

A Study of the Fusion of Religious Multiculturalism on the Tea Horse Road

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Abstract—In 2013, the "Tea Horse Road" was listed as the seventh national key cultural relics protection units. It marks the official entry of the Tea Horse Road steps into the field of cultural heritage protection. The Tea Horse Road is a folk trade channel that "walks out" by Horse Caravan. It is a channel for cultural communication and a corridor of national culture in southwest China. This article researches from the perspective of the Tea Horse Road from the Bingzhongluo area where the Nu nationality lived to the Chavalon in Tibet. This paper explores the religious multicultural integration of the Nu nationality and Tibetan nationality on this Tea Horse Road through the field investigation, interviews with people and literature, try to explain the positive significance and important role of this social and cultural phenomenon.

Keywords—Tea Horse Road; eligious culture; national culture; multi-culture; cultural integration

I. INTRODUCTION

The Tea Horse Road refers to the private international trade channel that exists in the southwestern part of China which uses the horse caravan as the main means of transportation. It is the corridor for the economic and cultural exchanges among the different southwestern Chinese nations. The first official introduction of the word "Tea Horse Road" was in 1990s. Mu Jihong, Chen Baoya, Xu Yongtao, Wang Xiaosong, Li Lin, Li Xu and other six people start from Zhongdian in Yunnan Province to Changdu in Tibet Province, and then crossed the Hengduan Mountain to Kangding in Sichuan Province, and finally returned to Zhongdian. After the expedition, they named this huge network of tea-based ancient roads on Asian as the "Tea Horse Road". After the raise of "Tea Horse Road", it immediately caused great repercussions in the society and led a series of related research and discussion.

The influence of the Tea Horse Road now is no less than the Silk Road. Many western and eastern scholars have paid attention to it and discussed about it. In fact, the ancient tea-and-horse road is not just martyrdom, but a complicated communication belt intertwined with numerous trails. It is also a way of life and a history. This article not focus on the main line of the Tea Horse Road, but discuss about one branch of it: it starts from the Gongshan Mountain in Nujiang, passes through Bingzhongluo, and goes to Chavalon in Tibet; and it is called the Tibetan Mastiff by

local residents. This ramp not only maintains the mutual exchanges between the people in Nu nationality and Tibetan nationality, but also serves as an important channel for the communication and transportation of people's materials between Gongshan in Yunnan Province and Zayu County in Tibet Province (district). At the same time, it provides favorable conditions for the cultural integration between Nu nationality and Tibetan nationality. The author tries to explore the formation process of ethnic multiculturalism from the perspective of cultural integration of Bingzhongluo (a post on the Tea Horse Road) through investigation, interviews with people, and literature research. It aims to show the religious multicultural integration of the Nu nationality and Tibetan nationality.

II. TEA HORSE ROAD — THE FOLK BELIEFS OF THE NU NATIONALITY IN BINGZHONGLUO

Bingzhongluo is a post on the Tea Horse Road which located in the north of Nujiang Lisu nationality autonomous prefecture Gongshan Dulong Nu nationality autonomous county. It is also located in the north of Chawarong township, charu county, lingzhi district, Tibet, the east of Yanmen township, Deqin county, Diqing Tibetan autonomous prefecture, the west of Dulongjiang township bordering Myanmar, in the south of Pengdang township Gongshan Dulong Nu nationality autonomous county. The total area of the township is 823 square kilometers. "Bingzhongluo" (Tibetan pronunciation: Bidgong; Nu nationality pronunciation: Manbiekrong) is formerly known as "Bizhong". The Tibetan meaning is "Tibetan village" and it is called "Ma Bai Ke Lao" in Nu nationality. The terrain in Bingzhongluo area is high in the north and low in the south. It is the core area of the three major rivers in the northwest of Yunnan, namely refer to Gaoligong Mountain, Nu Mountain and Yunling Mountain, and the Sanjiang: Nujiang, Lancang River and Jinsha River. The Sanjiang forms the core area of "three parallel rivers flow" with the shape of "川". The Nujiang runs through the whole area from north to south, with Biluo Snow Mountain in the east, Gaoligong Mountain in the west. The two mountains are sandwiched by one river, and forming an obvious alpine and canyon land form.

The sinister natural geographical conditions determine the extremely inconvenient traffic in the region of Nu nationality. Before the founding of the People's Republic of

China, the productivity of the Nu nationality was extremely low and almost isolated with the society. Before the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism, people of the Nu nationality generally believed in primitive religion. They believe that nature is a world that full of spirituality, such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the days, the mountains, the rivers, the lakes, the wind, the rain, the thunder, the electricity, the rocks, the trees, the caves, the vegetation, the birds, the beasts, and all the things that exists naturally. There all have souls, and their souls will never die. In the folk beliefs of the Nu nationality, the concept of animism is always in a dominant position and runs through all the religious life of the Nu nationality. The concept of animism and the immortal soul penetrate in life value, traditional concepts, ethics, psychological qualities, customs, festivals, weddings and funerals, farming and animal husbandry, hunting and fishing, and etiquette taboos of the Nu nationality. It dominates the spiritual life of the Nu nationality and also governs their daily social life. The folk belief which gradually formed by nature worship has been passed down from generation to generation and gradually became the unique religious culture of the Nu nationality.

The gods that the Nu people mainly believe in include of mountain gods, tree gods, water gods, road gods, and other ten gods. Some of these gods have their own duties, while others have several roles. People respect and worship these gods and hope to satisfy the needs of food, safety and health in a praying way. Among them, the rock god "Jimida" (language in Nu nationality) is an important god on the duties of the mountain, hunting, valley, rain, fertility, marriage, protection, etc. It is in the supreme position in the Nu nationality. The Nu nationality believe that they must sacrifice to "Jimida" before the original farming of the slash-and-burn cultivation, in order to obtain the acquiescence of the rock god, and the land reclamation can be started; When it comes to the harvest time, the first mature grain must be sacrificed to the rock god before it can be enjoyed. Before hunting, people must sacrifice to the rock god, pray for the prey, and the prey can only be divided in the mountains never bring back; Before people cutting down the mountain trees to "burn the land", they should offer sacrifices to the mountain gods and tree gods and ask their forgiveness; they offer sacrifices to the wind god and the fire god, prayed that the wind would help the fire and burn the trees and grass cut down so that the land would be full of fertility; worship the land gods and pray for harvest of the crops; they offer sacrifices to the earth god for a harvest; Before a long journey, people offer sacrifices to the road god for their safety; they also offer sacrifices to the river god before fishing to bless the catch, etc. In addition, the Nu hunters think that they can only speak the Nu language or Tibetan dialects when hunting in the mountains, otherwise the rock god will not give the prey, because the rock god only understands the Nu and Tibetan dialects. Rock god is also the valley god, which dominates the growth and abundance of crops. Therefore, it is necessary to "send the milk" to soak the seeds for the harvest in the coming year when offering sacrifices to rock god in the Chaoshan Festival. The rock god of the Nu nationality has also on the duty of fertility.

Therefore, many infertile couples pray for the children in the sacrifices activities.

The Nu nationality usually called "Nan Mu Sa" (Nu language, refer to the "wizard") refer to those who have certain sacrifices knowledge of the divination and cure the disease for others. "Namusha" is a communicator between people and gods. The functions of "Nan Mu Sa" are divine to predict, treatment of ghosts, rescue of life-saving souls, slashing evil spirits, and prophecy. The Nu nationality believe that these wizards are God-given, they can directly see and deal with ghosts and gods; while others are attacked from the clan or family, they call the ghosts with incantation and relying on the revelation of gods to carry out the witchcrafts. Now, there are very few "Nan Mu Sa" activities in the Nu region. After the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism, most ritual activities in the Nu nationality were presided over by Tibetan Buddhism clergy. Some of the sacrificial activities were cooperated by Tibetan Buddhist clergy and the folk priest "Nan Mu Sa".

III. MULTICULTURAL INTEGRATION OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM AND FOLK BELIEFS IN THE TEA HORSE ROAD

Because the Nu nationality live in the Bingzhongluo Town which near the north of Chawalong township, Chayu county, Tibet. Therefore, the Tibetan people in Nu nationality and Chawalong area are brave to overcome difficulties and dangers; they stepped out of the "Tea Horse Road" to connect the two places with their own feet and horse gang together, and Tibetan Buddhism was introduced into the Nu nationality through this way. After Tibetan Buddhism was introduced into the Nu nationality, the Tibetan Buddhism and the primitive religion of the Nu religion experienced a process of contradiction, conflict, mutual influence, and integration because of the deeply rooted folk beliefs of the Nu nationality. Therefore, Tibetan Buddhism in the Nu region (Bingzhongluo) is actually not belongs to the Tibetan Buddhism in a strict sense. It's a religious belief after the integration of the folk beliefs of the Nu nationality and the multiculturalism of Tibetan Buddhism.

The "Nai Re Festival" is a cultural custom of the Nu nationality to sacrifice the rock god "Jimida", which is an important embodiment of the primitive nature worship of all things. The formation of "Nai Re Festival" and the custom of sacrifice mountain has the following reasons: First, it is determined by the spirit of the Nu nationality's folk beliefs; people in Nu nationality regard the all-natural objects as gods such as mountains, rivers, trees, strange stones and caves, and through various sacrificial activities to achieve or realize their desires to communicate with the gods psychologically. It can be seen that the folk beliefs of the Nu nationality have gradually transformed from a multi-god worship into god worship. The rock gods in the minds of the Nu people are not completely natural gods and many mortal rock gods. The Nu nationality believes that the rock god "Jimida" has the distinction between good and evil. The kindly "Jimida" can shelter the Nu nationality can bring propitious winds and rains, the harvest of the grain, and the prosperity of the people; While the menacing "Jimida" will bring bad luck. Therefore, people keep a devout love and

worship to the good gods of the rock, and hold a very grand pilgrimage to the annual "Niger Festival". They will far away from sinister rock gods and use some wizards of "Nan Mu Sa" to deal with them. Second, it is inextricably linked to the special geographical environment of the Nu nationality. Due to the complex topographical structure of the Nu region, many caves are formed and bring the mysterious imagination space the Nu nationality. They believe that these caves are secret passages between gods and people. They gradually have a sense of awe and worship to the mountain gods, and sacrifice to "Nai Dong" (Rage, "Nai" means "God"; "Nai Dong" means "The imperial cave"); Thirdly, The idea of both fighting against and living in harmony with the harsh living environment gave rise to the simple idea of worshipping and worshipping the mountains. Fourth, it also causes for natural disasters, diseases, and security threats the Nu nationality has faced. Therefore, the formation of sacrificing to the mountain is to seek psychological comfort in a unique way in this sense. So far, the celebration of the "Nai Re festival" has been preserved in the Nu nationality.

After the Tibetan Buddhism was introduced into the Bingzhongluo area, it was merged with the local folk beliefs. Tibetan Buddhism has accepted many legends and concepts and regarded the heroes in the Nu myth as gods. At the same time, most people of the Nu nationality began to believe in Tibetan Buddhism. It has absorbed and integrated Tibetan Buddhism rituals to varying degrees in the folk beliefs sacrificial activities of the Nu nationality. The sacrificial activity of "Nai Re" (language of Nu nationality) is a typical example. "Nai Re" was originally presided by "Nan Mu Sa" and turn over to the lama of Tibetan Buddhism. It has gradually transformed from the worship activities of the Nu folk beliefs into the local Nu nationality and Tibetan common important sacrificial activities. In 1982, "Nai Re" was changed to "Flower Festival", and the ceremony was held at the lamasery in Bingzhongluo.

The lamas in the lamasery of Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan people who believe in Tibetan Buddhism are deeply influenced by the worship and sacrifice to the rock god in the folk beliefs of the Nu nationality. They also respect the rock god and participate in the sacrificial activities of the rock god. On the other hand, the ritual of the sacrificial activities has abandoned the murder offering to god and avoids the mass slaughter of livestock, which has certain positive significance to the religious consumption of the believers. Under the influence of local Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhism, the Nu nationality believed that the "Nai Re" could only be held in the "Nai Caves" where the lama was consecrated. In the Bingzhongluo area, the consecrated "Nai Caves" are: "Xin Dou Nai", which located in La Da Hou Mountain at the western part of Bingzhongluo; the "Pa Mu Nai", which located in the stalactite caves on the southern bank of the Ge Ma Luo River in the north of Bingzhongluo; "Deng Que Nai", which is located under the cliff on the east bank of Shimenguan in the north of Bingzhongluo. "Nai Re" is a collective ritual activity of the village. One village can worship a "Nai Cave", and some villages greet one "Nai-dong". Taking "Pa Mu Nai" as an example, the nearby Nu and Tibetan villagers will come here to hold a pilgrimage

ceremony on March 15th of the lunar calendar every year. Before the villagers worship the "Nai Cave", they must hold a ceremony of offering sacrifices. The sacrificial platform is set on the soil platform near the "Pa Mu Nai" and surrounded by colorful flags. The altar is filled with pine branches, and there are various sacrifices such as grains and fruits. The original ceremony was presided over by the folk belief "Nan Mu Sa", and now turn to the Lama of Puhua Temple and "Nan Mu Sa" jointly hold the sacrifice. The lama chanted while playing drums and prayed for the gods to bless the happiness of the people and the flourish of livestock, while the "Nan Mu Sa" used the prayers to sacrifice the gods. It is obvious that in the traditional mountain worship activities of the Nu people's folk beliefs, the Nu people have absorbed the sacrificial rituals of Tibetan Buddhism, and there have been mutual coexistence and integration of the two religious beliefs. It can be seen that the "Nai Re Festival" and the sacrificial activities originated from the natural worship of folk beliefs in Nu nationality. It has been integrated into the rituals of Tibetan Buddhism and has become a Tibetan Buddhism ritual activity for the worship of local Tibetans and Nu nationality. This is undoubtedly the best example of the integration from conflict to coexistence of Tibetan Buddhism and the folk beliefs. It can be seen that the sense of unity and identity in religion and culture has promoted the exchange of ideas and culture between the two nationalities.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Tea Horse Road not only connects the material exchanges between the Nu nationality and the Tibetan region, but also promotes their economic development. Moreover, the Tibetans' advanced production and life styles and new productive forces have been brought to the Nu region through the caravans. With the development of the Tea Horse Road and the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism, the Tibetan people moved into the Bingzhongluo area to lived together with the Nu nationality, which gradually forming a village layout of the local Nu and Tibetans. At the beginning, there have been contradictions and conflicts between the Tibetan Buddhism and the primitive religion of the Nu nationality; there have been contradictions and conflicts between the immigratory Tibetans and the local Nu nationality. Because of the immigratory Tibetans brought the advanced production and life culture. The land and forests in the Nu region are rich in resources and sparsely populated, providing a good living space for the immigratory Tibetan people. Therefore, the Nu and the Tibetans have achieved mutual understanding under the conditions of mutual needs through contradictions and conflicts. So, the two religions and the two ethnic groups can accommodate with each other and live in peace. The Nu nationality and Tibetans learned and respected from each other to achieved development and progress together in the long mutual accommodation. And they gradually eliminating ethnic prejudice and barriers and enhancing friendship. Since then, this friendship has developed into an intermarriage relationship on the basis of mutual understanding, which makes the cultural exchange and integration between the Nu nationality and the Tibetans more direct and in-depth. At the same time, the permanent inheritance and development of national cultural exchange

and integration are based on the national kinship. The cultural exchanges and integration of different ethnic groups based on kinship have greatly maintained and enhanced the national unity and the affinity of society; it also has great significance for building a harmonious and stable society.

Different ethnic groups members have more concentration; and the cultural borrowing and exchange has played an important role of in the process of cultural integration is particularly prominent. The dissemination and exchange of national culture is achieved through the cultural activities of individual individuals or groups in different national cultures. Therefore, the inter-ethnic communication can reflect the traces of the integration of national culture from one side. The multi-cultural integration and common prosperity of the Nu nationality and the Tibetans was formed during their long-term historical exchanges in the northern part of Gong Mountain. This national cultural integration starts from the introduction of Buddhism to the Nu nationality and was gradually accepted by the Nu nationality and merged with its traditional primitive religion. With the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism, the surrounding Tibetan people migrated into the Nu region and lived and married with them. The exchange and integration of cultural exchanges between the two sides is more direct and permanent. With the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism and the immigration of Tibetan, the simple passage formed by the Tibetan areas around the Nu region has gradually been transformed into a martyrdom and business road, and has developed into a "Dian Zang Tea Horse Road". The economic and cultural exchanges and kinship between the two nations are increasingly close, so that their cultural exchanges and integration are constantly maintained, continued and consolidated to form a new and more adaptable cultural type.

However, the author believes that it's necessary to pay attention to the possibility of mutual substitution, transformation and assimilation of national culture in the exchange and integration of national culture. It is necessary to carry out and strengthen the propaganda and education of the Marxist national outlook to enhance the national self-confidence, self-reliance, self-improvement tension and national honor in the process of the integration of religious multiculturalism. It is necessary to vigorously explore, inherit and promote outstanding national culture to make the exchange and integration of national culture and national culture play an important role in building a harmonious society and building a rich and civilized open and harmonious ecology Yunnan.

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