Drinking and Its Culture among the Yi People in Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture

Yuanfu Zhu

Chuxiong Normal University, Yunnan, PRC.
Part One  General Introduction

• A brief introduction to China
• A brief introduction to the distribution of ethnic groups in China
• A brief introduction to the distribution of the Yi Nationality in China
• A brief introduction to the distribution of the Yi Nationality in Yunnan and Chuxiong
Part Two

Drinking and its Culture among the Yi People in Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan, PRC
I. Traditional Ways of Drinking in Yi Communities

• 1. Drinking by the Firepit
• 2. Drinking at the Table—
  • 1). Host proposing toast to guests
  • 2). Guests proposing toast to host
  • 3). Guests proposing toasts to one another in turn
  • 4). “Penalty” toast
  • 5). Inviting some one to drink on behalf of you
• 3. Sucking Liquor with Bamboo Tubes
• 4. Drinking with the Same Bowl/Mug in Turn
• 5. Etiquette Drinking—“Three Cups of Liquor”
  • 1). “Lan Men Jiu” (A Cup of Liquor for Welcome)
  • 2). “Zhu Fu Jiu” (A Cup of Liquor for Blessing)
  • 3). “Liu Ke Jiu” (A Cup of Liquor for Farewell)
II. Daily Events & Liquor in Yi Communities

• 1. Religion & Liquor
• 2. Happy Events & Liquor
• 3. Sociality & Liquor
• 4. Social Criterion & liquor
• 5. Contract & Liquor
• 6. Health and Liquor
III. Taboos of Drinking in the Yi Communities

• 1. Taboos of pouring liquor
• 2. Taboos of drinking liquor
  • 1) When drinking by the Firepit
  • 2) When drinking at the table
  • 3) When sucking liquor in the yard or plaza
  • 4) When drinking from the same bowl/mug
• 3. Taboos of proposing a toast
• 4. Taboos upon asking sb to drink more
• 5. Taboos upon being asked to drink more
Part One
General Introduction

1. A brief introduction to China
• 23 provinces: Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning, Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, Jiangsu, Anhui, Henan, Hubei, Sichuan, Zhejiang, Fujian, Jiangxi, Hunan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Guangdong, Hainan, Taiwan;

• 5 autonomous regions: Tibet Autonomous Region, the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region

• 4 central government-controlled municipalities: Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing.

• 2 special administrative region:
  Hong Kong (1997), Macao (1999)
Map of China

Locations of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities.
2. A brief introduction to the distribution of ethnic groups in China
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Population in Million</th>
<th>Dwelling locality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Han</td>
<td>1148.0</td>
<td>All the provinces, Regions &amp; Municipalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhuang</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>Guangxi, Yunnan, Guanggong, Guizhaou, Hunan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man</td>
<td>9.82</td>
<td>between Changbaishan and Heilongjiang River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hui</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>Ningxia, Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yi</td>
<td>7.76</td>
<td>Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou, Guangxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miao</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Guizhou, Yunnan, Hunan, Guangxi, Sichuan, Hubei and Hainan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uygur</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tujia</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Hunnan, Hubei, Sichuan, Guizhou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolian</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Tibet Autonomous Region and Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. A brief introduction to the distribution of the Yi Nationality in China
Population & Distribution of the Yi People

• The Yi Nationality, one of the aboriginal minority nationalities in the southwest region of China, mainly inhabits in Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou, and Guangxi. The 5th census conducted in 2000 showed that there were **7,762,286** Yi people by the end of that year, of which **4,705,658** lived in Yunnan, over **1,813,400** in Sichuan, about **1,243,000** in Guizhou and about **7,100** in Guangxi.

• (See the Density of Yi Population below)
4. A brief introduction to the distribution of the Yi Nationality in Chuxiong Prefecture, Yunnan Province
Yi Population in Chuxiong

- The total area of Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture is 29,258 square kilometers, over 90% of which is mountainous and semi-mountainous. The total population of the prefecture in 2003 was 2,550,304, of which 808,458 were minority nationalities, covering 31.7% of the total population. Of the minority population, 652,892 were the Yi nationality, covering 25.6% of the total population and 80.76% of the total minority population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C/C</th>
<th>TP</th>
<th>The Han</th>
<th>Minorities</th>
<th>The Yi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>PTP</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>PTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuxiong</td>
<td>484283</td>
<td>375955</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>108328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayao</td>
<td>281221</td>
<td>190396</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>90825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lufeng</td>
<td>415195</td>
<td>321691</td>
<td>77.48</td>
<td>93504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouding</td>
<td>199614</td>
<td>158838</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>40776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanhua</td>
<td>232144</td>
<td>143170</td>
<td>61.67</td>
<td>88974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuangbai</td>
<td>154371</td>
<td>121612</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>72759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuding</td>
<td>264878</td>
<td>129587</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>135291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaoan</td>
<td>203061</td>
<td>152959</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>50102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yongren</td>
<td>103960</td>
<td>47090</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>56871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuanmou</td>
<td>206528</td>
<td>137187</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>69341</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* C/C=city or county; TP=total population; P=population; PTP=percentage of the total population; PTPM=percentage of the total population of the minorities
Part Two

Drinking and Its Culture among the Yi People in Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture
Jars of Liquor of the Yi People
I. Traditional Ways of Drinking in Yi Communities in Chuxiong
1. Drinking by the Firepit
A Firepit in a Yi Village
Features of Drinking by the Firepit

• 1). Strict order of seats;
• 2). Strict order of serving the liquor;
• 3) Strict restriction of language and behaviour;
2. Drinking at the Table

• 1). Host proposing toast to guests
• 2). Guests proposing toasts to host in turn
• 3). Guests proposing toasts to one another in turn
• 4). “Penalty” toast
• 5). Inviting some one to drink on behalf of you
Cheers!
Bottoms Up!
Friends Gathering in a Yi Restaurant
Cheers, for Friendship!
Cheers, for Happiness!

- (Woman): My dear friend, cheers!
- (Man): My dear friend, cheers!
- (Woman): My dear friend, cheers! For our friendships!
- (Man): My dear friend, cheers! For our happiness!
- (Chorus): For our friendships, Cheers! For our happiness, cheers!
- For friendships and happiness, cheers!
- For friendships and happiness, cheers!
3. “Za Jiu”---
Sucking Liquor with Bamboo Tubes
Announcing the Start of Special Occasions by Beating the Bronze Drum
Welcome Guests with Singing & Dancing
Celebrating Festivals with Singing and Dancing
“Za Jlu”--Drinking with Bamboo Tube
4. “Zhuan Zhuan Jiu”---
Drinking with the Same Bowl/Mug in Turn
5. Etiquette Drinking—“Three Cups/Bowls of Liquor”
1). “Lan Men Jiu” --- (A Cup of Liquor for Welcome)
Welcome Ceremony
We Are Ready to Welcome Guests!
Welcoming Guests with Cups/Bowls of Liquor Accompanied by Songs
Song for Proposing a Toast

• When the Sun and the Moon meet, stars propose a toast for the happy occasion;
• When clouds and rains meet, ribbons propose a toast for the happy occasion;
• When the lovers meet, the heaven and the earth propose a toast for the happy occasion;
• When distinguished guests come to visit, the Yi people propose many toasts for the happy occasion. (See VCD clip)
Welcoming Guests at the Gate with Cups of Liquor
My Pleasure!
Welcoming Guests in the Courtyard with Cups/Bowls of Liquor
2). “Zhu Fu Jiu” ---
(A Cup of Liquor for Blessing)
Singing Songs for Proposing Toasts
Good Liquor for Good Friends
(Song for Proposing a Toast, Version 1)

• I have good liquor ready for good friends
• The liquor represents my friendship,
• The liquor represents my respectfulness,
• The liquor represents my wish for your bright future.
• Good friends deserve good liquor and good wishes!
• Cheers! For Happiness!
“Drinking for Health & Happiness”
(Song for Proposing a Toast , Version II)

• Today is a happy day, we have friends visiting us;
• We get out our best liquor to share it with our best friends;
• Let’s sing for our health! Let’s drink for our happiness!
A Cup of Fragrant Liquor
(Song for Proposing a Toast, Version III)

• Honored guests and dear friends, you do not come here very often!
• The Yi’s tradition is to treat guests with liquor.
• Our liquor represents our honesty and hospitality.
• Please have a cup of our fragrant liquor!
3) “Liu Ke Jiu”---
(A Cup of Liquor for Farewell )
Welcome to Chuxiong Again!
Farewell Ceremony—Seeing off Guests
II. The Functions of Liquor in Yi Communities
1. Religion & Liquor

- Prays and Divination
- Funerals
- Worshipping
2. Happy Events & Liquor

- Congratulating the Birth
- Celebrating Festivals
- Treating Guests during a Wedding
Bimo (the Yi Priest) Lights The Main Torch: Announcing the Start of the Torch Festival
Wedding of the Yi People
---Ravishing the Bride
Carrying the Bride on the Back
In The Bridal Chamber
Experiencing the Yi Wedding
3. Sociality & Liguor

- Finding Lover by Dialogue Singing and Liquor Drinking
- Establishing Marital Relations
- Visiting Relatives and Friends
- Offering Gifts
- Having a Gathering
Can’t Find Words to Sing? Drink!
Song of Beautifulness

• Our mountains are beautiful, with your pine trees growing there, they will be more beautiful;
• Our fields are beautiful, with your grain seedlings growing there, they will be more beautiful;
• Our rivers are beautiful, with your fish swimming in them they will be more beautiful;
• Our house is beautiful, with your daughter married to our son, the house will be more beautiful.
4. Social Criterion & liquor

- Expressing Respect to the Old and Love to the Young
- Sharing Happiness and Woe
- Being Kind and Hospitable
- Seeing –off and Wecoming-home
5. Contract & Liquor

- Evidence of Engagement
- Witness of Sworn Alliance
- Symbol of Reconciling
6. Health and Liquor—Medical Function

• Promoting Blood Circulation
• Disinfecting and Stopping Itches
• Refreshing Energy
• Boosting Courage
• Helping Relieve Oppressed Feelings
III. Taboos of Drinking in the Yi Communities
1. Taboos of Pouring Liquor

- Never refuse the host or hostess when he or she pours out the liquor for you
- Never help yourself to pour liquor or any other drinks unless you are told to do so
- Never drop the flagon or splash the liquor
- Never leave any cup unfilled fully unless he or she insists
- Never forget to fill the cup of anybody
2. Taboos of Drinking Liquor

1) When Drinking by the Firepit

- never refuse the host or hostess when he or she pours out the liquor for you by the firepit.
- Do not talk loudly, endlessly or inattentively. Do talk with manners.
- Except for tea, do not drink unless being invited.
- Do not drink up the liquor in your cup or bowl at one drink.
- Do not cross over the firepit; do not walk over other’s cup or bowl; do not walk by someone from his front.
- never be drunk by the firepit.
2) When Drinking at the Table

- Do not start drinking till the host or hostess proposes a toast.
- Do not drop your liquor into other’s or into the dishes holding food;
- Do not drop food into the liquor cup of other persons;
- Do not refuse other’s invitation to drink;
- Do not drink without inviting others. (The Yi people never eat or drink alone when someone else is present.)
3) When Sucking Liquor with Bamboo Tubes

- Do not be the first to drink unless being told to do so;
- Do not refuse when you are invited to be the first to drink;
- Never accept the tube with one hand. You have to use two hands;
- Do not drop the tube to the ground;
- Do not pass the tube to other person without wiping up the liquor on the upper tip of the tube with your palm;
- Do not pass the tube to other person with one hand. You have to use two hands.
4) When Drinking from the Same Bowl/Mug

• Do not be the first to drink unless being told to do so.
• Never accept the bowl or mug with one hand. You have to use two hands;
• Do not drop the bowl or mug to the ground;
• Never drink too much at a time in this case;
• Do not pass the bowl or mug to other person without wiping up the liquor on the upper edge of the bowl or mug with your palm;
• Do not pass the bowl or mug to other person with one hand. You have to use two hands.
3. Taboos of Proposing Toasts

• As a guest, you can never propose a toast before the host or hostess does;
• Never forget to propose a toast to the host or hostess to express your gratitude;
• Never forget to propose a toast to someone at your table;
• It is most polite to propose a toast with two hands holding the cup or the bowl;
• When you clink your cup or bowl with other’s upon proposing a toast, yours will never be held higher than the other’s for two reasons: 1) showing respect, 2) avoid splashing your liquor into the other’s cup.
4. Taboos upon Being Asked to Drink More

- Never be angry;
- Don’t make yourself drunk at the table; (Have a sip with him or her, then try politely to ask him or her or someone else to help you drinking).
5. Taboos upon Asking Somebody to Drink More

• Do not force others to drink with threat
• Do not order others to drink
To see is to believe.
Welcome to Chuxiong to experience and enjoy everything by yourself!

Thank You!