

Review on the Origin of Namuyi Tibetan Nationality

Chuanwan Teng

School of History and Culture
Sichuan University
Chengdu, China

Abstract—The Namuyi Tibetan nationality has language but no words. The academic circles have their own words on the origin and history. Through oral data and verification of historical sources, this paper researches the related origins of Namuyi Tibetan nationality, proposes its shortcomings, analyzes its causes, and concludes that there is certain one-sidedness in Indian first ancestor, localization, and Naxi common-genesis hypothesis. In other words, the integration of Maoni Qiang nationality has considerable possibilities and rationality. Analyzing the origin of Namuyi Tibetan nationality can deepen the understanding of the historical origins of the Namuyi Tibetan nationality, the historical relationship and changes of Namuyi Tibetan nationality and other Tibetan nationalities in the Tibetan-Yi Corridor.

Keywords—Namuyi Tibetan nationality; Indian first ancestor; localization; Naxi common-genesis hypothesis; the integration of Maoni Qiang nationality

I. INTRODUCTION

The Namuyi Tibetan nationality is a branch of the Sanjiang River basin of "the Dadu River, the Anning River and the Yalong River" on the eastern edge of the Tibetan-Yi corridor of the six Tibetan ethnic groups. They mainly live in the north latitude 25.5° - 29.5° and the east longitude 99° - 102.5° , namely, the Yalong River and the Anning River Basin in the southwest of Sichuan. The Namuyi Tibetans are mainly distributed in Mianning County, Muli County, Xichang City, Yanyuan County, and Jiulong County and Shimian County of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture. Due to the modern relocation, the residence is relatively scattered and the current population is unknown. According to preliminary investigations, there are currently 10,000 Namuyi Tibetans.¹ Now, the people who live in Mianning, Xichang and Yanyuan are "Namuyi". The people living in Muli and Jiulong are "Namuzi". Some people think that the "na" in the Namuyi Tibetan nationality means "black"; and "muyi" or "muzi" means "human", namely, black people. The author learned through interviews: "Namuyi" refers to the "Tibetan nationality" in Namuyi Tibetan language, and also means "the descendants of the gods". As for the origin of Namuyi Tibetan nationality, it has hardly been noticed by the academic circles in the past. In recent years, with the loss of the language of Namuyi, attention has been paid to it. The

author combines what he has learned, investigated and thought about Namuyi. The various viewpoints of the origin of Namuyi Tibetan nationality are summarized as follows: Indian first ancestor; localization; Naxi common-genesis hypothesis; the integration theory of Maoni Qiang nationality. These views have certain one-sidedness. This paper clarifies the historical origin of Namuyi Tibetan nationality by combing and analyzing its possibility and rationality, and deeply understands the historical relationship and changes of Namuyi Tibetan nationality and other Tibetans in the Tibetan-Yi Corridor.

II. INDIAN FIRST ANCESTOR

Both Namuyi and Pumuyi in the Liangshan of Sichuan claimed that they were from Tibet and said they were from Nimalasa. In the interview, Mr. Wang from the Namuyi Tibetans in Shaba Town, Mianning County said: "Namuyi was called "Xifan" by others in the past, meaning that people were from Tibet." At the same time, he also said that he had crossed the Himalayas from India through Nepal and entered Tibetan areas. His ancestor and Tibetan King were good friends. Later, he became the military lords of the Tibetan King, and took the tribe to conquer the east with the order of the King. The Namuyi Tibetans all followed the Tibetan army to the area in southwestern Sichuan. Pazi Azhanima said: "The detailed route of the migration of the Namuyi Tibetan branch is portrayed in "Tsoburuku". When the Namuyi Tibetans die, the Namuyi Tibetans must ask Pazi to transmute the dead to the place of the Indian ancestors lived.² Regarding the Namuyi in India, some scholars believe that it was influenced by Tibetan Buddhism and "grafted" its history to the starting point of Tibetan Buddhism. Whether it is thought to come from Tibet or originated from India, there are traces of Tibetan Buddhism in the historical memory of Namuyi. This explains that their identities are Tibetan to some extent.

III. LOCALIZATION

The Namuyi Tibetans consider themselves to be the earliest residents. In the opinion of Namuyi sorcerer Hanniu Mazhang, there are fifty-one generations of the Namuyi phylogenetic in Lining District of Mianning County. If it is 30 years in each generation, there will be thousands of years. The Yi people of Liangshan called the Namuyi Tibetans as

¹ Gu Tao, Wang Dehe. A Preliminary Study of Namuyi Tibetan Culture [M]. Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2014.

² Gu Tao, Wang Dehe. A Preliminary Study of Namuyi Tibetan Culture [M]. Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2014.

"E ancestors", meaning "mountain owners" or "owners of the land." However, some people think that the "Nima Lasajue" mentioned in the Namuyi Tibetan Road is not the Lhasa of Tibet. It is intended to be the center of the sun shining. It refers to the Yele Township, Daqiao Township and Ningyuan County of Mianning County today, namely, the original Boroba or Suzhouba. At present, the 96-year-old Namuyi Tibetan man Mu Wenfu believes that the origin of the Namuyi Tibetans is Liangshan. Referring to where the Namuyi Tibetans first started, he said: "What I heard from childhood is that these places are all full of the Tibetans. They live on the top of the mountain and down to the foot of the river. They are all Tibetans. In Mianning, there are temples everywhere! These places, such as Xichang are full of Tibetans. Later, with the opening of "Sandushui", other nationalities came in. The Han nationality came from Guangdong and Guangxi areas during the war; and the Yi people came from Yunnan. The Yi people called Namuyi Tibetans "o zhu", meaning "mountain owners", that is, the Yi people contracted mountains to plant; the Han people rented the land along the river. Later, with smuggling and killing the Yi people, the internal harmony of Tibetans is broken, and the population is getting less and less."³

In the author's field interview, some interviewees recognized the view that the Namuyi Tibetan originated locally. Personally, it is believed that the localization is likely to be the result of the fact that Namuyi Tibetans have no written records.

IV. NAXI COMMON-GENESIS HYPOTHESIS

From the perspective of linguistics, some scholars have proposed that the basic vocabulary and grammatical structure of Namuyi (Mianning) are close to those of Naxi language, belonging to the eastern dialect of Naxi language in the Yi language branch of the Tibetan-Burmese language group, and the western dialect of Naxi language is mainly used by this part of the self-proclaimed Naxi people whom mainly distributed in the Lijiang of Yunnan. Eastern dialects and western dialects have some commonalities in terms of pronunciation, grammar, and lexical. These two groups of people have a common ethnic origin. In the historical literature, they are called "Moxie".⁴ Regarding this point of view, some "records" can also be found in the history. "Yueluosandu" recorded in the citation of "Tu Yi Kao: Ningfanweitu Shuo" refers to the bank of the Yalong River in Lizhuang District and Luining District of Mianning County. In the local record of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Mosuo people lived in these places. Are the Mosuo people the ancestors of Namuyi Tibetans? Mianning County in the organizational system of the Yuan Dynasty was in Ningyuanli, Xuanwei, in the Xiningyuan of Liya Changhe, Diaomen Yutong, and Mr. Ren Naiqiang thought that it was Mianning. In the organizational system of the Yuan Dynasty, Mianning was Ningyuan and Diaomen (Tianquan area), and

these areas were the residences of the Xifan people. The Namuyi people think that they migrate from Ningyuan (Mianning). In "New Tang: Fu Man", "Wudeng" and other eastern Man tribes were sealed by Tang Dynasty, and Liu Qiang was Mianning. Combined with the historical materials of the Yuan Dynasty, it is speculated that the Wu Man in this area of the Tang and Song Dynasties should be related to the ancestors of Namuyi. "The history of Yuan dynasty: Geography" recorded that the Qiongbuchuan was the residence of some people in the past, indicating that there were some people living in the west of Ganluo at least before the Yuan dynasty. Today, the people living in the west of Ganluo are mainly the Ersu people. Their "Shabawen" is obviously influenced by the Naxi ancestors and "Dongbawen" of "Moxie". Also, it can be said that Qiongbu five-surname Wu savage is Mosuo people, the Namuyi ancestors. However, they were driven away by the Yi people. The Ersu people in this area moved westward to Jiulong Muli, and some of Namuyi people moved west to Mianning. The five sects of Shimen Liuqiang and the six-surname savage can be inferred to be Namuyi ancestors. In "New Tang: Nan Man", one of the six-surname savages is Meng savage, and it should also be the ancestors of Namuyi, namely, Mosuo people. "Meng" is very similar to "Mo", and it may be "Meng savage" is the translation of "Mosuo".

From the historical origins, religious beliefs, social customs and literary arts, Yang Fuquan has carried out detailed research and analysis on the relationship among the "Na" ethnic groups who claim to be "Naxi", "Nahan" and "Na". It is believed that the Namuyi people and Naxi people are in a homologous relationship; and the second words of "Naxi", "Naheng", "Nahan", "Naru" mean "people." For this kind of statement, it is close to the views of individual Tibetan scholars. Naxi people and Namuyi people were two brothers long ago. Later, Namuyi insisted on fighting in the Dongman area. Naxi ancestors went to the south of the Jinsha River to recuperate and develop production and population. Naxi people consist of the Naxi nationality, and Namuyi became a Tibetan Namuyi Tibetan.

V. INTEGRATION OF MAONIU QIANG NATIONALITY

Most scholars agree that the Namuyi Tibetans have a history of migrating from the Qiangtang Plateau to the south. In the field interviews, some people said that their ancestors lived in Qiangtang Plateau firstly, and some said that they came from Qinghai. The old man named Lan in Shaba Town, Mianning County recalled: "according to the opinion of the old people, Namuyi migrated from Ganzi." According to the research of scholars, the main inhabitants along ancient Maoniu road in the Han Dynasty were Maoniu Yi people, who mainly use the language of the branch of Yi nationality. Ancient Maoniu Road is also known as Lingguan Road. Lingguan is in Ganluo County. In ancient times, it was also occupied by Maoniu Yi. In the Anning River Basin, a tributary of the Yalong River, more than forty remains of the Neolithic Age have been discovered. Among them, the Lizhou site of Xichang has a large area and has been excavated three times before and after. Most of the unearthed stone tools are ground, including stone knives, stone axes,

³ From the author's interview record, the interviewee: Mu; interview time: 10:40 am of 8.10, 2010; interview location: Mu's home.

⁴ Long Xijiang. Discussion on "Xifan" in Liangshan Prefecture and Its Origins [J]. Tibet Studies, 1991, (01)

stone castings, and stone spinning wheels. Pottery is mainly composed of sand-crude pottery stone, mostly gray-red. The site is estimated to be between 3,000 and 3,500 years ago.⁵ From the cultural connotation, the Lizhou ruins have many similarities with the Neolithic sites such as Yunnan Yuanmou Dadunzi and Tibet Changdu Karuo. They have been designated as "Dadunzi — Lizhou Culture". The relics of the Neolithic sites found in the Yanbian River downstream of the Yalu River and the Miyi River in the lower reaches of the Anning River are similar to those of Dadunzi and Lizhou. This culture is speculated by archaeological experts to be related to the south of the ancient and sectarian nationalities.

The records in "Northern History: Dangxiang", "Sui Shu", "New Tang" and "Old Tang" indicate that Maoniu, Dangxiang, Bailang and other groups in ancient Chinese literature are not opposite concepts to the ancient "Qiang" people, they are different family names that have the same history of "Suichang and Bailang calling themselves monkey species", that is to say, these ancient ethnic groups have the historical identity of evolution of the same monkey species as the current Tibetans. At the same time, the researchers of genetics discovered that the Tibetans and the Han literature had a close relationship with the descendants of the Shiqiang (Memba, Pumi, Yi, Qiang, etc.). The physique anthropologists also examined the homology among the Zhuxi group. Mr. Lin Huixiang also holds this similar view, who believes that "Xifan" living in southwestern Sichuan and northwestern Yunnan is generally considered to belong to Tibetans or the bereaved family of Qiang nationality. This view does not conflict, but believes that "Xifan" is between Tibetan nationality and Qiang nationality. It can be one of these two, or a mixture of the two.

For this kind of statement, the author looked through the relevant historical documents and found that: in the Jin and Han Dynasties, Hanyuan, Ganluo, Yuexi, Taideng, etc. were the ancient Maoniu roads leading to Chengdu in the south, and the main indigenous people were trained at this time. The "Qiang" nationality originated from Tizhisheshou and Hehuang area, the northern part of the Maoniu emblem. Before the Han Dynasty, the tribes of the Gansu River were already moving southward. In the Han Dynasty, the Qiang people moved south, and they must inevitably contact the Yi people, forming a mixed situation. Probably in the Tang Dynasty (or even earlier), the ancestors of Xifan have entered the northern and western parts of today's Liangshan Prefecture. The descendants of "Xifan" who speak the language of the Liangshan Mountains are Pumi, Ersu, Duoxu, and Niru. They must be connected with the local indigenous "Yi" nationality, and there must be mutual integration in the long-term mixed living process, as is Namuyi.

In summary, from the Hanyuan, Ganluo, Yuexi, Hugu lines, there were some of the ancestors of Xifan, which were roughly equivalent to the Maoniu of the Han Dynasty. In the Tang and Song Dynasties, the five-surname Wu savage and

the first wrap of five-surname Wu savage, who lived in this area, should be descendants of the Maoniu Yi of Han dynasty, namely, the Moshayi and Moxie savage of Tang dynasty. The ancestors of Namuyi should be Moxie in the Tang Dynasty. In the process of long-term ethnic exchanges, a large number of Qiang people mixed with each other.

VI. CONCLUSION

By combing the origin of Namuyi Tibetans, it is concluded that the study of the origin of an ethnic group cannot be limited to its existing national attributes. This paper should not only make longitudinal analysis, but also should make in-depth and meticulous comparative study of multiple ethnic groups with homologous relationships crossing the existing ethnic boundaries. It is possible to conduct a scientific analysis of the roots of a nation. No matter which kind of Namuyi Tibetan origin, it is based on the historical memory of Namuyi people, and Namuyi people have the language but no words, making all kinds of arguments have certain rationality and uncertainty. In this regard, researchers also need to find more convincing historical materials. With scientific research, it is possible to explore the origin culture of Namuyi people.

REFERENCES

- [1] Song Zhaolin. The Road to Root Seeking — The Discovery of a Mysterious Witch [M]. Beijing: Xueyuan Publishing House, 2004. (in Chinese)
- [2] Gu Tao, Wang Dehe. A Preliminary Study of Namuyi Tibetan Culture [M]. Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2014. (in Chinese)
- [3] Lizhou Ruins Joint Archaeological Excavation Team. Neolithic Age Site in Lizhou, Xichang, Sichuan Province [J]. Chinese Journal of Archaeology, 1980, (04). (in Chinese)
- [4] He Yaohua. Report on the investigation of Tibetans, Namuyi people and Paimuyi people in Mianning County Joint Commune [A]. Research Collection of Southwestern Ethnic History (No. 4), 1983. (in Chinese)
- [5] Li Shaoming. The burial of Liangshan and Dukou and their ethnic groups [J]. Sichuan Cultural Relics, 1984, (04) (in Chinese)
- [6] Li Shaoming. A Review of Ethnic Investigations in the Liujiang River Basin [J]. Journal of Southwest Nationalities University, 1986, (01) (in Chinese)
- [7] Long Xijiang. Discussion on "Xifan" in Liangshan Prefecture and Its Origins [J]. Tibet Studies, 1991, (01) (in Chinese)
- [8] Chen Zongxiang. Interpretation of the Long-length Chain of Mianning Tibetans "Opening Road" [J]. Tibet Studies, 1992, (3) (in Chinese)
- [9] Yang Fuquan. A Study of the Relationship between the Ethnic Groups of "Namuyi" and "Na" [J]. Ethnic Research, 2006, (03) (in Chinese)

⁵ Lizhou Ruins Joint Archaeological Excavation Team. Neolithic Age Site in Lizhou, Xichang, Sichuan Province [J]. Chinese Journal of Archaeology, 1980, (04).