for the inheritance and protection of ethnic minority cultures.

Data analysis of Ethnographic Approach

Ethnographic approach methods are research methods based on fieldwork and in-depth interviewing that aim to provide a detailed description and analysis of the social and cultural life of a specific ethnic group. The advantage of ethnographic approach methods is that they can provide in-depth, comprehensive, and specific data and information, helping researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the historical reasons for the creation of the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth, as well as the mythological content of the local Yi living myths, the myth-related folk religion and culture, the changes in the cultural context, and the similarities and differences in the myth transmission models.

● Fieldwork

Fieldwork is a common qualitative research method. The researcher visited the research site many times from 2023 onwards, and through field visits to the Kaiyuan Yi Society, Kaiyuan City Library and Archives, and the four main Yi areas studied: Beige Village, Beige Township; Zongshe Village, Yangjie Township; Pipu

Village, Zhongheyang Township; and Laole Village, Xiaolongtan Township, the researcher observed or participated in local Yi people related to the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood." conducted in-depth interviews and exchanges with the main inheritors of the myth, practitioners and protectors of local Yi traditional culture, established close relationships with them, and collected their experiences, stories, insights, and opinions in order to obtain rich information and data to better understand the local Yi myth transmission environment, the Yi family-social structure, aesthetic psychology, and behavior patterns.



Table 3 Data analysis of fieldwork data in four Yi villages

Research destinations	Research time	Data collection methods	Key findings and limitations of the research
Beige Village, Beige Township	June 2024	Text recording, Audio recording, photo taking, Video recording, interviewing, etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respect for local culture means that adult women cannot enter the Loong forest to participate in the Loong ritual; 2. Many of the ancient chants of the Beima can no longer be translated. The way myths are passed down is orally transmitted, and there is a lot of uncertainty and cultural diversity in the content and form of the myths; 3. Inadequate cultural publicity and misunderstandings of traditional ethnic myths and culture among young people; 4. The culture of the Beige Yi people has unique elements of nature worship, ancestor worship, and myths and legends; 5. The traditional Yi ecological view of the unity of heaven and man not only shows the original ethnic spirit and beliefs of the Yi people but also directly or indirectly protects the local vegetation and ecological environment; 6. Related folk rituals and activities have combined entertainment for gods and entertainment for people and have been incorporated into the unique Yi ethnic aesthetic culture, showing a certain adaptability of traditional Yi cultural cognition of modern civilization; 7. The economic foundation is closely linked to the way myths are passed down, and changes in the economic foundation also drive the evolution of the way myths are passed down; 8. The myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood is relatively more complex and complete and even coexists with the myth of the "god-human marriage after the flood."; 9. It is urgent to reshape the value of Yi myths and explore new ways to promote traditional Yi mythological culture.

Table 3 (Continued)

Research destinations	Research time	Data collection methods	Key findings and limitations of the research
Zongshe Village, Yangjie Township	June 2024	Text recording, audio recording, photo taking, video recording, interviewing, etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The old Zongshe village is no longer accessible for research, while the new Zongshe village more fully embodies the cultural image of modernization; 2. There are no more Beima in the village, and most villagers no longer tell ancient Yi myths and corresponding legends; 3. It is regrettable that the "ancestor woodcuts" could not be seen in person, and only historical photographic materials could be obtained; 4. The traditional Yi culture of Zongshe Village has unique elements of nature worship, ancestor worship, and myths and legends. Under the leadership of teacher Yang Xiuying, a "Path-Guiding Scripture" was found; 5. The traditional Yi ecological view of the unity of heaven and man not only shows the original ethnic spirit and beliefs of the Yi people but also directly or indirectly protects the local vegetation and ecological environment; 6. Zongshe Village currently shows a very typical phenomenon of traditional Yi culture adapting to modern civilization; 7. The economic base is closely linked to the way myths are passed down, and changes in the economic base also promote the evolution of the way myths are passed down; 8. The traditional mythological culture of the village is rapidly disappearing, and it is urgent to reshape the value of Yi myths and explore new ways to promote traditional Yi mythological culture.

Table 3 (Continued)

Research destinations	Research time	Data collection methods	Key findings and limitations of the research
Pipo Village, Zhongheyang Township	June 2024	Text recording, audio recording, photo taking, video recording, interviewing, etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The rainy season with continuous heavy rain brought a lot of inconvenience to the field survey in Pipo Village; 2. Mr. Li Caibao, the only person in the Kaiyuan area familiar with the Yi script, has passed away. Ancient Yi scriptures are currently not available for close inspection due to protection measures; 3. Most young villagers are no longer interested in the village's traditional mythological culture, or even the Yi mother tongue and traditional Yi clothing; 4. The Yi culture of Pipo Village has unique elements of nature worship, ancestor worship, and myths and legends; 5. The traditional Yi ecological view of the unity of heaven and man not only shows the original ethnic spirit and beliefs of the Yi people but also directly or indirectly protects the local vegetation and ecological environment; 6. Related folk rituals and activities have combined entertainment for gods and entertainment for people and have been incorporated into the unique Yi ethnic aesthetic culture, showing a certain adaptability of traditional Yi cultural perceptions of modern civilization; 7. The economic foundation is closely linked to the way myths are passed down, and changes in the economic foundation also promote the evolution of the way myths are passed down; 8. As an important post station on the ancient tea-horse road, Pipo village has been deeply influenced by foreign cultures, especially Han culture. Despite this, the village still retains many unique ethnic cultural characteristics, such as stone houses, Yi ancient text scriptures, and the inheritance of ancient myths, which add a unique ethnic spirit and cultural research value to the Yi culture of Pipo village. At present, reshaping the value of Yi mythology and exploring new ways to promote traditional Yi mythology and culture has become an urgent task.

Table 3 (Continued)

Research destinations	Research time	Data collection methods	Key findings and limitations of the research
Laole Village, Xiaolongtan Township	March 2023	Text recording, audio recording, photo taking, video recording, interviewing, etc.	<p>1. In previous years, due to the impact of the epidemic, the elderly people who could tell the myths in their entirety had passed away one after another, which led to difficulties in the protection and promotion of the Yi cultural heritage in Village;</p> <p>2. Due to the prominent integration of Yi and Han cultures in Laole Village, the related folk rituals and activities have combined entertainment of gods with entertainment of people and have incorporated the unique Yi ethnic aesthetic culture. Currently, they also show a very typical phenomenon of traditional Yi culture adapting to modern civilization;</p> <p>3. The Yi culture of the Laole village has unique elements of nature worship, ancestor worship, and myths and legends;</p> <p>4. The traditional ecological view of the unity of man and nature not only shows the original ethnic spirit and beliefs of the Yi people but also directly or indirectly protects the local vegetation and ecological environment;</p> <p>5. Thanks to the preliminary efforts of experts such as Li Zixian and Cao Ding'an, the rare traditional mythological culture of the Yi people in Laole Village, and in particular the Human Ancestors Temple and the rich ethnic and cultural connotations behind it, are gradually being revealed to the world;</p> <p>6. There have been some achievements in the protection of cultural relics. As a municipal-level cultural relic protection unit, the Human Ancestors Temple has borrowed from Han architecture and artistic decoration, but behind its physical form is the traditional Yi ancestor worship and mythological beliefs, as well as a unique Yi aesthetic culture;</p> <p>7. There is a certain cultural connection between the Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village and the Human Ancestors Temple of Nǚwa and Fuxi in Henan Province, but it also shows more of the unique ethnic and cultural characteristics of the Yi people;</p> <p>8. With the continuous promotion of cultural relic protection and cultural publicity work, it is urgent to reshape the mythological value of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City and open up new ways to publicize the traditional mythological culture of the Yi people;</p>

Table 3 (Continued)

Research destinations	Research time	Data collection methods	Key findings and limitations of the research
Laole Village, Xiaolongtan Town	March 2023	Text recording, audio recording, photo taking, video recording, interviewing, etc.	9. After interviewing teachers Cao Ding'an and Li Yanbo, we went to the south of Shuangtangzi Village, about 3,500 meters west of Xiaolongtan Town, Kaiyuan, to conduct research on the Kaiyuan Dahongshiya Cliff Paintings. The shape and name of the paintings are the same as those recorded in Yi literature about the cliff where the Yi ancestor A Pudu (A Pudu Muli) lived.

Since early June 2024, the researcher has made several trips to Beige Village, Kaiyuan City, for fieldwork. It's located in the high alpine mountains in the east of Kaiyuan City. Beige is a typical Yi ethnic minority settlement area. The traditional Yi language of Pula is still spoken here, and the original folk customs have been preserved relatively intact. The traditional culture preservation area of the Yi people (Pula branch) in Beige has been listed as a provincial intangible heritage protection project. It is the only provincial intangible heritage protection project in Kaiyuan and one of the three whole-town preservation areas in Yunnan Province. The area is surrounded by mountains and shrouded in clouds. The scattered villages in the mountains are surrounded by lush forests, and the eye is filled with vibrant green. The local Yi people call these forests "Loong Forest" and consider it a sacred place with the original memories of their ancestors. According to the villagers, "Loong Forest" is regarded as the territory of the dragon god, and anyone entering the forest must do so with a pious heart and refrain from any form of destruction. This traditional belief has contributed greatly to the ecological environmental protection of the Kaiyuan Dahei Mountains area and has helped to preserve this green natural paradise. Over the course of their long history of production and life, the Yi people of Beige have gradually developed totem

worship of Loongs and Loong trees. They revere heaven and earth as objects of awe, admire nature and life, and pray for the protection and blessings of their ancestors and gods. This vibrant Loong forest is deeply rooted in their cultural psychology and has become a spiritual link between the past and the future. No matter where they are, their souls can always return to the roots of the dragon tree, which symbolizes their common ancestors and cultural origins. The Loong Ritual of Beige Area vividly demonstrates the historical process of human society's transition from a clan society to a family society and has unique and rich characteristics of its own nationality. It not only completely reflects the primitive worship of nature and ancestors by the indigenous people of the mountains but also profoundly demonstrates the way their culture is passed down and their spiritual world.

In Beige Village, the transmission of myths has always been based on the more traditional farming economy in the high alpine mountains in the eastern part of Kaiyuan. Once this economic form changes, the form and chain of transmission of myths are likely to break. According to the villagers of Beige Area, the annual Loong Rituals is one of the biggest festivals of the Beige Yi people. There are four times a year (different in some villages), of which the two on the 2nd of the 2nd lunar month and the 13th of the 9th lunar month are fixed time and place Loong Rituals. The loong tree is located in a place called "Xiaomiao" in the northwest of the village. The specific time of the other two events is generally decided by the villagers' meeting, and it will be held in February or April of the lunar year (usually on the day of the rat or the day of the horse). The Loong Rituals in Beige Area are divided into two types: "public loong" and "private loong." The village's "public loong" ritual is usually presided over by a family with a fixed surname, and all the villagers of the village with other surnames participate. The loong tree for the event is selected by the village's respected elders, and the tree must be approved by all the villagers before it becomes the designated loong tree. If it is a single family's loong ritual, it is a "private loong," and only people with the same surname can participate, and people with other surnames, including relatives of the family, cannot participate. The selection of the loong tree and the determination of the time for the loong ritual can also

be decided by the elders of the family. Just as I regretted not being able to catch the loong ritual in the village, the villagers added again that adult women are not allowed to participate in the entire ceremony, and they are even forbidden to enter the forest during the event. This may be influenced by the ancient patriarchal primitive heritage. As a sign of respect for local cultural customs, researchers can only give up their plans to participate in this traditional event.

According to the villagers, the sacrificial rituals for the "public loong" and the "private loong" are basically the same. The sacrificial procession is made up entirely of men, and each household will send one or two people to attend. On the day of the loong ritual, the villagers will go to the foot of the loong forest and select trees that can regenerate and bear fruit to set up a wooden loong gate, symbolizing the birth and prosperity of life. Before the ritual, the chief priest ties a straw rope around the waist of the loong tree, selects an open space to set up a large iron pot, and slaughters a black-haired pig (the hair on the black-haired pig is shiny and cannot have curls) and two chickens (a red rooster and a hen, and the hen must not be white). Before the pig is killed, Beima recites the first two lines of a prayer: "Male gods and male ancestors, female gods and female ancestors, " praying for the blessings of the mythical ancestral brother and sister gods. Then the pork and chicken are placed in a wok and boiled. Each villager participating in the loong sacrifice brings a bowl of either corn flour or buckwheat flour, bows their heads, and passes through the loong gate. Pray for favorable weather and abundant harvests in the coming year, prosperity for people and animals, and a bumper harvest in the coming year. Then they pour the flour into the wok in turn, which is known as "cooking the loong's rice" in the ritual. After the rice is cooked, everyone is served a bowl, and then they follow the lead priest and kneel before the loong tree in turn. When kneeling, they must drink, eat the loong's rice, and pray and make wishes. The loong ritual is solemn and sacred, full of mystery. The priest is passed down from generation to generation, and no outsiders were passed on. Although the Pula people have no written language, but the Beima mumbled and chanted ancient myths and legends in the ancient Yi language. Even the local villagers and experts on Yi

culture have been unable to accurately translate the content of these chants word for word. They can only roughly interpret the content as a chant about the origin of the Yi people, expressing gratitude to the loong tree for its protection in the past, reporting important family matters, and praying for and hoping for the future. During the loong worship ceremony, the Pula prepare the best food in their homes to show their deep respect to the loong tree. After the ceremony, the villagers share the food, drink wine, sing, and dance. In the evening, when they return home, every household also performs corresponding ancestral worship rituals and entertains relatives, thus continuing the ethnic beliefs and traditional culture that have been passed down from generation to generation.

In addition, research has found that the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Beige is more complete and complex than similar myths in Laole Village, and there are also some variant versions with different narrative content that are passed down in other Yi villages in Beige Township. Even in the village of Jiaji, there is even a more primitive myth of the god-human marriage after the flood." Among the four branches of the Kaiyuan Yi people, only the Pula people of Beige Area have inherited the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood," as well as the story of the "god-human marriage after the flood." As a living myth, it is inevitable that it will continue to evolve and change in the course of being passed down. The way these myths talk about "gods" and the idea that "gods" exist in our lives has a significant impact on the everyday beliefs of the local people. Influenced by the cultural context, they are colored with many features that reflect the culture and ecological environment of a particular region.



Figure 12 Fieldwork in Beige

Source: Peng,L.Q.H. (2024), Photographed by the researcher herself.

Ancestor worship is widespread in the original culture of the high alpine mountainous area. The mountainous area of Beige Village, Kaiyuan County, is typical, and it also includes the semi-mountainous areas such as Zongshe Village in the neighboring Yangjie Township. The original culture of the Pula branch of the Yi people has been relatively well preserved. Such as creation myths, primitive religious belief systems, and festivals and celebrations, all of which retain a simple and vibrant ethnic identity. In June 2024, after completing the research in Beige Township, the researchers immediately went to the second site, Zongshe Village in Yangjie Township, Kaiyuan City.

Zongshe Village is adjacent to Masang Village to the east, Xibaile Township in Mengzi County to the south, Yangliu Village to the west, and Beige Township to the north. It is a traditional village of the Pula people, a branch of the Yi ethnic group. Driving deeper into the mountains, the researcher finally saw the village entrance archway of Zongshe Village. This scene was very different from the Zongshe Village the researcher had seen in photos before. According to local villagers, the scene in front of them was actually Zongshe New Village, which was under construction, while the old Zongshe Village was almost uninhabited. Most villagers have moved here to start a new life. Here, it is clear to see that the traditional culture of Zongshe Village is undergoing a process of modernization. The widened country roads, newly built houses and villas, and the green fields intertwined with the surrounding dense forest create a

picture of the blending of the old and the new. In the fields, Yi women dressed in bright traditional costumes are either busy farming or smiling and chatting in the sun. Their simplicity, hard work, and enthusiasm seem to have breathed new life and hope into this land. Everything here makes you feel a refreshing sense of happiness, as if a bridge has been built between modernity and tradition, making you can't help but look forward to the future with longing and anticipation.

In Kaiyuan City today, the integrated development of urban and rural areas is the general trend. Enhancing cultural awareness and the sense of cultural innovation is crucial to the socio-economic development of Kaiyuan and the smooth advancement of the construction of new rural areas in Kaiyuan. Traditional ethnic culture can only maintain its creativity and vitality by keeping pace with the times and constantly enhancing its ability to renew and adapt. Through this visit and research, it was discovered that although Zongshe Village, like Beige Village, also holds a loong ritual on the second day of the second lunar month or the third day of the third lunar month every year, and a fire god temple worship on the tenth day of the tenth lunar month (this is a type of altar that integrates Yi and Han cultures), there is still no way to avoid worrying. Zongshe Village no longer has a Beima. The mythical culture of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Zongshe Village has already been affected by external factors in the process of transmission, especially the strong invasion of Han culture, and has lost its integrity and specific details. Here, the Zongshe Pula people associate ancestor worship with mythology and make "ancestor spirit wood carvings" for worship, that is, ancestor spirit tablets, which are called "Nashetang" in Pula and are used to worship ancestors. The villagers said that in the myth of the flood, the Pula ancestors hid in a wooden barrel, which eventually landed on a Duoyi fruit tree, saving the lives of the two siblings. Among them, if the relative passed away at home, the woodcut is placed on the lintel of the son's bedroom door at home; if the person passed away outside, the woodcut needs to be placed under the eaves outside the lobby. These "Nashetang" that are worshipped at home are generally sacrificed on the 15th day of the 7th lunar month, the Spring Festival, and the 27th day of the 12th lunar month by slaughtering a pig, so

that they can be blessed with no disasters and peace. The villagers told us with a smile, "This is a custom passed down by our ancestors in Pula. " It is worth noting here that the tree selected for the woodcut, the Duoyi fruit tree, can be seen as a kind of natural totem, like the loong tree used in loong worship; it can also be as a kind of ancestor worship, with the Duoyi fruit tree used to make the "Nashetang" being a symbol of the ancestors of the Pula people. The integration of mythological elements with folk beliefs is also reflected in other Yi areas of Kaiyuan, which is an important feature of living myths.

When the villagers were asked if they could have a chance to see the mysterious woodcut of the ancestral spirit of "Nashetang," the villagers seemed a little embarrassed. The villagers told me that the ancestral spirit wood carvings of the "Nashetang" have become very rare in Zongshe Village nowadays. There are mainly the following reasons for this phenomenon: First, with the construction of the new village, most of the wood carvings that were originally used to make the "Nashetang" have been burned. Since the Nashetang is not accumulated, the descendants of the next generation will take the Nashetang to the graves of their ancestors and burn it there so that it can be with their ancestors. Some of them have also been left behind in the old houses that have been left behind and lost. Second, the traditional woodcarving craft is no longer being passed down to the new generation of young people in Zongshe Village. The production of "Nashetang" requires the use of special wood (such as the Duoyi fruit tree or the Masang tree), and the production process is cumbersome. The elderly people who could carry out this kind of handicraft production have now also passed away one after the other. Third, in the context of modern culture, the woodcarving culture of the Zongshe Yi people has gradually been given a new meaning. A popular urban saying, "The woodcarvings of the Pula are one moment after another, " is in essence a stereotypical evaluation of the character of the Pula Yi people, implying their national characteristics of being too honest and stubborn. Similar derogatory terms include "masang tree lump" and "muyitou. ". The appearance of these words caused the young people of the Pula to begin to avoid this cultural discrimination, and they even became insecure about their own traditional culture. As a result, they

gradually lost interest in the wooden carvings of the "Nashetang" and the mythological cultural background behind them. Finally, the constant influx of modern production methods and lifestyles caused some young Pula people to regard the traditional ancestral spirit wood carvings as a kind of "feudal superstition" cultural dregs and therefore abandoned them.



Figure 13 Fieldwork in Zongshe

Source: Peng, L.Q.H. (2024), Photographed by the researcher herself.



Figure 14 "Nashetang" Wood Carvings

Source: Li, L., Cao, D.A., & Li, Z. (2010). The traditional culture of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City and its modern adaptation (p. 43). Yunnan People's Publishing House.

Pipo Village was once a bustling place where caravans and merchant travelers gathered. It is located deep in the foothills of Dahei Mountain at the intersection of Zhongheying Town, Beige Township, and Dazhuang Township. The name "Pipo Village" comes from the Yi language and means "a village surrounded by stones," which describes the geographical environment and cultural landscape of the area in ancient times. Most of the villagers are Luoluo people and belong to the Nisu branch of the Yi ethnic group. Although they no longer wear traditional ethnic costumes, they still use their native language in their daily lives. However, with the continuous penetration of modern civilization, few children in Pipo Village can speak their mother tongue. Zhang Baosheng, a young man from the village, told me that in addition to the Sinicization factor, the historical status of Pipo Village as a relay station on the ancient postal road has also had a certain impact on these changes.

At the entrance to Pipo Village stand several well-preserved Qing Dynasty steles. These steles record the policy provisions of the ancient yamen on incorruptibility and eliminating abuses, as well as measures to protect the environment such as village rules and regulations and forest protection. Each stele seems to be a silent witness to history, telling stories of the past. The home of the villager we visited is located at the highest point of the village. Walking up a long ancient post road along the southern side of the village and past the stone steps made of bluestone, you can see a unique scenic spot in the village, which is the stone houses of Pipo Village. The natural stone buried underground is a gift from nature to the generations of Pipo people. At an altitude of more than 2,000 meters above sea level, with an average annual temperature of about 15°C, the hardworking and intelligent ancestors of the Yi people used local materials and collective wisdom to turn the originally cold stone into stone houses with good thermal insulation, warm in winter and cool in summer, sturdy and solid, and fire and moisture resistant, to protect generations. In 2005, the stone houses of Piposhan were announced as a traditional architectural conservation project in Honghe Prefecture, and in 2007, they were included in the Honghe Prefecture-level intangible cultural heritage protection list. In 2014, Li Baochang, the master builder of stone

houses in Piposhan, was successfully declared a municipal-level intangible cultural heritage inheritor.

Along the way, the ancient trees of the primeval walnut forest beside us towered high, blocking out the sky; the centuries-old hawthorn tree beside the Loong Pool was even more vigorous and powerful, with luxuriant branches and leaves, as if it had witnessed the passage of time. The spring water in the Big Loong Pool flows down from the mountains. Although it was pouring with rain during our visit to Pipo Village and the mountain path was slippery and muddy, we were still deeply attracted by the deep and secluded beauty of the scene. We drove along the rugged mountain road, struggling to move forward. The mountain road was steep and narrow, and it was very thrilling. The weather was sometimes pouring with rain and sometimes drizzling. Finally, we arrived at the home of a warm-hearted Yi villager just before the next heavy rain. The corn kernels from the harvest, piled up in front of the door like a small mountain, contrasted with the warm smile on the face of the Yi host, as if it were a feast of autumn harvest. The Yi hosts are hardworking and simple. They made steaming hot tartary buckwheat cakes from tartary buckwheat, the "king of grains" in the hearts of the Yi people, which had a delicious aroma. Paired with the natural honey they had collected from the mountains, it was absolutely delicious. Add in the crispy fried meat and small potatoes fried in the meat fat, as well as the freshly slaughtered hen, and a hearty Yi meal is ready to be devoured. Here, one cannot help but be reminded of the ordinary life of slaughtering a chicken to entertain guests as a sign of respect and the ubiquitous sacrificial rituals involving animal blood and flesh. This all reflects the ancient Yi culture of primitive religious beliefs in the worship of the chicken. The cold and hunger brought on by the rain were quickly dispelled with this delicious meal. The meaty aroma filled the air and spread through the eaves of the house and into the quiet little Yi village, as if to make us forget the stormy rain outside, leaving only a feeling of warmth and contentment in our hearts.

There was once a person in Pipo village who was the only person in the Kaiyuan area familiar with the Yi script. He was also the village Beima, Li Caibao. As a

representative figure of the intangible cultural heritage of Honghe Prefecture, he has used his own efforts to pass on the traditional culture of the Yi people and tell the story of the origin of the Yi people in Pipo village. After becoming the village Beima, Li Caibao selected eight apprentices and began teaching Yi scriptures. In order to better carry out the work of passing on the Yi script, the cultural department of Kaiyuan City also sent Li Caibao and his apprentices to the Honghe Prefecture Ethnic Research Institute to take a training course to learn the Yi script. The Kaiyuan Yi Society also visited Pipo Village to learn the Yi script. In addition, the local government also built the Yi Culture Institute in Pipo Village, which is used to pass on the Yi script and sacrificial culture. In 2020, the elderly Li Caibao passed away. Today, his apprentices continue the path he did not finish in the Yi cultural institute. The villagers also voluntarily send household items with unique Yi characteristics to the Yi cultural institute for display and promotion. Interestingly, sometimes when they need the items at home, they can apply to take them back. During this visit, I met with the descendants of Teacher Li Caibao. They said that the Yi scriptures in the hands of the elderly had a high value for cultural research, but after the elderly passed away, they could not be freely viewed at present. Therefore, it is also a pity that I was unable to take photos of the precious scriptures containing ancient Yi texts this time.

The villagers of Pipo Village maintain their original religious beliefs, and the transmission of their myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is also highly original. Coexisting with this is the worship of ancestral spirits associated with the myth. Under the continuous development and reform of the myth and the nation, the Yi people of Pipo Village have injected their ethnic blood into their production lives and folk rituals. The myth tells of how, in ancient times, when there was a great flood, the poor people made a wooden barrel to hide in, and when the flood came, the barrel was stopped by a tree. At that moment, an eagle flew over and carried the poor man to a plant with sharp leaves. Since then, the poor people have revered the tree that saved their lives as the "ancestral tree." Even today, when an Yi person dies, a section of the ancestral tree is cut down to make the ancestor spirit. The making of the "Pujida" in the local Yi funeral

ceremony is the practice of this mythological plot. In the process of practicing, the Pipo Yi people have mixed in a lot of national characteristics, forming a set of rules that blend myths and real life together harmoniously. As Professor Li Zixian and Mr. Cao Ding'an, the former director of the Kaiyuan Cultural Relics Management Institute, said, the myths here are of a primordial nature and have been passed down to the present in a hidden way.



Figure 15 Fieldwork in Pipo

Source: Peng, L.Q.H. (2024), Photographed by the researcher herself.



Figure 16 Pipo Village Ancestral Tree and Beima

Source: Li, L., Cao, D.A., & Li, Z. (2010). The traditional culture of the Yi people in Kaiyuan City and its modern adaptation (Photo color page). Yunnan People's Publishing House.

Laole Village is part of the Zejiu administrative village under the Xiaolongtan office of Kaiyuan City and is located in the semi-mountainous area. The Yi people in this village belong to the Gaisu branch and call themselves Gaisupo or Luoluopo. After the Ming Dynasty, Han immigrants and Han culture began to gradually integrate, and the coexistence of multiple cultures and the mixed living conditions of other nationalities and Han began to emerge. It was this blending of ethnic cultures that ultimately gave birth to the material cultural crystallization of the folk beliefs of the Laole villagers—the Human Ancestors Temple, making Laole Village a village full of "sacredness" in the hearts of the Yi people. The Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village is perhaps the only surviving "Human Ancestor Temple" in southwestern China's ethnic minority areas that worships the two siblings who survived the flood. It is also a rare form of materialization of the living mythology and multicultural values of nationalities in southwestern China. It is the sublimation and crystallization of the harmonious integration of Yi and Han grassroots cultures and folk cultures since the Ming Dynasty. It is also a unique and precious reflection of the artistic culture of the Yi nationality in Kaiyuan City. It has important academic value and practical significance.

In 2023, with the support and help of the Xiaolongtan government in Kaiyuan City, researchers went to Laole Village for investigation and research. Xiaolongtan Town, Kaiyuan City, is the hometown of the *Ramapithecus* and an important energy security base in Yunnan Province. The one-hundred-year-old Yunnan-Vietnam Railway and Nanpan River run through the town. The road to the village is challenging to traverse, with high mountains, steep slopes, and complex terrain. Fortunately, the scenery along the way is beautiful, and we also saw the largest open-pit coal mine south of the Yangtze River. When we arrived at the entrance to the village, a beautiful new rural scene came into view, and Bai Yongfei, secretary of the Party branch and village team leader of Laole Village, and the villagers who cooperated with the research activities gave us a warm welcome.

The village is characterized by its tobacco farming and thousands of acres of peach trees, and the fields are filled with a charming earthy smell. Growing flue-

cured tobacco and fruit and vegetable gardens has always been the main way for the villagers of Laole to increase their income. Especially flue-cured tobacco: in the early days, almost every household in Laole had built an earthen tobacco barn. Team leader Bai showed us the way while giving us an introduction, and we walked to the final destination of the trip, the Human Ancestors Temple. Although it was not a traditional sacrificial date during the visit, the local Yi people were still ready to give us a brief demonstration of the sacrificial process so that we could record and research it. This deeply moved the researchers, and they couldn't help but quicken their pace. Along the way, we could see several uninhabited mud houses. Due to long periods of disuse and a lack of maintenance, many of the mud houses have been classified as dangerous buildings. A few leisurely water buffalo passed by, and the villager who was herding them also greeted us enthusiastically. The old village sign, set up by the Kaiyuan government in 1988, is still in its original position. The weathered stone tablet bears the traces of the village's development. On the gentle slope between the village and the mountains, ancient trees with luxuriant foliage and strong, green beauty tower over the sky, their crowns overlapping, adding a layer of mysterious depth to the entire mountain village. After walking past a few earthen houses, we finally arrived at the Human Ancestors Temple.

The Human Ancestors Temple of the Laole Village people was built during the Daoguang period of the Qing Dynasty. The local Yi people called it the "Temple of the King of Humans." It was built by the local Yi people to commemorate and sacrifice to the surviving brother and sister in the myth of the flood who got married to recreate the human race. They built the temple and worshipped the statues according to their unique belief culture. The Human Ancestors Temple of the Laole Village covers an area of only 20 square meters, with a frontage of three rooms of 12 meters and a depth of three rooms of 6.5 meters. After being rebuilt in recent years, it shows the typical style of classical Chinese architecture. It is a very rare form of physical manifestation of the living myths of nationalities in Southwest China and the display of multicultural values. The open space in front of the temple is used for public rituals and incense-burning

ceremonies. The outer walls are decorated with plaques depicting the myth of the ancestors of mankind. On one side is a red sun bursting forth, and on the other side are 14 colourful pictures telling the story. Although it was created in modern times, it is already showing signs of wear and tear. The antique doors and windows open to reveal two statues of the human ancestors, a male and a female. The male is nearly one meter tall, with a round face, wearing a green robe, holding a feather fan in his right hand, and a fortune-telling stick in his left. The goddess statue is slightly taller, with a melon-shaped face, a cherry mouth, dressed in red, and holding a swaddling cloth in her arms. The transformation of oral mythology into idol worship at the Human Ancestors Temple of Laole Village was nothing less than a means of protection for the self-growth and rejection of decline of the Kaiyuan Yi culture. Moreover, these self-protection measures align closely with the agricultural civilization they rely on for survival, embodying the essence of survival of the fittest.

The ceremony begins. The elderly burn incense, prepare the offerings, and mutter words of prayer. The scene is quite solemn. Team leader Bai introduced that there are two main folk religious rituals that have been passed down from generation to generation at the Human Ancestors Temple: one is the annual ritual on the 19th day of the twelfth lunar month to worship the statues of the brother and sister gods, to express gratitude for the fact that they gave birth to human beings; the other is the ritual to pray for children and blessings on the 16th day of the first lunar month, which is a ritual to thank the ancestors for adding children to the villagers in the village. Many infertile villagers come to pray to the gods, praying for the ability to bear children and happiness and well-being. The temple fairs and sacrificial activities at the Human Ancestors Temple are very lively, and the surrounding villages, and even the Yi people from Jianshui, come to participate in the activities. Yi women dressed in their best attire come walking one after the other, with their offerings in winnowing baskets on their heads. There is no uniform style for the offerings from each family, but generally they must include eight bowls. However, there is one offering that is always the same, and that is "Huagao rice cake." After saying this, team leader Bai pointed to the "Huagao rice cake"

in the old man's hands. According to the local Yi elder's explanation, "gāo" is homophonic with "gāo" (high), which means that the ancestors bless the future generations to go from strength to strength. The old people then began to kneel in front of the temple to pray and dance. Although only four old people participated, one can imagine the lively atmosphere of the formal ceremony. When the Yi villagers gathered in front of the Human Ancestors Temple to hold a sacrifice, the "cigarette box dance" was a wonderful form of entertainment that served the dual purpose of entertaining the gods and themselves. This is a traditional type of dance that has been passed down for thousands of years among the Yi people. The dancers hold a round cigarette box in each hand, and while dancing, their index fingers and big fingers beat against the inside of the box to produce a rhythmic "da-da-da-da" sound. It's very interesting.

After the ritual in front of the temple was completed, they entered the inner hall, offered the prepared offerings, lit incense, and began to worship the statue of the god. After that, the elderly person began to use the prepared knife to cut the "Huagao rice cake" and distribute them to everyone who participated in the sacrifice, including us onlookers, who were also given the sweet rice cakes. This "sacred meal" banquet, which allows you to taste the food of hundreds of families and enjoy the flavors of hundreds of dishes, finally brought the ancestral worship to a climax... The offerings are made to the gods, and the ultimate purpose of worshipping the gods is for everyone to live happily and get along with each other. Sharing the sacred meal carries a sacred meaning of blessing, and at the same time, it is also interpreted here as a kind of most realistic material redistribution and a great exchange of emotions. Looking up, I saw the centuries-old trees around the Human Ancestors Temple, with the rings of the trees carved with the traces of the years. The discovery of this human ancestors temple of the Yi people has provided important evidence for in-depth research into the Yunnan minority groups, in particular the Yi people's mythological system, the flood motif, the brother and sister marriage motif (including the theme of strange births after marriage), and the connection between the belief in the ancestors of the nation and the aesthetics of the nation. In addition, from an aesthetic perspective, the common prototype of the

myths of the nationalities in Yunnan is the close connection between humans and the natural world, and various images of the natural world occupy an extremely important position in the myths.



Figure 17 Fieldwork in Laole

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2023), Photographed by the researcher herself.

- **In-depth interviewing**

During the fieldwork, the researcher collected and recorded different documentary and oral materials, sacrificial rituals, and related folk activities related to the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in four Yi villages. Many random interviews were conducted in the village, covering local villagers of different ages. In

addition, this ethnographic approach method will also conduct in-depth interviews with the protectors and inheritors of the main myths and related culture and art of different branches of the Yi nationality in Kaiyuan City. They are active and influential in the field of mythological culture, have a deep understanding and research experience in the inheritance and protection of Kaiyuan Yi myths, and can provide rich information and insights, especially those inheritors or practitioners in the village who have lived in the village almost all their lives and are directly engaged in the inheritance and protection of myths.

Finally, the researcher will code and thematically analyze the interview transcripts to organize the main mythological stories and related cultural symbols. At the same time, through in-depth interviews with interviewees representative of the research, a large amount of primary data that is most direct and authentic for this study will be obtained, and a clearer understanding of the research object and purpose will be gained from a systematic perspective and complex details. Respecting the beliefs and culture of the local Yi people and conducting in-depth research and understanding of the cultural content of local myths can lead to a better understanding of the perspectives and backgrounds of the local people and also help to ask more meaningful questions. Finally, based on the previous research materials and analysis results, the data obtained from in-depth interviews are systematically recorded, organized, and analyzed and interpreted.

Table 4 Data analysis of In-depth interviewing data in four Yi villages

In-depth interview time	In-depth interview respondents	Interview keywords or key content
May 5, 2024	<p>Yang Zhangwen</p> <p>The national second-class actor, a native of Beige Village, and one of the current representatives of the traditional culture of the Yi ethnic group in Beige Village. He is currently the chairman of the Honghe Prefecture Dramatists Association.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ritual of sacrificing the loong is more of a nature worship of the Yi people, and the influence of mythology is not great; 2. Traditional Yi culture is influenced by the economy, and people become interested in it when they get older. It is a unique form of spiritual sustenance; 3. Yi culture has experienced a significant cultural discontinuity, especially as a result of previous pandemic outbreaks, making it increasingly challenging to sustain and pass on the traditional Yi mythology despite the desire to do so; 4. Some young local Yi people have gradually begun to value the cultural heritage of their own ethnic group in recent years; 5. It is wrong for outsiders to define the Beige Yi epic "Cuozuozuo" as a "folk song." Mr. Yang named it "Pula Warp," which includes various myths of the Yi people, including the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood." Whoever can chant it can become the inheritor of the Yi Pula culture; 6. To study the mythological culture of the Pula, one must understand the language systems, cultural systems, and social histories of the Han Chinese and Pula people. One must also have a deep cultural foundation, love the Pula people, and not be influenced by the outside world's inherent image of the Pula, which could easily lead to biased research; 7. Share the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in this village and its corresponding variant stories; 8. Due to the lack of writing, the main way of passing on local myths is through oral transmission by Beima chanting.
May 6, 2024	<p>Yang Xiuying</p> <p>The native of Zongshe Village, Yangjie Township, and is very familiar with the Yi culture of Zongshe Village and Beige Township.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ancestral spirit wood carvings have become very rare in Zongshe Village nowadays, and many have been burned or lost; 2. The alternation of the old and the new in Zongshe Village is also a conflict and integration of traditional culture and modern civilization; 3. Cultural inconfidence and misunderstanding of mythical culture have led to the gradual disappearance of traditional mythical culture and its materialized forms; 4. Together with experts such as Cao Ding'an, they once discovered a Zongshe Village Yi "Path-Guiding Scripture. "; 5. Hope to use modern digital multimedia and electronic imaging technology to better and more comprehensively protect traditional culture; 6. Share the village's myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and its corresponding variant stories.

Table 4 (Continued)

In-depth interview time	In-depth interview respondents	Interview keywords or key content
May 21, 2024	<p>Li Yong (Nizhiluobo)</p> <p>The native of Pipo Village, Yangjie Township, he is known as the Pipo Village Prince of Yi Folk Songs. He is a relative of Li Caibao, the only person in the Kaiyuan area who is familiar with the Yi writing system and a bearer of the tradition.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An introduction to the historical background of the Yi culture in Pipo Village. Pipo Village was an important relay station where the ancient Tea-Horse Road passed through, and it was once a place where multiple ethnic cultures met, bustling with activity and economic prosperity; 2. Although there are many Yi people in Kaiyuan, Pipo Village is the place where the Yi people's native language and writing are relatively well preserved; 3. There are also caves dug by bandits on the ancient tea-horse road to hide, and remember that grandmother was once robbed by bandits when she was young. Fortunately, she escaped and returned. Grandfather was also robbed by bandits on his way home from the market, and all his belongings, including all his clothes, were stolen; 4. Introduced the traditional culture and customs of marriage in Pipo Village; 5. Introduced the traditional culture and customs of funerals in Pipo Village; 6. Shared the village's myth about the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and its corresponding variant stories; 7. Analyzed the mythical elements of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" contained in the funeral ceremony; 8. Explain the culture of Pipo Village regarding "Jiujiu (uncles)"; 9. It is believed that many Yi loong and tree worship rituals in Kaiyuan are similar, but many have been Sinicized, and Yi mythology can only be passed down orally, so its integrity cannot be guaranteed; 10. An introduction to the stone houses and stone post roads in Pipo Village; 11. Mythology is not feudal superstition; it is something that our ancestors left us, and it is our wealth.
June 9, 2024	<p>Zhang Baosheng</p> <p>A young Pipo Yi native who has studied the traditional art and culture of his people as well as the languages and literature of China's ethnic minorities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yi young people who reject their native myths are just a minority. Most Yi young people respect traditional myths, and Beima has told about this myth; 2. Pipo Village has been significantly sinicized, and many children no longer speak their mother tongue clearly; 3. The decline in traditional Yi attire is likely closely related to Pipo Village's role as a relay station on the ancient post road; 4. Local Yi records are generally not allowed to be borrowed; 5. Some of the rituals related to mythology and ancestor worship are indeed no longer obvious or have been lost. As the younger generation of Pipo, we deeply understand the importance of the traditional culture of the Yi people. We need to continue to innovate, develop, and promote our national culture to better unite the national spirit and promote the inheritance and development of culture.

Table 4 (Continued)

In-depth interview time	In-depth interview respondents	Interview keywords or key content
March 20, 2023	Bai Yongfei Secretary of the Party branch of the Laole village group in Xiaolongtan Town, Kaiyuan City, and directly responsible for the safety of cultural relics in the Human Ancestors Temple	1. Introduction to the history of the development of the Yi ethnic group in Laole Village and the Yi myth of brother-sister marriage after the flood", which continues to be passed down through "living myths", as well as the artistic materialization of the myth, the Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village; 2. Introduction to the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" that is passed down in the village; 3. Introduction to the current living and production conditions of the villagers, the surrounding environment, etc.; 4. After the Ming Dynasty, the gradual integration of Han immigrants and Han culture began, and the coexistence of multiple cultures in the mixed state of other nationalities and Han began to emerge; 5. As a municipal-level cultural relic protection unit, the Human Ancestor Temple is protected by the relevant government departments and managed by local Yi village cadres and elders who are the inheritors of Yi culture in the village; 6. Introduction to the exhibition at the the Human Ancestors Temple fair.
	Kong Dezhen Cultural relics safety management personnel of the Human Ancestors Temple in the Laole village group of Xiaolongtan Town, Kaiyuan City	1. Introduction to the history of the Yi people in Laole Village and the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" that is still being passed down as a "living myth" and the artistic materialization of the myth, the Temple of the Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village; 2. Introduce the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" that is passed down in the village; 3. As the cultural relics safety management personnel of the Human Ancestors Temple in the Laole Village Group, Xiaolongtan Town, Kaiyuan City, put forward many suggestions for protecting the Human Ancestors Temple, strengthening modern digital cultural publicity, and promoting the development of the local cultural tourism industry; 4. Introduce and display local Yi costumes and the Human Ancestors Temple Fair.

Table 5 Data analysis of In-depth interviewing data in the Kaiyuan Cultural Relics Management Bureau and the Kaiyuan Yi Society

In-depth interview time	In-depth interview respondents	Interview keywords or key content
May 3, 2024	<p>Mr. Cao Ding'an</p> <p>Former director of the Kaiyuan Cultural Relics Management Institute</p>	<p>1. According to personal understanding, the Yi myth should be regarded as a form of Yi ancestor worship;</p> <p>2. The birth of the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" occurred during the transitional period between the Kaiyuan Hongshiya cliff paintings and the Human Ancestors Temple. The Kaiyuan Yi flood myth appeared in the Neolithic period. As for the myth of human origins, in Laole Village it was influenced by the Han people and adopted a materialized form of expression, while in Beige Township it is expressed in a colorful living form;</p> <p>3. The flood myths of Beige have formed two types of myths: the "god-human marriage after the flood" myth and the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth, through the interweaving of the original form and the Han cultural form;</p> <p>4. The tradition of woodcarving gods in Pipo still carries traces of the mythical sacred tree and is a continuation of the post-flood myths. Beima is actually a demigod, a demigod of the post-flood myths, who continues the national spirit and beliefs of the myths by presiding over and organizing various religious ceremonies and activities;</p> <p>5. For environmental and resource conservation reasons, China has abolished burial in the ground, which has affected the traditional funeral culture of the Yi people. From this perspective, the continuation of traditional funeral rituals has indeed encountered some practical difficulties;</p> <p>6. The protection of traditional ethnic culture is not something that is just talked about; it is something that is actually done. Myths are not purely feudal superstitions. What we pass on and protect are the mythical stories of nationalities and the ethnic spirit behind them, not human activities aimed at changing reality;</p> <p>7. Despite the difficulties, after continuous efforts, the Kaiyuan Cultural Relics Management Office finally designated the Human Ancestors Temple as a municipal cultural relic protection unit, which undoubtedly provided a platform for the protection of the Yi traditional mythological culture, where mythological stories can continue to be told and temple fairs organized;</p> <p>8. The diverse characteristics of the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" are promoted by the living form of mythical inheritance in the local area. In the course of history, the content of myths is inevitably subject to change due to changes in the geographical and cultural context, and this change is more pronounced in the oral transmission of myths;</p>

Table 5 (Continued)

In-depth interview time	In-depth interview respondents	Interview keywords or key content
May 3, 2024	Mr. Cao Ding'an Former director of the Kaiyuan Cultural Relics Management Institute	9. I am not worried about young people using new ways to adapt myths for cultural publicity, unless they adapt them without a deep understanding of the myths themselves. If young people are willing to specifically study and research myths, isn't that a good thing? I encourage young people to try more, because if you don't try, how will you know if it's good or bad?
May 4, 2024	Ms. Pu Tongmei Vice president of the Kaiyuan Yi Society	<p>1. I am originally from the Yi ethnic group. I used to work at the Kaiyuan Cultural Center to protect intangible cultural heritage. I discovered that most things related to ethnic beliefs are reflected in certain living habits, including clothing, dance, music, etc.;</p> <p>2. Historical preservation is difficult. As the de facto inheritor of Yi traditional culture, I find that the culture of priests, or Beima, is difficult to protect. It is considered superstitious, which is indeed a source of controversy. This is indeed a pain point in her work, too, and she can only continue to improve the relevant protection policies for traditional ethnic culture in practice;</p> <p>3. The Yi cultural gap in Kaiyuan is very serious. Young people all want to make money, and not many like old things. It is currently difficult to find young people who can understand and read ancient Yi;</p> <p>4. The myth of brother and sister marriage is found in many Yi myths and legends. Even in the last century, there were cases of first cousins marrying. However, we do not promote close marriage through myths but rather use them to convey the ethnic memories, spirits, and customs from history. In a certain community, in fact, in addition to the constraints of modern social laws and regulations, there are also many customs and spirits formed by ethnic history;</p> <p>5. An introduction to the Yi people's totem of the tiger and their natural worship of the loong as well as their ancestor worship culture, such as ancestor worship;</p> <p>6. As an industrial city, Kaiyuan should pay more attention to the inheritance and protection of the city's ethnic culture, in addition to the development of the urban economy. It would be a great thing if there were more publicity channels and more young people joined in the protection of Yi traditional mythology.</p>

Table 5 (Continued)

In-depth interview time	In-depth interview respondents	Interview keywords or key content
May 5, 2024	Ms. Li Yanbo Former secretary of the Kaiyuan Cultural Relics Management Institute	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Things related to folk culture are protected throughout China from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage; 2. The Human Ancestors Temple of the Laole Village is a municipal-level protected cultural relic (mainly in terms of architecture) in Kaiyuan City, including the oral mythological culture contained within. In the past, only the historical, scientific, and artistic value of cultural relics was emphasized, but now the social and economic value is also included; 3. The situation of a cultural gap in ethnic groups exists throughout the country. For example, after the last international symposium on the Human Ancestors Temple of the Yi people in the Laole village and its myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood," due to insufficient publicity, its influence was limited, and no further progress was made in the later stages of research; 4. The Hongshiya cliff paintings in Xiaolongtan were only discovered in recent years, and they have not yet been listed as a cultural protection unit; 5. One reason why the Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village has not been upgraded to a higher level of cultural protection is that cultural relics should be preserved in their original state. However, because it was heavily renovated before, the appearance of the Human Ancestors Temple has been significantly influenced by Han architecture, and it is quite different from the original appearance; 6. It seems that minority cultures have to adapt and integrate with Han culture if they are to survive in history; 7. Finally, the character images in the Xiaolongtan Hongshiya cliff paintings seem to have similarities with another stone carving found in the Xi Mountains areas of Kaiyuan. Whether there is a connection between the two remains to be further studied in the future;

Kunming University of Science and Technology in-depth interview:

Interview time: May 11, 2024

Number of interviewees: five

Interviewee information: Kunming University of Science and Technology undergraduate students, respectively from the Naxi, Dai, Miao, Bai and Yi ethnic groups

Key content of the interview:

Many of the students had only heard of the myth, including the Yi student, who had only heard of it but was not familiar with it. As for the Human Ancestors Temple, they only know a little about the Fuxi and Nuwa Temple in Henan Province. Overall, the inheritance of ethnic mythological culture is a complex situation. On the one hand, many ethnic groups are still actively passing on their mythological stories and maintaining the vitality of their culture through festivals and ceremonies. On the other hand, the modernization process has brought many challenges, such as the gradual replacement of traditional lifestyles by modern lifestyles and a decline in interest in traditional culture among the younger generation. These changes have created certain difficulties for the inheritance of mythological culture. I think college students can get involved in a variety of ways. First, we can use academic research and cultural projects to explore and record ethnic mythologies in depth. For example, conducting field research, writing research papers, or participating in cultural exhibitions. Second, we can organize or participate in cultural activities such as lectures, exhibitions, and seminars to enhance public awareness of ethnic myths. Finally, we can use modern technology, such as social media and digital tools, to disseminate ethnic mythological stories and attract the attention of more young people.



Figure 18 In-depth interviewing (1)

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2023-2024), Photographed by the researcher herself.



Figure 19 In-depth interviewing (2)

Source: Peng,L.Q.H.(2024), Photographed by the researcher herself.

Comparatively Study the similarities and differences in the living myths of Yi "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and their related cultural traditions in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City.

Comparative research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships, changes, and influences between different objects, groups, cultures, and regions by comparing the similarities and differences between them. The advantage of comparative research is that it can provide a channel for cross-cultural, cross-regional, and cross-period research, which not only helps to discover the universal laws of minority ethnic mythological inheritance in Dian culture but also facilitates the exploration of the similarities and differences in the cultural inheritance of the Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth in different Yi areas of Kaiyuan, the Kaiyuan Yi "god-human marriage after the flood," and the Henan Huaiyang Han female Nuwa and Fuxi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth. Similarly, when using comparative research methods, attention must also be paid to issues such as ethnic and regional cultural biases and biases in the selection of research subjects.

The Yi myths that have been nurtured in a cultural atmosphere of pluralism are the root of each Yi culture in Kaiyuan. The myths of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Yi in Kaiyuan, as well as the folk rituals and ceremonies and art related to the myths, in the Yi villages of Beige, Zongshe, Pipo, and Laole (the Human Ancestors Temple), where the majority of the Yi people live. Because of its long history, relatively complete mythological materials, and strong Beima culture in the village, not only is there the only provincial intangible heritage protection list in Kaiyuan—the Beige Yi (Pula branch) Traditional Culture Protection Zone—but there is also the only surviving "Human Ancestors Temple" in Southwest China dedicated to the two siblings who survived the flood in Laole Village. Therefore, four Yi villages become the main research objects of this comparative study.

This comparative study first collected and organized literature and other materials to establish a systematic comparative framework to help organize and analyze the similarities and differences between the comparison objects. The comparative framework mainly includes four directions: the contents of myths as a point of

comparison, the similar folk belief practices related to myths as a point of comparison, the geo-socio-cultural environments as a point of comparison, and the transmission of living myths as a point of comparison

Finally, based on the comparative research framework, the objects of comparison are analyzed and compared in depth, and all the data obtained is compared to identify the similarities and differences between the different objects. Based on the results of the comparative analysis, conclusions and insights are proposed to explain the reasons and effects of the similarities and differences between the different objects.



Table 6 To analyze the contents of myths as a point of comparison

Beige Village	Zongshe Village	Pipo Village	Laole Village
<p>1. The theme of the flood and human rebirth reflects the Yi people's awe of nature, their reflection on the birth of life, their examination of ethnic morality and aesthetic concepts, and their understanding of the ideas of multi-ethnic symbiosis and ethnic cultural identity;</p> <p>2. The mythological content contains a large number of symbolic descriptions of nature worship (such as pine and fir trees, dog tails, buckwheat seeds, etc.);</p> <p>3. There are different versions of the myth in different villages in Beige Area: in some versions, the iron bucket and the wooden bucket symbolize evil and good, respectively;</p> <p>4. There is also the "god-human marriage after the flood," which expands the storyline of this type of myth and reflects the influence of geographical, economic, and cultural factors on the transmission of myths.</p>	<p>1. The core of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is that the brother and sister survived the flood disaster and reproduced their offspring. The wisdom of their ancestors and the protection of the nature god are reflected through specific trees and objects (wooden buckets, Duoyi fruit trees);</p> <p>2. In the process of myth transmission, Han cultural elements were incorporated, and the narrative structure is simple and the plot straightforward;</p> <p>3. In the Zongshe Village myth, the Duoyi fruit tree is the sacred tree, in the Haicaitang Village of Kaiyuan, the cowtail tree and golden bamboo also perform similar life-saving functions. The different versions of the myth in different villages reflect differences in geographical environment and cultural background.</p>	<p>1. The theme of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Pipo Village focuses on the narrative of "the origin and reconstruction of mankind after the flood disaster." The narrative is full of details and plot development, full of local characteristics, and embodies the themes of the continuation of life after the disaster and the worship of nature. It conveys profound religious metaphors and life philosophy;</p> <p>2. The versions of the myth vary slightly with the region and the difference between the oral transmitters, but the core content remains the same, reflecting the consistency and changeability of the culture of the Luoluo branch of the Yi nationality.</p>	<p>1. The theme and core content of the Laole Village myth revolve around two typical mythological motifs: the flood that destroyed the world and the brother-and-sister marriage that regenerated humanity. The content combines metaphors and symbols, including catastrophe, survival, marriage, reproduction, and teaching;</p> <p>2. The objects in the myth, such as the millstone, the winnowing basket, and the sewing kit, symbolize marriage and harmony. Natural elements (trees, egrets) symbolize the close connection between humans and nature;</p> <p>3. The Laole Village myth reflects the ethical conflict of brother-sister marriage and teaches a moral through the myth. It emphasizes the awe of nature and teaches future generations not to violate the taboo of "divine punishment. ".</p>

As a vehicle of culture, myths carry profound historical memory and cultural expression in their content, roles, plots, and symbolic meanings. In the four Yi villages in Kaiyuan, although the mythological systems show similarities in terms of their basic structure, their content differs significantly in detail due to their different historical and cultural backgrounds and economic productivity. These differences are reflected in the construction of the core stories and characterization, highlighting the subtle balance between the common and the individual in Yi culture.

First, the Yi myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" has the core themes of the flood disaster, brother-sister marriage, and the regeneration of humanity, reflecting the Yi culture's awe of nature and deep reflection on the continuation of life. These myths are based on the philosophical narratives of nature worship, ancestor worship, and human origins and have distinctive religious meanings and ethical teaching functions. In terms of content, these myths are not only influenced by the Dian culture and the traditional aesthetics of the Yi people, but also deeply influenced and permeated by the local geographical and cultural context, economic production methods, and foreign cultures (especially Han culture), forming a unique regional cultural identity. It is worth noting that in the Beige area of Kaiyuan, there is also the phenomenon of the coexistence of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and the "god-human marriage after the flood." Regarding this phenomenon, some scholars pointed out at the 2010 Renzu Temple Symposium that the myth of "brother-sister marriage" may have originated from the influence of rice farming culture, while the myth of "god-human marriage" depends on the existence of a dry farming society. However, the mythological form presented in the Hongshiya Cliff Paintings at Xiaolongtan is more primitive, originating from the period of nomadic hunting economy, which is completely different from the previous two, demonstrating the diversity and complexity of the mythological development process.

Second, the content of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in the four villages generally contains rich elements of nature worship and diverse symbolic objects, such as trees such as pine trees, Duoyi fruit trees, cowtail trees, and golden

bamboos, as well as life-saving tools such as wooden barrels and iron buckets and objects that facilitate the marriage of siblings such as millstones and dustpans. These objects are not only important media in the storyline but also reflect the shaping of cultural heritage by the different geographical environments and production methods of each village. The choice and description of these objects show the unique way in which the local people perceive their relationship with nature.

Thirdly, the theme of brother and sister marriage, whether it is smooth or bumpy in the myth, not only implies an exploration of the Yi people's conflicts with and ways of reconciling their ethics and morals, but also conveys the profound significance of taboos and education through the myth. The myth uses the symbolism of objects and the narrative of the story as a vehicle to educate future generations to have awe for nature while regulating human behaviour to align with national morals and cultural values. The narrative of brother-sister marriage further metaphorically expresses the national spirit of "sacrifice the self for the greater good." This value is particularly prominent in the process of post-disaster reconstruction, highlighting the Yi culture's prioritization of collective interests and temporary compromise of individual emotions. The significance of brother-sister marriage is not limited to the family but is elevated to a national perspective. Extending from the relationship of "brother and sister" to the symbiosis of the ethnic group, this marriage model symbolizes the mutual assistance and integration of multiple ethnic groups, achieving common survival and development through unity and cooperation. This narrative conveys not only the wisdom of survival but also philosophical thinking about the relationship between humans and nature.

Finally, although myths are mainly transmitted orally in the process of their continuation as living myths, and although there are also corresponding written records in ancient Yi script in Pipo Village, the details of the myths themselves may vary slightly due to differences in regional culture and economy and the narrators. However, the core narrative remains consistent. This consistency reflects the inherent unity of Yi culture and also reflects its ability to adapt to changing times.

Table 7 To analyze the similar folk belief practices related to myths as a point of comparison

Beige Village	Zongshe Village	Pipo Village	Laole Village
<p>The myths of the Beige people play an important role in the village's traditional festivals and rituals, such as the Yi Torch Festival, loong rituals, and funeral rituals. These rituals are not only religious activities but also a manifestation of community cohesion. Mythical characters such as the god of heaven and the ancestor god still play an important role in traditional festivals and rituals, reflecting the influence of mythology on social norms.</p> <p>The loong ritual is a vivid demonstration of the historical process of human society's transition from a clan society to a family society, and it has unique and rich characteristics of its own nationality. It not only completely reflects the primitive worship thinking of the mountain indigenous people towards nature and ancestors but also profoundly demonstrates the way their culture is passed down and their spiritual world.</p>	<p>Zongshe Village has dragon-worshipping rituals closely related to ancestor worship, temple activities that combine Yi and Han cultures to worship the fire god, and spring festival and twelfth lunar month ancestor worship rituals that are symbolically linked to the flood myth. All of these retain the simple but vibrant ethnic characteristics.</p> <p>"Ancestor woodcuts" enshrine mythical figures and ancestral spirits, embodying a form of nature worship and ancestor worship. They also showcase the Yi people's unique woodcarving craftsmanship and ethnic aesthetics and have become a symbol of ethnic art and cultural beliefs.</p> <p>The family rules for the worship of the wood carvings in the "Nashetang" are strictly followed. Only the wood carvings of the parents and elder brothers are worshipped. Rituals such as the slaughter of a pig and the burning of the wood carvings during the ancestral worship express the respect for the ancestors.</p>	<p>In the traditional funeral activities and ancestral spirit worship ceremonies of the Pipo Village, there are traces of mythical culture, emphasizing the placement of the souls of loved ones and the reverence for ancestral spirits.</p> <p>The production of the ancestral spirit wood carving "Pujida" directly echoes the plot of the flood myth. Secondly, the use of elements with sacred attributes such as the "ancestral tree," sharp-knife grass, and wild bamboo roots during the worship also symbolizes the materialization and ritualization of myths.</p>	<p>Ancestor worship and nature worship are the main ideas behind most of the ancestral temple rituals in the Laole village. For example, on the 19th day of the twelfth lunar month, the Sun Ceremony, sacrificial brother and sister gods, on the 16th day of the first month, prayers are offered for fertility and blessings.</p> <p>The temple rituals include the Cigarette Box Dance, folk songs, story painting, making Huagao rice cakes, and sharing the sacrificial offerings. Participants are not limited to the Laole village but also include other Yi people from the local area and beyond.</p>

Folk beliefs and customs are inextricably linked to myths. They not only reflect the practical application and social functions of myths but also bring the content of myths to life in our daily lives. Rituals and activities are not just religious acts but also a way to combine entertaining the gods with entertaining people, as well as an important way to strengthen community cohesion. Myths do not only exist in texts but are also given concrete and ritualized expression in folk beliefs and customs. A comparison of research shows that the natural deities and legendary figures in myths play an important role in the worship rituals, festive activities, and folk customs of different regions. The differences in folk beliefs and customs are mainly reflected in the specific forms of worship, the different dates of festivals, and the diversity of local legends. Some myths are passed down orally in folk traditions, while others are passed down in the form of festivals or folk art.

First, in terms of similarities, the traditional rituals of the four villages all revolve around ancestor worship and nature worship, fully embodying the Yi culture's reverence for and inheritance of mythical figures, ancestral spirits, and natural elements.

(1) Ancestor worship: For example, the "Nashetang" ritual in Zongshe Village, the "Pujida" woodcarving ceremony in Pipo Village, and the "Ritual of Sacrificing the Statues of the Brother and Sister Gods" in Laole Village all revolve around ancestor worship, highlighting the importance of ancestral spirits in the rituals.

(2) Nature worship: The loong rituals in Beige Area use natural elements such as the "ancestral tree" and sharp-blade grass, and the woodcut "Pujida" in Pipo Village directly echoes the flood myth, demonstrating the central position of nature worship.

In addition, the festivals and rituals in each village, such as the torch festival, the loong rituals, and the "sun ceremony," not only continue the traditions of ethnic culture but also enhance the cultural identity and cohesion of the community through the rituals. The extensive use of symbolic material elements in rituals is also remarkable, such as the "ancestor woodcarving" in Zongshe Village, the "sharp blade grass" and "ancestral tree" in Pipo Village, and the Huagao rice cake making in Laole Village. These

images not only strengthen the connection between mythology and rituals but also reflect the Yi people's unique aesthetics and craftsmanship traditions.

Second, in terms of differences, there are significant differences between villages in terms of the specific form of sacrificial rituals and the integration of diverse cultures. There are also differences in the ritual connotations of traditional ancestral spirit woodcarving culture:

(1) Beige Village: The loong ritual sacrifice ceremony vividly reflects the historical process of the transition from a clan society to a family society, emphasizing the continuity of primitive worship thinking in the culture of the indigenous people of the mountains.

(2) Zongshe Village: The sacrificial activities not only retain the traditional loong and ancestor sacrifice ceremonies but also integrate into the activities of the temple of worship to the fire god of Yi Han culture. Its woodcarving culture is dominated by "ancestor woodcarvings," which symbolize the union of nature and ancestral spirits and showcase the artistic characteristics of Yi woodcarving craftsmanship.

(3) Pipo Village: The main focus is on funerals and ancestor worship, and the rituals highlight the close connection between the placement of souls and the flood myth. The ritual object "Pujida" directly echoes the plot of the flood myth, reflecting a distinctive local expression of the myth.

(4) Laole Village: The temple's fair-centered rituals incorporate various art forms such as the Cigarette Box Dance, folk songs, story painting, etc., creating a strong festive atmosphere. The openness of the rituals allows local and surrounding villagers to participate, demonstrating a wider cultural interactivity.

In short, the folk beliefs and customs related to the myths of the four villages are consistent in terms of their core themes. They all have religious connotations of ancestor worship and nature worship, while at the same time strengthening the cultural identity and cohesion of the community. However, there are significant differences between the villages in terms of the specific forms of ritual expression, the degree of cultural integration, the choice of objects, and the depth of the connection with the flood myth.

These differences not only reflect the diversity of geographical environments and historical backgrounds but also demonstrate the regional characteristics and cultural adaptability of Yi culture in its inheritance and change. Through these rich and diverse folk beliefs and customs, myths have become closely integrated with real life and have become an important part of Yi cultural identity.

What needs to be pointed out separately here is that a deeper interpretation of the Human Ancestors Temple and the myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Laole Village to which they are attached must also be systematically compared with the relevant myths and beliefs in the Central Plains region of China. In Henan Province, China, there has been a folk tradition of myths that include the marriage of the brothers and sisters Fuxi and Nüwa after the flood destroyed the world and their reproduction of the human race. Such myths have similar narrative structures, and there are also myths of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" similar to that of Laole Village in Kaiyuan City. A comparative study will reveal some noteworthy cultural phenomena common to the ancestral temple culture of the people of Laole Village and that of Henan: for example, the consistency of mythological motifs, both of which contain the primitive belief in ancestor worship, with profound religious and social symbolic significance. Both the myths of Laole Village and Henan use the temple as an important place to worship the ancestors, and religious activities such as temple fairs are used to maintain the transmission of beliefs. The sacrificial rituals in both places involve ancient religious rituals. Han priests or the Yi people's Beima will narrate the myths of the ancestors orally or recite them during the sacrificial ceremonies to express their admiration and prayers. The belief in the ancestors in both places was formed against the backdrop of the intersection of multiple ethnic cultures and was influenced by various cultures, reflecting the inclusiveness and diversity of Chinese culture. In the vicinity of Huaiyang County in Henan Province, a group of myths developed around the Flood and the creation of humanity by the brother and sister Fuxi. In the Lao Le village and surrounding areas, the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is also densely distributed.

However, the Laole Human Ancestors Temple culture and the Henan Human Ancestors Temple culture also show distinct regional differences in terms of geographical environment, cultural background, the image of the ancestors, and ritual performance. The Henan Fuxi and Nuwa Ancestor Temple culture is more inclined towards the grand narrative and ritualised inheritance of the Central Plains civilisation, while the Laole culture emphasises the original ancestral spirit worship and local characteristics. These similarities and differences provide important examples and insights for the study of the diversity and integrity of Chinese culture.



Table 8 To analyze the geo-socio-cultural environments as a point of comparison

Beige Village	Zongshe Village	Pipo Village	Laole Village
<p>The inheritance of the myths of Beige Area has always been based on the more traditional farming economy in the high alpine mountains in the eastern part of Kaiyuan. Beige is a typical Yi minority settlement area, where the traditional Yi language is still spoken today. It has a strong historical and cultural background, and the ecological environment has preserved relatively complete original folkways and customs. The myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and its traditional culture have been passed down relatively intact.</p> <p>Loong Forest is regarded as the territory of the loong god, and this traditional belief has to a large extent promoted the ecological and environmental protection of the Dahei Mountain areas of Kaiyuan.</p>	<p>Ancestor worship is widespread in the original culture of the high alpine mountains of Kaiyuan. Zongshe Village is a traditional settlement of the Pula people with a profound ethnic and cultural heritage. The flood myth highlights their worship of ancestral spirits and historical memory.</p> <p>The geographical features of Zongshe Village have influenced the content of the myth and the form of belief. Many geographical features, such as Duoyi fruit trees and "waterfall caves," directly participate in the mythological narrative of Zongshe.</p>	<p>First, Pipo Village is located at the foot of the Dahei Mountains, with dense forests and abundant water sources. The natural environment provides rich material for myth creation, and at the same time, the flood story may reflect the villagers' perception of the environment.</p> <p>Second, Pipo Village is an important ancient post station and trading hub, and its historical background is a blend of diverse cultures, creating a unique ethnic style.</p> <p>Finally, the Pipo Yi belongs to the Luoluo people of the Nisu branch, and their social structure is centred on the family and village. Religious beliefs and myths are intertwined, and ancestor worship and the flood myth have a profound influence on the villagers' daily lives, ethical value, and aesthetic sense.</p>	<p>The Laole village is located in the hills and has a community economy based on farming. The natural environment reinforces the natural imagery in the myths and influences the creation of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths. The village has a long history, and more than 90% of the population are Yi people, belonging to the Gaisu branch, with a long and rich culture.</p> <p>Since the Ming Dynasty, they have been influenced by foreign cultures, especially Han culture, and there are also Han residents in the village, which over time has led to the formation of a multicultural pattern blending Yi and Han cultures.</p> <p>The myth combines the Yi people's primitive ancestor worship with the Han culture that has been integrated since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, forming the unique culture of the "Human Ancestors Temple" in Laole Village.</p>

Myths do not exist in isolation but are deeply rooted in a specific geographical environment and social and cultural context. Research shows that mythological stories are often closely linked to specific natural landscapes, reflecting the profound influence of the local natural environment on myth creation. At the same time, the historical development of ethnic groups in the context of Dian culture, the evolution of ethnic mythological thinking and aesthetic consciousness, the deep-seated needs of the socio-political context, changes in social and family structures, and the blending of diverse cultures have all combined to shape the formation and evolution of mythological stories.

The geographical and socio-cultural environment of the four Yi villages in Kaiyuan not only contains a common cultural core but also displays distinctive and diverse characteristics. First, the myths of these villages are mostly centered on ancestor worship and nature worship, relying on the traditional agrarian economy and a relatively closed ecological and cultural context, continuing the unique traditions of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and proto-culture. Second, due to the differences in the geomorphological characteristics, degree of cultural integration, and social structure of each village, the content of the myths and forms of belief shows great diversity. This diversity not only reflects the specific influence of geography and culture but also demonstrates the process of adaptation and dynamic change of Yi culture in different regions.

Table 9 To analyze the transmission of living myths as a point of comparison

Beige Village	Zongshe Village	Pipo Village	Laole Village
<p>The myths of Beige Area are deeply rooted in religious rituals and are mainly transmitted orally. The content of the myths is mostly passed down through the Beima, who have a high social status and recite the myths during related rituals, playing the role of leading beliefs, passing on culture, and enhancing popularity.</p> <p>In recent years, through the work of protecting intangible cultural heritage, some of the oral myths in Beige have been recorded and compiled.</p> <p>The interpretation and changes of the myths are first reflected in the overflow of folk variants, which enrich the narrative; and second, in the integration into artistic activities to convey values.</p>	<p>The myths of Zongshe Village were mainly passed down orally from generation to generation in the village, and a few were based on family sacrificial activities, gradually losing their integrity.</p> <p>With the integration of Han culture, the narrative of the myths gradually became simplified, some details were forgotten, and the ritual woodcuts and ceremonies were simplified or even disappeared, but the core ethnic spirit and symbols of the myths were retained.</p> <p>Today, in ethnic tourism and cultural publicity, myths have gradually become cultural symbols, promoting the revival of local culture.</p>	<p>The "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths of the Pipo village are mainly transmitted orally and live, and some are also recorded in written form in Yi scriptures. Not only are they the essence of cultural narratives, they are also an important cornerstone in shaping local religious beliefs and social customs. These myths have been incorporated into the lives and ritual practices of the villagers through the mode of living transmission, demonstrating the deep interaction between cultural inheritance and modernization.</p> <p>Beima, the bearer of traditional Yi culture, occupies an important position in society. He is both the guardian of culture and the executor of religious rituals.</p> <p>In modern society, Pipo Village promotes the protection and promotion of myths through the application for intangible cultural heritage status and the activities of the transmission studio, while also using them as cultural tourism resources to attract more attention.</p>	<p>The myths of the Laole village are mainly orally transmitted through the village elders, who tell the mythological stories to future generations, maintaining a vivid linguistic character. The myths are then materialized, with the Human Ancestors Temple as the core, and the mythological content is fixed through art forms such as statues and murals. Finally, the myths and their culture are passed on through diverse and living forms, such as temple fair rituals and other activities, and have become an important part of the cultural life of the local Yi people.</p> <p>With the changing times, the ethical concepts in the myths have been reinterpreted, and Yi traditional myths have gradually been combined with modern rural cultural tourism and education. The myths convey ecological protection and ethical concepts, providing an example for the protection of ethnic minority cultures.</p>

Living myths refer to those myths that are constantly performed, passed down, and closely integrated into contemporary social life. The transmission of the living myths of the Kaiyuan Yi ethnic group's "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths not only relies on the traditional oral method but is also deeply embedded in social life and production. The transmission of myths in each village is closely integrated with religious sacrificial activities or family rituals, and through intergenerational transmission, the liveliness and flexibility of the myths are maintained.

In Beige Village, myths are passed down through the recitation of Beima; in Zongshe Village, tradition is maintained through family rituals; in Pipo Village, they are practiced through Yi scriptures and religious ceremonies; and in Laole Village, myths are passed down through activities such as the Human Ancestors Temple Fair. Whether through the addition of variant texts or the simplification of content, each village has retained the core national spirit and cultural symbols in the transmission of myths. Each village has its own characteristics and strategies for the materialization and artistic expression of myths.

In Beige, religious chanting is the main form, and there are various forms. Some oral myths have been recorded through intangible cultural heritage protection, maintaining a relatively complete content, and the cultural value of myths is conveyed through artistic activities.

Zongshe Village is deeply influenced by Han culture, and it emphasizes oral and living inheritance. The physical expression is relatively weak, the content of the myths has gradually been simplified, and some details have been lost, but the core spirit has been retained.

In Pipo Village, myths are passed down through written records and oral traditions in parallel, with fewer physical forms. However, the essence of cultural narratives is maintained through Yi scriptures.

In Laole Village, a combination of oral traditions, physical representations, and rituals are used to express mythical content through art such as statues and murals. Coupled with academic exchanges, cultural tourism, and modern education, the

ecological protection and ethical concepts in the myths are integrated into the contemporary cultural context.

In modern society, these mythical cultures continue to evolve with the times. Young local Yi people are passionate about trying to pass on and interpret the spirit of the myths through a variety of modern media and sociocultural changes (such as intangible cultural heritage protection, cultural promotion, and tourism development) so that these ancient cultural treasures can flourish in the modern world.



CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION

Summary

The continuation and inheritance of myths must rely on a specific cultural ecosystem. The myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is one of the most representative ancient mythological types among China, especially among the ethnic minorities in Yunnan. "THE VALUE RECONSTRUCTION OF YI MYTHS IN DIAN CULTURE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE MYTHS OF 'BROTHER-SISTER MARRIAGE AFTER THE FLOOD' AMONG THE YI PEOPLE IN KAIYUAN, CHINA." takes Dian culture and the Yi Aesthetics as the starting point and takes the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths and related living mythological cultures and folk religious activities in the four Yi settlements in Kaiyuan City—Beige Village, Zongshe Village, Pipu Village, and Laole Village—as the research objects. Through data collection and analysis, the formation and significance of this mythological type are explored in depth.

First, two main research objectives of this study are clarified: first, to analyze the historical reasons for the formation of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myths in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City; second, to comparatively study the similarities and differences in the living myths of Yi "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and their related cultural traditions in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City. Based on the research objectives, three main research questions are proposed: (1) What kind of cultural and ecological contextual foundation did Dian culture lay for the creation of the Kaiyuan Yi myths? (2) How does Yi aesthetics influence the creation of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" myth among the Kaiyuan Yi? (3) How to conduct a comparative study of the myths of "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" and "God-Human Marriage after the Flood" among the Yi in different Yi districts in Kaiyuan City and the myth of brother-sister marriage after the flood" among the Han Chinese in Huaiyang, Henan Province, which is based on the myths of Nuwa and Fuxi?

Second, according to the research objectives, a theoretical research framework was created, including theories and concepts related to myths; mythological motifs, and ancestral beliefs; the types and characteristics of mythic forms of existence; and Dian culture and Yi aesthetics and related research. The specific theories involve the "mythological historical facts theory," that is, the views of "Euhemerism" and "Palaeopateticism," which attempt to rationalize mythological narratives and believe that the magical narrative elements in myths originate from human misunderstandings of external phenomena and language. In addition, it also combines the animism and theory of survival. The former emphasizes the influence of the power of the soul and gods on human life, which has developed into the worship of them, while the latter traces the evolution of human culture through the cultural structure of "cultural remains." The study also draws on the "Myth and Ritual" theory, which emphasizes that myths depend on rituals for their existence, linking myths to religious rituals and artistic and cultural phenomena and extending to the fields of music, dance, and drama. In addition, the mythological view of Marx's theory is also incorporated into the study, which believes that myths, as a product of human childhood, contain great aesthetic value, reflecting early human exploration of the origins of nature, society, and the self, while also nurturing the sprouting of modern scientific consciousness.

Third, the research methods used in this study are mainly qualitative, including archival and documentary research, ethnographic approach methods (fieldwork and in-depth interviewing), and comparative research methods, to obtain a wealth of oral, documentary, and visual data. In the final comparative study, a systematic analysis was carried out from four directions: the contents of myths, the similar folk belief practices related to myths, the geo-socio-cultural environments, and the transmission of living myths. This multi-dimensional research method ensures the reliability and validity of the research.

Discussion

In the Yi ethnic minority area of Kaiyuan City in Yunnan Province, this mythical culture, which carries the historical memory of the nation and the beliefs of the ancestors, is regarded as a symbol of the origin of the Yi ancestors and Yi culture. It embodies the Yi people's respect for life and awe of nature. The historical reasons for the formation of the Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in the four Yi villages of Kaiyuan City mainly include the historical, cultural, and social background, geographical and climatic environment, social structure, primitive religious beliefs, ways of passing on mythical culture, and the influence of foreign cultures.

Regarding the origin and development of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Kaiyuan City, research shows that the embryonic form of this type of myth can be traced back to the primitive mythical plastic arts of the primitive hunting economy. From a geographical perspective, the natural environment of Yunnan has been stable for a long time. Kaiyuan is a region inhabited by many ethnic groups. The migration, reproduction, and creation of many ethnic groups in Kaiyuan have formed a regional ethnic cultural characteristic that is both diverse, primitive, and marginal. The myth of the Yi ethnic group's "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Kaiyuan is mainly distributed in the original ethnic minority cultural circle in the high-altitude mountainous areas in the east of Kaiyuan and the Yi-Han mixed cultural circle in the remote northwest. It presents a state that coincides with the regional culture, and once this geographical environment and traditional form of agrarian economy change, the form and chain of transmission of the myth will be broken. With the development of society and the penetration of external cultures, the social structure of the Yi ethnic group has shifted from the traditional tribal model to a more diverse modern social form. As an important part of Yi culture, myths not only carry a wealth of historical and spiritual value in the oral transmission mode but also reflect Yi religious concepts and aesthetics and strengthen the Yi ethnic identity and sense of belonging. In addition, the mythological system of the Kaiyuan Yi is closely related to religious beliefs, sacrificial rituals, and folk beliefs. Although with the progress of science and technology, the

Kaiyuan Yi have gradually entered the "post-mythological civilization" and the worship of myths has weakened, the spirit of myths has never disappeared. It is worth mentioning that the Laole Village in Kaiyuan preserves a Human Ancestors Temple related to the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood." The temple's sacrificial activities include festive rituals such as the "Sun Ceremony," which demonstrate the unique integration of the living mythological art and multicultural values of nationalities. This cultural relic provides important evidence for the study of the mythological system of the Yunnan Yi people's "brother-sister marriage after the flood," ethnic aesthetics and beliefs, and is of great academic and practical significance for the inheritance and protection of ethnic minority cultures.

In addition, a comparative study was conducted to examine the similarities and differences between the myths of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" among the Yi people and their related cultural traditions in four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City. First, archive and documentary research methods and ethnographic approaches were used to systematically collect and organize relevant data and establish a systematic comparative framework to more effectively organize and analyze the similarities and differences between the comparative objects. The framework covers the following four aspects: the contents of myths, the similar folk belief practices related to myths, the geo-socio-cultural environments, and the transmission of living myths.

As carriers of culture, the content, characters, plots, and symbolic meanings of myths carry profound historical memories and cultural expressions. Although the mythological systems in the four Yi villages in Kaiyuan City have certain similarities in terms of their basic structure, they differ significantly in terms of the details due to differences in their historical and cultural backgrounds and economic and production conditions. These differences are mainly reflected in the construction of the core stories and characterization of the characters, which fully demonstrate the subtle balance between the common and the individual in Yi culture. In addition, myths are inseparable from folk beliefs and customs. The latter not only reflect the practical application and social functions of myths but also enable myths to be vividly presented in daily life.

Rituals and related activities are not only religious acts but also a comprehensive expression of entertaining gods and people, as well as an important way to enhance community cohesion. Myths gain new vitality in folk beliefs and customs through concretization and ritualization. Comparative research has found that the differences in mythological festivals and folk customs in different Yi areas are mainly reflected in the forms of sacrifice, the timing of festivals, and the diversity of regional legends. In addition, some myths are passed down through oral tradition, while others are passed down through festivals or folk art. Myths do not exist in isolation. Research shows that they are closely related to the local natural landscape, reflecting the profound influence of the natural environment on myth creation. At the same time, the historical development of ethnic groups in the Dian cultural context, the evolution of mythical thinking and aesthetic consciousness, social and political needs, changes in family structure, and the blending of diverse cultures have all shaped the formation and evolution of mythological stories. The transmission of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" of the Kaiyuan Yi people not only relies on traditional oral transmission but is also closely linked to religious rituals or family ceremonies. Through intergenerational transmission, these myths have maintained their vitality and flexibility. In modern society, these mythological cultures continue to evolve with the times. Local Yi young people are enthusiastically involved in the continuous inheritance and interpretation of the spirit of the myths through modern media, intangible cultural heritage protection, cultural promotion, and tourism development, giving these ancient cultural treasures a new lease of life in the modern era.

The origin of humanity has long been a subject of inquiry, both scientifically and mythologically. Myths about human origins often blend fantasy with ancestral reverence, with many cultures attributing humanity's beginnings to a primordial couple. Notable examples include the stories of Fuxi and Nuwa in Chinese mythology, Adam and Eve in the Bible (Corresponds to Aadam and Hawwaa in the Holy Quran), and Izanagi and Izanami in Japanese lore. In the context of the civilized era, the narrative in the Kaiyuan Yi myth about a brother and sister marrying and having children does not really accord

with modern ethical concepts. Even in the last century, the phenomenon of first cousins marrying still existed in a very small number of Yi areas in Kaiyuan. However, we are not advocating close marriage through myths but rather aiming to convey ethnic memory, ethnic spirit, and ethnic customs through myths. The myth itself reflects the Yi ancestors' thinking about the origin of mankind, a concept that can be traced back to the family structure of blood marriage in primitive society - one of the important ways for early humans to solve the problem of survival and reproduction. The description of brother-sister marriage may be precisely an embodiment of the marriage form in China's primitive society during the transition from group marriage to pair marriage. It is worth noting that the Yi myths of human rebirth after the flood also often involve the mythological motif of giving birth to a freak, that is, the situation where the first child born after a brother and sister marry is some kind of alien (gourd, piece of meat, etc.). Although different mythological systems around the world have the narrative unit of flood-type brother and sister marrying and then reproducing human offspring, behind these myths of consanguineous marriage, there are very different values. Even in a multicultural environment with many nationalities, such as Yunnan Province, this kind of union based on kinship is obviously against social order and good customs. Our ancestors who had entered the age of civilization already had misgivings about brother and sister marriage, as we can also see from the initial rebellious attitude of the two siblings in the Yi myth of Laole Village, Kaiyuan City, towards being forced to marry.

Due to the influence of the natural environment and the social and cultural environment, myths often undergo a process of development and compounding in subsequent transmission. In modern society, the Yi myth of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" not only fulfils the functions of cultural inheritance, moral education, and religious belief but also demonstrates the role of cultural adaptation and innovation in the face of the challenges of modernisation and globalisation. As society develops further, the Yi myth will continue to fulfil its unique social functions in Yi society and continue to adapt to changing times.

Suggestion

The cultural significance and heritage value of myths

First of all, the study has always explored myths from a historical and cultural perspective, which does not affect the conceptual basis for modern notions of scientific ethics. Marriage between close relatives is also a form of marriage that is explicitly prohibited under current Chinese law. In the Civil Code of the People's Republic of China (2020), it is stipulated that close relatives prohibited from marrying include blood relatives in the direct line or blood relatives in the collateral line within three generations. As a result, many ethnic groups in China, including the Yi, have long since imbued the mythological concept of brother-sister marriages with a more sublimated ethno-spiritual and cultural allegory that is divorced from the actual reality of life. It should be noted that myths have always been an integral part of cultural resources in the construction of various forms of social culture, political culture, and ethnic culture, etc., and they are an important part of China's "intangible cultural heritage." To reshape the value of myths is not only to give full play to the advantages of Chinese mythological resources but also a historical responsibility that mythologists must undertake. This study is based on a comparative study of the myths of "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in different Yi areas of Kaiyuan and comprehensively examines the transmission and application of ancient myths in the local Yi culture. Continues to protect the mythical culture and art of the Kaiyuan Yi people, fully explores the value of this cultural treasure, and allows the ethnic spiritual wealth it contains to flourish.

Kaiyuan has been a place where multiple ethnic groups have lived together since ancient times. The Yi people have a profound historical and cultural heritage, and their interactions with the Central Plains culture have permeated their daily lives, production, and folk customs, forming a rich and colorful cultural system that blends the two cultures. This includes multicultural elements such as festivals, temples, beliefs and customs, and song and dance arts. Ethnic culture is the root and soul of a nation. The Yi people of Beige Village in Kaiyuan pass down creation myths through oral songs. The Yi people of Zongshe Village combine ancestor worship with myths and make "ancestor

spirit wood carvings" to worship. The Luoluo people of Pipu Village pass down myths implicitly with ancient Yi scriptures and primitive ancestor spirit beliefs at their core. Laole Village transforms Yi oral myths into idol worship. These cultural transmission methods not only reflect the ability of the Kaiyuan Yi culture to grow and discard decline on its own but are also closely related to the traditional farming civilization on which it depends, demonstrating the wisdom of "survival of the fittest." Although the world is entering the "post-mythological era," myths are still an important part of the lives of China's ethnic minorities. Myths convey core values such as good and evil, courage, and justice through narrative structures, shaping the national spirit and identity. In modern civilization, myths are still an important source of inspiration for art forms such as music, dance, painting, literature, and film. At the same time, the imagination and creativity inherent in myths are of irreplaceable value in enriching human cultural expression and stimulating creative thinking. In the myths of the nationalities of Yunnan, mythological motifs and ancestral beliefs of the ancestors show both diversity and unity. Through cultural exchanges, mutual learning, and joint efforts, a historical scroll has been created that has promoted the development of human civilization. The myth of the Yi people of Kaiyuan about the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" is a typical example of this cultural phenomenon. Its form of transmission encompasses geographical culture, religious rituals, and folk beliefs, showing a dynamic and complex cultural system.

Research and protection of the "Brother-Sister Marriage after the Flood" Myths in Kaiyuan

Yunnan Province, as a typical region for the study of mythical art and culture worldwide, is a "mythical kingdom" that has not completely broken away from the age of myths. The myth of the Kaiyuan Yi ethnic group's "brother-sister marriage after the flood" not only occupies a unique position in the academic discussion of the mythical motif of the world being destroyed by a flood and the rebirth of mankind, but is also closely related to the ecological protection, ethical values, and social norms of the local Yi area. Although the Kaiyuan Yi people have not been able to completely preserve their

traditional mythological text records due to problems with the writing system, the myths still survive in the modern social psyche through oral transmission or "expressive" religious ceremonies or folk art. Myths are an inevitable product of the cultural process of mankind as well as a complex cultural phenomenon that develops dynamically. However, they are by no means a form of leisurely human creation, but rather a cultural achievement with obvious social utility. However, with the acceleration of the modernization process, the environment for the transmission of myths is undergoing profound changes. Economic and geo-cultural changes, the impact of foreign cultures, and the popularization of modern technology have created challenges for the transmission chain of living myths. Although the Kaiyuan Yi myths still survive in the folk environment and religious rituals, the transmission chain is prone to breaking. Therefore, if the transmission of myths is not protected in a timely and effective manner, and if the social, artistic, and economic value of myths cannot be realized, these cultural messages may completely disappear.

The myth of the Yi people's "brother-sister marriage after the flood." In today's transmission, both the form and content of the transmission inevitably undergo innovation and mutation. To summarize, there are roughly the following reasons:

First, the geographical culture, economic development level, and corresponding sacrificial customs and production patterns of different Yi areas in Kaiyuan have had a certain impact on the transmission of myths. Kaiyuan Yi myths are mainly distributed in the high-altitude mountainous areas in the east and the remote areas in the northwest of Kaiyuan. The high-altitude mountainous areas in the east show the extensibility of traditional Yi culture, while the remote areas in the northwest show the variability of traditional Yi culture. At the same time, the phenomenon of the human ancestors temple of the Yi people in the northwest is not common in other Yi areas. Second, the cultural integration between the Yi people in Kaiyuan and other ethnic groups also has an impact on the inheritance of local Yi myths today. In particular, in the Yi area in the northwest of Kaiyuan, where the Yi people accepted Han culture relatively early and had relatively convenient transportation, and where foreign economic activities

were frequent, the local Yi myths and Han myths have also merged with each other. Finally, the change in the cultural context of Dian culture, especially in the Kaiyuan area, is also an important reason affecting the transmission of Kaiyuan Yi myths. In terms of the survival of myths, they are mainly preserved in the form of oral transmission in production life and traditional religious ceremonies and folk beliefs.

As we know, in the protection of China's intangible cultural heritage, minority living myths are often regarded as feudal superstition and excluded from cultural protection because they involve issues such as religious beliefs and sacrificial rituals. Therefore, a correct understanding of the transmission of minority myths today and the proper protection and development of intangible cultural heritage are of importance.

Research Suggestions

(1) Strengthen the systematic research system

Conduct a comprehensive and systematic study of the Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth in Kaiyuan, including fieldwork, document collation, and oral records, to thoroughly explore the transmission characteristics of the myth in its geographical, historical, and social context. Focus on the transmission mechanism of living myths and their adaptation and changes in modern society, and clarify the dynamic evolution of myths in a multicultural environment.

(2) Establish a cultural protection and transmission system

With the help of relevant intangible cultural heritage protection policies, the Kaiyuan Yi ethnic group's myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" and its mythical culture should be incorporated into the cultural heritage protection system, and the rescue and preservation of oral traditions, folk rituals, and related artistic expressions should be encouraged to prevent the mythical transmission chain from being broken due to the modernization process. Reasonable protection and promotion plans should be formulated for the religious rituals and folk beliefs of living myths to prevent them from being mistaken for "superstition" and excluded from protection.

(3) Improve the modern publicity system for mythical cultural resources

Use modern technology and multimedia communication methods (such as documentaries, digital exhibitions, online communication, etc.) to revitalize and disseminate the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in a way that is easily accepted by young people. Combine it with cultural tourism and the creation of local cultural brands, explore the economic value of mythological resources, develop cultural products and tourism projects with regional characteristics, and promote the win-win development of the local economy and culture.

(4) Form a system of cultural exchange and international cooperation

In response to the phenomenon of the discontinuation of mythic traditions, establish a special protection fund, support measures such as training for inheritors and support programs for folk artists, and encourage inheritors to be active in community cultural life through teaching, performances, and other forms, so as to continue the mythic traditions. Use interdisciplinary research from ethnology, religion, sociology, anthropology, and other fields to comprehensively interpret the connotations and symbolic meanings of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood." Combining ecological protection with the needs of social development, the potential role of myths in addressing modern environmental crises and challenges to cultural heritage will be explored, providing a theoretical basis for the innovation of Yi mythological culture. Cooperation with academic institutions at home and abroad will be deepened, comparisons with mythological research in the Central Plains region will be strengthened, and the evolution and commonalities of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in different cultural contexts will be explored. Advanced foreign theories and methods of mythological research will be adopted, and through academic exchanges and joint research, the mythological culture of the Kaiyuan Yi people will be promoted on the international stage and its global influence enhanced.

Reinventing the cultural value of Yi mythology, delve into the cultural spirit of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth, such as the harmonious coexistence of

man and nature, national unity and harmony, etc., and emphasize its practical significance in modern society. Introduce the results of mythological research into education, using it as an important tool for disseminating national spirit and moral values and strengthening national cultural identity and self-confidence. Through the above suggestions, the research and protection of the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth will not only effectively preserve this valuable cultural heritage but also enhance cultural confidence and contribute significantly to the inheritance and innovation of the outstanding traditional culture of the Chinese nation.



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Appendix details

Table 10: The specifics of this in-depth interview

Places and persons interviewed	Number	Interview question
Beige Township Myths and their associated cultural inheritors	1	Are you a native Yi from Beige Township? What is the significance of the myth of the "brother-sister-marriage after the flood" in Beige Township to you?
	2	What roles do the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and the "god-human marriage after the flood" myth play in the life and production of the Yi people in Beige Township?
	3	How are the cultural traditions of myth passed on and transmitted in your family or village? Have you participated in any related mythological rituals or activities in recent years?
	4	Can you share some variant text stories or legends about such myths?
	5	How did the loong rituals in the township of Beige become associated with mythology?
	6	Do you know anything about the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in other Yi regions of Kaiyuan? Can you tell us what you think?
	7	What kind of challenges do you think local mythological traditions are facing in modern society? How do you think we should preserve and pass on these traditions and reinvent the value of myths?
	8	What are your views on the introduction of mythological traditions into modern traditional cultural education or other social activities? What impact do you think this has on the education and awareness of the younger generation?

Table 1: The specifics of this in-depth interview (continued)

Places and persons interviewed	Number	Interview question
<p>Zongshe Village</p> <p>Myths and their associated cultural inheritors</p>	1	Are you a native Yi from Zongshe Village? What is the significance of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Zongshe to you?
	2	What is the role of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and the traditional "ancestral woodcut" in the life and production of the Yi people in Zongshe Village?
	3	How are the cultural traditions of myth passed on and transmitted in your family or village? Have you participated in any related mythological rituals or activities in recent years?
	4	Can you share some variant text stories or legends about such myths?
	5	How is the production and veneration of "ancestral woodcuts" linked to mythology?
	6	Do you know anything about the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in other Yi regions of Kaiyuan? Can you tell us what you think?
	7	What kind of challenges do you think local mythological traditions are facing in modern society? How do you think we should preserve and pass on these traditions and reinvent the value of myths?
	8	What are your views on the introduction of mythological traditions into modern traditional cultural education or other social activities? What impact do you think this has on the education and awareness of the younger generation?

Table 10: The specifics of this in-depth interview (continued)

Places and persons interviewed	Number	Interview question
<p>Pipo Village</p> <p>Myths and their associated cultural inheritors</p>	1	<p>Are you a native Yi from Pipo Village?</p> <p>What is the significance of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Pipo to you?</p>
	2	<p>What role does the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and related cultural traditions play in the life and production of the Yi people in Pipo Village?</p>
	3	<p>How are the cultural traditions of myth passed on and transmitted in your family or village?</p> <p>Have you participated in any related mythological rituals or activities in recent years?</p>
	4	<p>Can you share some variant text stories or legends about such myths?</p>
	5	<p>What other ethnic beliefs and religious rituals are currently associated with myths in Pipo Village?</p>
	6	<p>Do you know anything about the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in other Yi regions of Kaiyuan?</p> <p>Can you tell us what you think?</p>
	7	<p>What kind of challenges do you think local mythological traditions are facing in modern society?</p> <p>How do you think we should preserve and pass on these traditions and reinvent the value of myths?</p>
	8	<p>What are your views on the introduction of mythological traditions into modern traditional cultural education or other social activities?</p> <p>What impact do you think this has on the education and awareness of the younger generation?</p>

Table 10: The specifics of this in-depth interview (continued)

Places and persons interviewed	Number	Interview question
<p>Laole Village</p> <p>Myths and their associated cultural inheritors</p>	1	<p>Are you a native Yi from Laole Village?</p> <p>What is the significance of the myth of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" in Laole to you?</p>
	2	<p>What role do traditional events such as the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and the temple fair at the Human Ancestors Temple play in the life and production of the Yi people in Laole Village?</p>
	3	<p>How are the cultural traditions of myth passed on and transmitted in your family or village?</p> <p>Have you participated in any related mythological rituals or activities in recent years?</p>
	4	<p>Can you share some variant text stories or legends about such myths?</p>
	5	<p>What other folklore and religious activities are currently associated with the Myth and Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village?</p>
	6	<p>Do you know anything about the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myths in other Yi regions of Kaiyuan?</p> <p>Can you tell us what you think?</p>
	7	<p>What kind of challenges do you think local mythological traditions are facing in modern society?</p> <p>How do you think we should preserve and pass on these traditions and reinvent the value of myths?</p>
	8	<p>What are your views on the introduction of mythological traditions into modern traditional cultural education or other social activities?</p> <p>What impact do you think this has on the education and awareness of the younger generation?</p>

Table 10: The specifics of this in-depth interview (continued)

Places and persons interviewed	Number	Interview question
Relevant persons in charge of the cultural relics management department of the Kaiyuan Municipal Government and the Kaiyuan Yi Society	1	Are you a Yi yourself? What is the significance of the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth of the Kaiyuan Yi for you?
	2	What role does the "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and related traditional culture play in the life and production of the Yi people in different Yi districts in Kaiyuan?
	3	How are the cultural traditions of myth passed on and transmitted in the different Yi regions of Kaiyuan?
	4	Can you share some variant text stories or legends about such myths?
	5	What policies have been launched by the government and relevant cultural relic management authorities for the protection and inheritance of Yi mythological traditional culture?
	6	What do you think are the misunderstandings or misconceptions about the Kaiyuan Yi mythological culture? In what way do you hope to correct these misunderstandings?
	7	With the rapid development of science and technology, the Internet, and the popularization of self-media communication, what opportunities and challenges do you think have been brought to Kaiyuan Yi's myth?
	8	What are your views on the introduction of mythological traditions into modern traditional cultural education or other social activities? What impact do you think this has on the education and awareness of the younger generation?

Table 10: The specifics of this in-depth interview (continued)

Places and persons interviewed	Number	Interview question
Minority college students in Kunming University of Science and Technology	1	Which ethnic minority are you? Do you know anything about the "brother-sister-marriage after the flood" myths of the Kaiyuan Yi?
	2	Have you ever heard of the Human Ancestors Temple in Laole Village in Kaiyuan or the Human Ancestors Temple in the Huaiyang area of Henan Province?
	3	With the rapid development of science and technology, the Internet, and the popularization of self-media communication, what opportunities and challenges do you think have been brought to Kaiyuan Yi's myth?
	4	What socio-cultural values and economic values do you think traditional mythological cultures can bring?
	5	For the younger generation, what do you think is the most effective way to pass on the Kaiyuan Yi "brother-sister marriage after the flood" myth and culture?

VITA

