

Tibetan Wine Production, Taste of Place, and Regional Niche Identities in Shangri-La, China

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Introduction

Traveling through rugged Deqin County in China's Northwest Yunnan Province today, the landscape is quite distinctive, the Lancang River (Dzachu in Tibetan, upper reaches of the Mekong) and Jinsha River (Drichu in Tibetan, upper reaches of the Yangtze) flow through deep, dry, and arid canyons flanked by forest covered mountains and high snow-capped peaks. Along the banks of these rivers and their tributaries are scattered Tibetan villages, today identifiable by a common yet surprising sight, vineyards. In 2011, while researching the economic impacts of hydropower resettlement in the region, through daily ethnographic engagement with villagers I then began to understand just how important these vineyards have become to livelihoods and daily agricultural life (Galipeau, 2015; Galipeau, 2014). Based upon these initial findings, I embarked upon a much larger ethnographic exploration into the history and overall project surrounding this village agricultural industry. I found it was based upon a long if yet small Catholic history in a few villages, combined with recent state based schemes to simultaneously improve local livelihoods and further promote commodities produced within, and the development of the landscape of 'Shangri-La.' By Shangri-La, in this chapter I am referring to both a recently incorporated administrative unit of Yunnan Province and an imagined space for commercial use.

This chapter illustrates the story of household wines produced in Northwest Yunnan's Deqin County, and how they have worked to produce distinctive and unique regional economic identities among Tibetan villagers. I begin by ethnographically outlining the history and story of French and Swiss Catholic missionaries who first introduced grapes and wine making in a select few villages in the late 19th century. I then describe how over the last two decades, both the state and local Catholic villagers have moved to re-create village agricultural landscapes using this history. In the case of the Catholic village of Cizhong, working to form a new economic, ethnic, and religious identity melded with state promoted tourism, while in other areas working to transform the local agricultural landscape of predominantly traditional and subsistence wheat and barley crops, to one primarily defined by vineyards and cash cropping.

In the case of the Catholic village of Cizhong, I then ask and inquire into what ways the development of a wine economy based upon Catholic history has worked to give Cizhong a very specific economic niche within the larger landscape of 'Shangri-La'? More specifically, in Cizhong, how do wine, Tibetan culture, and conceptions of history work together to create forms of identity and distinction among villagers? In answering these questions, I draw upon the French notion of *terroir* as a cultural taste of place and method of producer empowerment (Demossier, 2011; Ulin, 2002; Ulin, 2013), and recent engagement and explorations with of the formation of 'Shangri-La' as a physical space in China, bringing together state based tourism development, and cultural and economic agency among local Tibetans (Coggins and Yeh, 2014: 3-18; Hillman, 2003; Kolas, 2011; Smyer Yü, 2015: 183-211). My primary argument and assertion within the themes of this volume, is that Catholic Tibetans, use their religious identity

as a marketing instrument to promote wine making as a livelihood practice, emphasizing their historical and religious transregionality with Europe and contemporary economic connections with other parts of China. Within the Sino-Tibetan borderlands this similarly ties into a larger ‘re-emergence of transnational luxury commodity chains’ as these borderlands and their landscapes have been opened up by the local state (Hathaway, 2014).

Methodology

The majority of the research upon which this chapter is based took place through long-term ethnographic engagement living among Cizhong villagers and engaging in their daily lives. My overall project on wine production in Northwest Yunnan upon which smaller portions of this chapter also draw involved multi-sited regional ethnography in several villages along with visiting wineries, breweries and restaurants, and interviewing government officials. I also spent time in Paris France and Martigny Switzerland for one month to delve more deeply into the archival history of viticulture in Shangri-La and the Sino-Tibetan borderlands. Data was collected over several years’ time in Shangri-La and Deqin County dating back to 2007. Primary data collection though took place beginning in the summer of 2013 with a pilot study in Cizhong village and with long term work then taking place among a variety of locales over one year from fall 2014 through summer 2015; an additional six months of fieldwork was then conducted in spring and summer 2016. Living side by side with my study subjects and engaging in their daily lives was by far the most useful of my methodological approaches in addition to being a research instrument myself, constantly taking notes, and observing events and activities as they occurred so that I could later interpret them. As Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011: 11) also point out though, ‘substance cannot be considered independent of method,’ and I recognize that much of what is written in this chapter comes from my own understanding and interpretations as an ethnographer while simultaneously attempting to understand and interpret the events in the lives of my study subjects, while also stretching things like my own linguistic abilities.

The Missionary Past and Current Winemaking in Cizhong

French Catholic missionaries from the Société des Missions étrangères de Paris (MEP) first arrived in northwest Yunnan in the nineteenth century, and viewed their work as a gateway to expanding their teachings across greater Tibet. Never being able to reach very far into this isolated and at times violent country, often due to resistance from local Buddhist lamas, the French would eventually manage to set up a slew of churches and convert many Tibetan communities in northwest Yunnan along both the Lancang and Nujiang (Gyalmo Ngulchu in Tibetan, upper reaches of the Salween) rivers. They were never quite able to pierce much further into Tibet. The first of these missionaries, Père Charles Renou, arrived in the region in 1852 and his followers subsequently worked towards establishing the first church in the Lancang valley at the village of Cikou (today Cigu), just downstream of today’s Cizhong, (Bray, 1995; Moseley, 2011: 124-125). While Renou and the other French priests who later followed him were able to befriend local Tibetan lamas in the Mekong region, this peaceful coexistence did not last. Eventually the churches were destroyed and priests murdered in a major campaign carried out across the region by Tibetan lamas in 1905 (McLean, 2009: 69-70; Moseley, 2011: 124-129; Mueggler, 2011: 23, 125-126). Four years later however, in 1909, the Tibetans converts who had

remained faithful began construction on a new church along the river, at Cizhong just upstream of Cikou, where the French Catholics would also re-establish themselves. This community still exists today, and has remained faithful to its Catholic beliefs, with about 80 percent of village households remaining actively Catholic (Goodman, 2001: 184-185; Moseley, 2011: 124-129). As the French persisted in their missions, they were later joined in the early to mid-twentieth century by request in Paris by a group of Swiss hailing from the Great Saint Bernard Hospice high in the Alps. These fathers had already become quite famous for providing mountain rescues and services to Catholic pilgrims crossing the Alps en route to Rome. Their expertise in mountain travel and high-altitude living, including in mountain vinicultural techniques, were crucial in helping to continue and eventually take over the work first begun by the French in Yunnan.

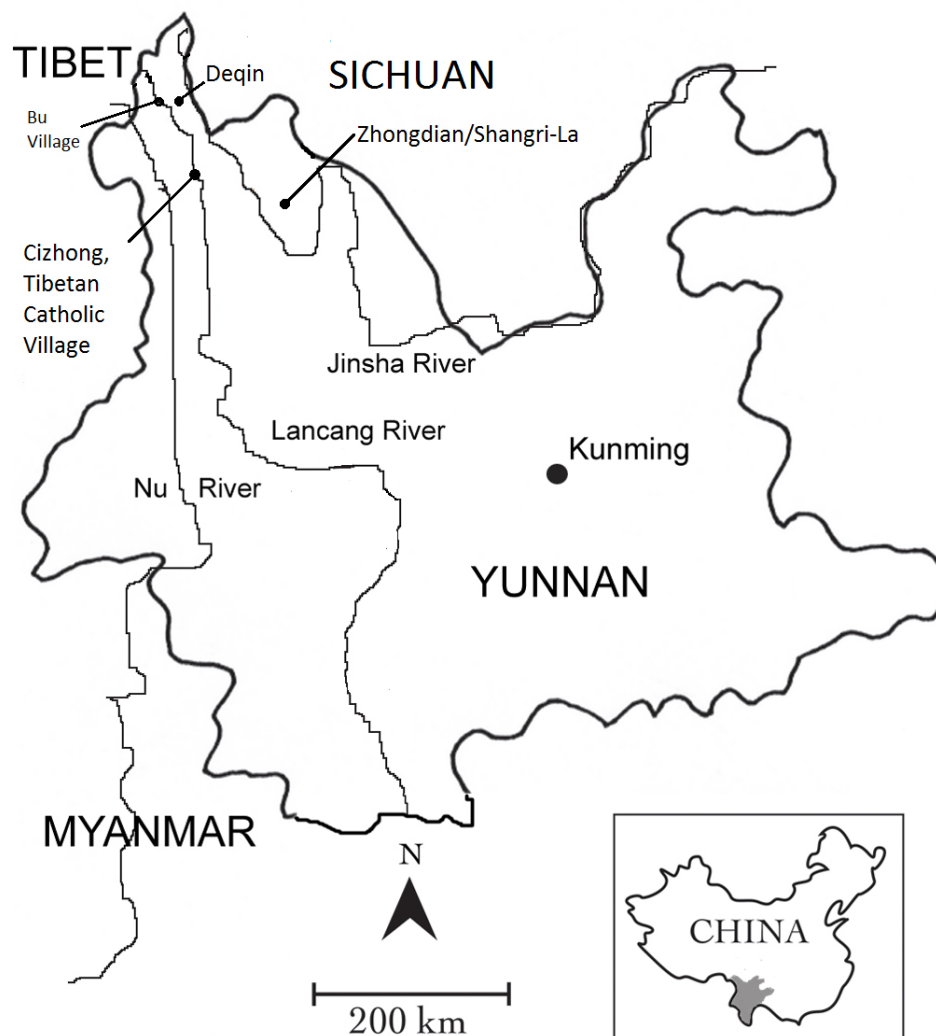


Figure 1. Map of Yunnan showing village field sites.

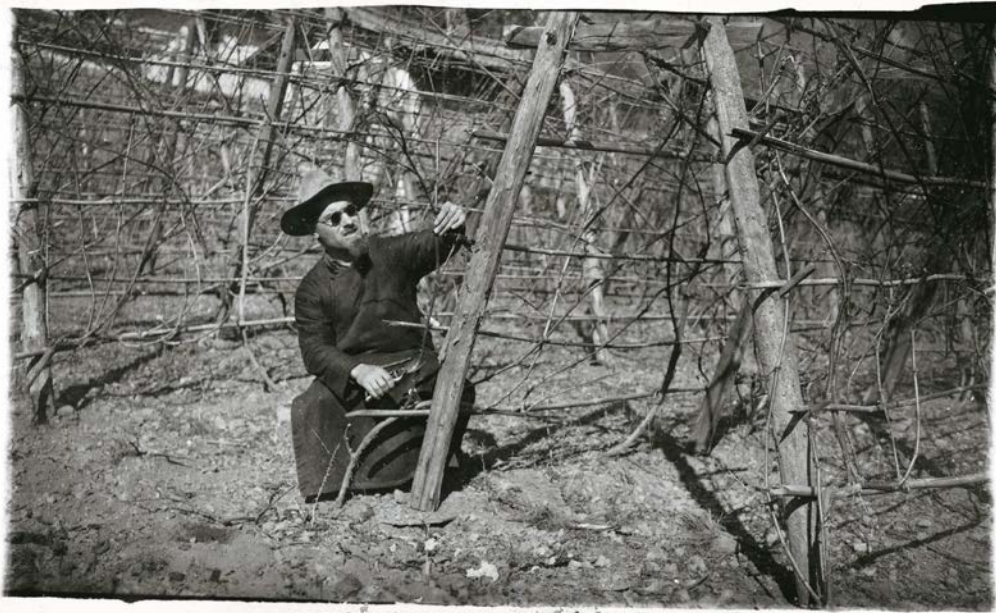


Figure 2. Father Angelin Lovey of the Saint Bernard Mission to Tibet tending vineyards in the Cizhong churchyard. (Courtesy and copyright: Maison hospitalière du Grand-Saint-Bernard, Médiathèque Valais.)

Today in Cizhong, where the original church built in 1909 still stands, Catholic households have persisted in their beliefs are led in their prayers by a Han Chinese priest from Inner Mongolia who arrived in 2008, sent by the Catholic Association of China. Prior to this time, the village had no priest, and so no formal masses were held after 1952 when the remaining French and Swiss Christians were expelled. Villagers nonetheless maintained their religion and began to openly pray in the 1980s. In addition to leaving behind Catholicism, the French and more substantially the Swiss fathers also planted grapes within the walled churchyards at Cizhong, and according to local histories also made wine for mass, though this practice was not widespread nor openly shared with many villagers except for those who directly assisted the fathers. According to a local 86 year old historian and elder in Cizhong who had direct encounters with the French and Swiss, grapes in the Deqin area were in fact first grown and introduced upstream in the area today known as Yanjing in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, where another Catholic church and wine making also remain active today (Zhengping, 2011: 54-56). The French here brought these grapes by way of Sichuan, though local history also suggests they may have also come by way of Vietnam though Southern Yunnan where French Catholics also established a strong presence (Michaud, 2007). The grapes introduced by the fathers and still found in the churchyard and now in the fields of many Cizhong households are a varietal called 'Rose Honey.' Originally these grapes were grown predominantly for use in making wine for Catholic mass, though based on archival materials and the works of Bonet (2006: 161) and Croidys (1949: 153-154), it seems that the Swiss Saint Bernard priests in fact also produced wine and planted grapes in larger quantities for their own enjoyment and personal consumption.

Today in Cizhong, something that I do not necessarily consider a revival but rather a re-working of the agricultural landscape and life has occurred to include widespread household grape growing and wine making, a newly emergent commercial industry of sorts connected with the village's Catholicism and history. I suggest that this new form of livelihood formation drawing up the village's transregional history has created a unique means modernization. Though elders today indicate that the original vines were mostly restricted to the churchyards and winemaking knowledge never passed on to any large number of villagers, this has not prevented a re-working of agricultural practices and identities to include what villagers describe as a historically important if not even expected practice of growing grapes and making wine that comes along with being a Cizhong Tibetan, applying not only to Catholic households but Buddhist ones as well.

According to most accounts, the interest in growing grapes and making wine first occurred in one ethnic Catholic Tibetan household of Wu Gongdi in 1998. I use Wu Gongdi's real name rather than a pseudonym by his own request. Gongdi is a public figure in Cizhong as the director of the church management association and has also been the main protagonist in a documentary produced about Cizhong and Catholicism in Tibet by the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong, *The Way to Tibet*, 2004. Gongdi and his son Hong Xing are both especially proud of their family's wine making and viticulture, something they are indeed known for and have asked me to use their family members' real names when writing about them because they do indeed want people to know about their wine and their family's story. Gongdi has told me that for him the idea of taking cuttings from 'Rose Honey' vines in the churchyard to plant his own vineyards and then make his own wine came from the thought that before wherever there was a missionary, there was a vineyard, and that to have a proper Catholic mass you also need to have wine. For him, especially as the manager of the church association, and lay spiritual leader at that time (ten years before a permanent priest arrived in the village), not having wine anymore meant that religiously and culturally, life in Cizhong was in a way incomplete. Additionally, with a burgeoning tourist interest just beginning at that time in Cizhong coupled with the beginning years of tourism promotion across 'Shangri-La' in Northwest Yunnan, making wine to serve to tourists as a way of sharing local history and increasing his income seemed like a novel idea for Gongdi. Gongdi has also explained in two documentary films produced in the early 2000's about his family and Cizhong (one filmed by himself and his son with the support of Yunnan academics), that his interest in producing wine is also connected with rising concerns over health and naturalness in China, and that compared to hard grain liquor or *baijiu*, more and more people in China are turning to grape wine for its health qualities and in the case of his own, because it is organic. Perhaps one of the most memorable times I have seen Gongdi discuss this matter was unfortunately before I met him, but he and his son Hong Xing perform a wonderful drinking song about the health and religious benefits of their wine in their self-filmed documentary, *Cizhong Red Wine* (茨中红酒) from 2002 produced by the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences, Liu, 2002. In the film, prior to singing the song, the entire family discusses their potential future economic gains that will come with the grapes they have begun to grow and the wine they are making, and they also toast with the family's grandmother wishing her a long life by drinking their new healthy grape wine. The lyrics to the song they sing are as follows:

Ah, wine! Beautiful fragrant wine!
Ah, wine! Sweet dew that makes men happy!
Plant a grape vine in the lands of Cizhong,
Present the first glass of sweet grape wine to Almighty God,
Present the second glass of clear and fragrant grape wine to your kind parents,
Take the last glass of clear and fragrant grape wine for ourselves and play a game.

In order to ensure his wine was produced in the traditional method employed by the missionaries, in 1997 Gongdi first travelled to Yanjing to learn about wine making from his grandmother's sister who was a Catholic nun there. After learning the methods, which he insists are unique to his family, though other villagers in Cizhong often say he boasts too much and everyone now uses this method of wine making, he returned to Cizhong and from 1998 onward began producing wine, first using grapes from the church yard and from other areas around the Dzachu where they had been planted, and eventually using grapes from his own vineyards planted with 'Rose Honey' cuttings taken from the church. Following Gongdi's lead, by around 2002-2004, most families in Cizhong had also begun planting grapes and making wine using 'Rose Honey' cuttings, with each family seeing the potential market and success that selling wine as a historical product from Cizhong's landscape could provide. Today every household in Cizhong can be seen as instrumentalizing upon Catholic religion and history for commercial orientation through viticulture and wine making. This is one of the primary ways in which this trend ties into the themes of this volume, showing Gongdi's and his family's agency in reconstructing and re-configuring household livelihoods and economic and touristic niche identities in Cizhong.



Figure 3. Wu Gongdi making wine.

Landscape Change, Tibetan Identity, and *Terroir* in Cizhong

There is no doubt that grapes and wine are indeed a foreign introduction, and most villagers themselves freely admit this, but simultaneously, Catholic villagers when asked will still often assert that wine is cultural for them as Catholic Tibetan people and because of Cizhong's history and religious ritual practices coupled with new Shangri-La tourism. Below some quotes from Wu Gongdi and others are provided to help exemplify these assertions:

Wine is important to local culture because it is needed for Catholic mass, and this ritual can't take place without wine. Wherever there is a church there is a vineyard.

I think Catholic culture is part of Tibetan culture, so wine is also part of Tibetan culture. But you also can't talk about wine without talking about Catholic mass. The fathers who were here even learned to speak Tibetan and I think this also makes wine part of Tibetan identity here.

Cizhong is a big name in local Tibetan culture and lore. Before wine and grapes were not part of Tibetan culture but now they are because everyone knows about our wine making.

There are many more quotes like these from my interviews, but each of them all suggest that wine and vineyards are a part of a dual identity among Catholic Tibetans in Cizhong, whereby they are Tibetans through linguistic, cultural, and ethnic affiliation, and Catholic through their adopted religion. Through the facets of history, religion, and now with the development of Shangri-La and tourism, a reputation and expectation have also ensued among both visitors and villagers alike that Cizhong's landscape includes two things, the original French church, and accompanying vineyards. These vineyards though are much more a modern part of Cizhong villagers' identities given that historically they were never nearly as extensive as they are today. Indeed Lim (2009), who has also published ethnographic work on Cizhong, while focusing primarily on the ethnic identity provided to villagers by Catholicism, has also observed the new landscape inscription provided by household vineyards in the context of villagers working towards exoticising themselves within larger Shangri-La:

Hence in an interesting way, the increasing commercialization of wine production has discursively facilitated the inscription of a 'foreign religion' into the local tradition of the Catholic Tibetan areas, through an advertising narrative that connects the legacy of the French missionaries with the exoticism of an earthly paradise in China (93).

This brings me into the primary thrust of my discussion on Cizhong, landscape, and identity utilizing a construct of the French notion of *terroir* or 'taste of place', (Trubek, 2009). Demossier (2011), describes *terroir* among wine growers in France as being a twofold process that has recently evolved more into a localized discourse in response to globalization, similar to what I argue is occurring among Cizhong Tibetans. *Terroir* according to Demossier, was previously used as a marker of the geological and geographical uniqueness of French wines, and often came as a means legal recognition following local senses of pride and distinction among

individual wine makers in France. Today *terroir* has been re-contextualized by rural vintners as a process of historical and cultural differentiation within the global economy; providing such farmers with a means but which to make themselves distinct. *Terroir* as a construct has allowed small scale local farmers to directly identify themselves with their products, wine in particular, through direct connections to landscape and history (also see Guy, 2007; Ulin, 1995; Ulin, 2002). As Demossier (2011) further indicates, the recent entry into *terroir* studies by ethnographically focused anthropologists in particular has brought to light new details on production, consumption, and social actors involved in wine making (685). In a sense, anthropologists have sought to ask how wine is given meaning and value by those who make it, referring to *terroir* as a special, ecological, and cultural process that brings together actors, their histories, and agricultural practices (686). Drawing upon histories of wine growing in France in particular, *terroir* has created discussions regarding much like what is occurring in Cizhong, over how old histories and landscapes of wine making are made new, and what the roles of history are in these social processes (697). However, despite the wide range of social scientific approaches meant to capture the deployment of *terroir* by wine makers in France, very few have sought to capture its strategic deployment in precise geographic locations as Demossier does in Burgundy, and as I seek to do in Cizhong (687).

Terroir treatments in Asia and China in particular have not tended to focus on wine up until this point, even though this is where the conception began in France and where the majority of literature can be found. Using an inexplicit *terroir* style framework, Tsing (2008; 2009; 2013), in discussing *matsutake* (Japanese) mushrooms (also found in Yunnan Province and Deqin), has suggested that rural commodities can confer different forms of meaning and value upon those who both produce and consume them, and that more research into how such value among producers is created is necessary. Besky (2013), Ching Chan (2012), and Zhang (2013) borrowing the concept of *terroir* from wine scholars, have also each demonstrated how the creation or re-creation of agricultural landscapes using past histories combined with modern producer ideals can be engraved utilizing an idea of ‘taste of place’, and that by mobilizing rural workers and farmers to buy into such an ideal, they themselves will begin to buy into the value of the crops being grown, in these cases highly expensive teas in Darjeeling India and various regions of China.

I suggest here that a similar process of creation and re-creation of history and producers’ identities is taking place with wine in Cizhong, which is marketed by villagers utilizing the Catholic history of the missionaries who first introduced grape growing and wine making to the region. In a sense, Cizhong wine and the household vineyards from which it is produced are marketed using what I suggest is *terroir* like language, both because they originate in a region officially designated as ‘Shangri-La’ or a Himalayan paradise by the government, and due to the history of French introduction and production that has since been passed on through generations of villagers to this day. While most colloquial translations and *terroir* refer to it as ‘taste of place’, the ways in which Cizhong villagers produce and market their wine may in fact be better referred to as ‘place of taste’. Cizhong and its people have developed a very specific reputation for their wine and for being a place where unique wine first introduced by French and Swiss missionaries and produced by villagers today following these original techniques can be found. Though in fact while most villagers market their wine and suggest that they produce it using

traditional techniques introduced and taught to them by the Catholic fathers, Wu Gongdi's story about how he first learned to make wine in 1997 from a nun along with other oral history accounts suggest that these forms of marketing are in fact slightly inaccurate, though certainly tell a good story, which is why what I choose to call 'place of taste' and historical style marketing of Cizhong wine is so effective. The inaccuracy here though comes from the fact that winemaking was not a tradition passed from the French and Swiss, then from generation to generation as most claim, but rather something learned, and due to elders indicating that the French and Swiss fathers did not actively share wine and winemaking techniques. Rather, these were things they shared and taught with a few close village assistants, but not the general population.

In a sense, Chinese and foreign tourists who visit Cizhong today and purchase wine do so primarily because of the historical value and history of foreign transregional Catholicism embedded within the landscape of Cizhong through the French church built in the early 20th century, and through the agency of village winemakers. Over the last 15 years, large swaths of household farmlands have been converted to vineyards in an attempt to imbue the landscape with history to create, drink, buy, and sell wine based upon the village's past combined with the contemporary indigenous, state, corporate, and touristic inscription or imagination of 'Shangri-La', as a physical space through renaming a town and county previously known as Gyalthang, or Zhongdian in Chinese (Coggins and Yeh, 2014; Hillman, 2003; Smyer Yü, 2015). By planting vineyards and invoking Cizhong's Catholic history, I suggest villagers have been able to invoke something like *terroir*, as Demossier (2011) contends, to not only encompass things like soil, geology, and geography, but also cultural or ethnic elements as well. In doing so, they are not simply becoming subjects in the state 'mapping of Shangri-La', but like many local Tibetans, rather playing an active role in the creation of Shangri-La as a physical space, alongside state and corporate manifestations of Shangri-La (Coggins and Yeh, 2014: 5; Smyer Yü, 2015: 191-195); through the process of landscape creation, they create their own image as Cizhong Tibetan people.

I also wish to emphasize here that while the renaming of neighbouring Gyalthang County in Northwest Yunnan as Shangri-La, and what Coggins and Yeh term the 'shangrilaization' of the greater Sino-Tibetan borderlands have been conceived and formulated as state based projects and forms of 'governance...where cultural economies are reconfigured for tourism-based development' (2014: 16), in Cizhong, wine promotion and production have been a grassroots village endeavour. This is much different from the rest of Deqin County where the state has played a very active role in promoting grape agriculture and wine production, which I discuss in the next section. In Cizhong however, while the state promotes tourism to the village because of its unique history within the larger Shangri-La landscape, the endeavour of making and promoting wine as part of this tourism scheme and simultaneously promoting it as having been 'Tibetan' made, or rather 'Franco-Tibetan' made, has been a village based endeavour beginning with Wu Gongdi's efforts in 1997. Indeed it is possible to visit Tibetan villages for tourism in any number of places in Northwest Yunnan, so part of what wine and vineyards to an extent as a visual sight have provided Cizhong villagers with, is a level of distinction and niched living through the wine that they serve to visitors themselves. Perhaps one of my favourite quotes I came across regarding this idea came from the same 86 year old local historian I mentioned

earlier who compared the difference between serving visitors butter tea, the ubiquitous Tibetan drink served all over the region and wine:

People like the wine here for its unique history. The French fathers brought wine here and wine is more civilized than butter tea, and it is getting more and more popular in China. Through wine we can provide a civilized way to welcome tourists into Tibetan culture and to experience it and the region.

In many ways this quote, and in particular the use of ‘civilized’ ties quite well into the dual cultural and religious consciousness of Catholic Tibetans, and niched living within larger Shangri-La, which I suggest has occurred with wine production in Cizhong. Given the transregional nature of this volume, it also points towards both the connections that borderland Tibetans have made with other parts of the globe and the Himalayas, and suggests an ideal of ‘indigenizing modernity’, and both reproducing and reconstructing livelihoods in the face of a globalizing trans-Himalayan region, a major theme discussed by Smyer Yü in the introduction and by many of my co-authors in this volume, (Li; Michaud; Smyer Yü; Turner; Turner, Bonnin, and Michaud, 2015; Yang).

The idea that wine allows Cizhong villagers to provide a more civilized experience to tourists compared to other villages in the area is an important queue towards the distinction and niched living I suggest villagers experience in their wine production, as is the unique and authentic ‘ethnic Tibetan’ and rurally household produced component of village wines as explained by Wu Gongdi:

All the bars and hotels in places like Zhongdian and Lijiang (another popular tourist town to the south), sell fake ‘Rose Honey’ wine, and it is not real. My family has actually received a certificate from the quality bureau of Deqin County stating that our ‘Rose Honey’ is authentic. People especially also like Shangri-La Wine because it says minority and homemade, this makes Chinese people more curious and interested in the wine.

Authenticity, being organic, and household made are all important here within my contextualizing Cizhong wine as being marked by a village *terroir*, which emphasizes various aspect of the placiality of Cizhong, including the history of the missionaries, ‘traditional’ French wine making techniques, and the Tibetan landscape. ‘Rose Honey’ grapes are also unique historically due their French or Swiss introduction and preservation within the churchyards, and villagers in Cizhong actively promote their wine as organic and also as being made from ‘Rose Honey’ grapes. This differs greatly from the larger corporate wine projects taking over village fields throughout the rest of Deqin, where recently introduced cultivars, primarily Cabernet Sauvignon are grown, usually under heavy chemical intensification. Cizhong villagers recognize this and actively promote their wine as both authentic ‘Rose Honey’ and as being organic, which they contrast against the corporate Shangri-La Wine, which can also be bought in local stores and is produced using grapes grown by other villages in Deqin. In Cizhong however, villagers have managed to define themselves through their wine and the planting of vineyards, highlighting what makes them not just Shangri-La Tibetans, or based on the work of Lim (2013:

110), ‘religio-ethnic’ Catholic Tibetans. In my contention rather providing them with a newly emergent form of regional ethno-economic identity within the larger Shangri-La landscape, moderated by economic distinction and niched living as winemakers within larger Shangri-La.

Both Smyer Yü in the introduction to this volume, and Michaud in his own chapter, drawing from Scott (2009), and others point towards earlier historical conceptualizations of this type of niched living I suggest is occurring in Cizhong with wine making today. Here certain highland ethnic groups have formed identities based upon both subsistence living and economic production modes. As Smyer Yü notes quoting Scott: “‘Ecological niche, because it marks off different subsistence routines, rituals, and material culture, is one distinction around which ethnogenesis can occur’”, (Scott, 2009: 262), (emphasis mine)’. Michaud aptly adds:

Different ecological niches and variations in their degrees of industrialization, diffused chiefly from the core states, ensured that inhabitants from each tier could deliver specialized produce, goods, and services. Goods that were gathered, hunted, herded or grown in the high and middle regions (rare timber, coffin wood, medicinal plants, game, and various parts of animals considered essential in the Chinese, Indian, Thai, or Vietnamese pharmacopeia) were traded for indispensable processed goods common in the lowlands but often lacking in the highlands (cloth, precious metals, steel tools, salt, petrol, matches, firearms, or gunpowder).

Today this type of ethnogenesis and niched living continues among Cizhong’s wine makers, fulfilling a certain place within the imagined landscape of ‘Shangri-La’, by producing goods for China’s emerging and mobile traveling consumer classes seeking out both Shangri-La and wine, an increasingly desirable good among Chinese consumers. This contemporary articulation (versus the historical notions of Smyer Yü and Michaud), of ‘niched living’ as a form of livelihood adaption to modernity, is aptly described by Yang (this volume) in the case of land lost peasants outside the provincial capital of Kunming. Yang describes being modern among these peasants as an adaption or ‘floating niche’, framed as a ‘site-specific “creative adaptation”’, drawing from Turner, Bonnin and Michaud (2015: 8), through which people make themselves modern. Through Yang’s particular case of ‘niched living’, placed together with that of household winemakers such as Wu Gongdi in Cizhong, there is a certain pattern within the communities and peoples described across this volume (Li; Michaud; Turner) in which livelihoods tied to landscapes, natural resources, and agriculture are adapted through the agency of these peoples to cope with and meld themselves within the globalization and state initiated changes occurring across this trans-Himalayan region. Wine production and promotion as a method of such state craft though, contrary to local agency, is also prevalent as I describe below.

Corporate and State Vineyard and Wine Development in Deqin

Throughout the Lancang and Jinsha valleys in Deqin, vineyards and wine have similarly transformed village landscapes and household farming over the last 15 years, though contrary to Cizhong, these changes have not been driven by household development of wine making, but rather by state and corporate development interests. In this section, I briefly outline these developments drawing on a variety of interviews with county government officials, village

leaders, and company officials. I then draw out my comparison between the changes this industry has brought to village agricultural landscapes, contrasting these changes with those also created by wine and vineyards in Cizhong.

Wine promotion and production is big business in Deqin today, and has become a major local policy initiative for rural economic development in the region, with the government co-opting and monopolizing most of the grape and wine production, directing the majority of sales of village grapes to the Shangri-La Wine Company. Unlike Cizhong where at least some, even if a very limited history of growing grapes and wine making previously existed, villages who never engaged in viticulture on their own, have now only done so at the urging of the prefectural and county governments, who partnered with Shangri-La Wine (part of a much larger nationwide conglomerate named VATS) sometime around 2002 or 2003. Based on interviews with the assistant manager of the Shangri-La Winery in Tiger Leaping Gorge Town to the south, the company itself was actually original begun as a barley liquor maker, but was later approached by the government to begin producing wine from grapes grown by Deqin's villagers as part of both a 'Shangri-La' promotion scheme and method of improving household incomes. This has virtually transformed all of the lowland agricultural fields in Deqin into vineyards.

Elsewhere, I've discussed the government and Shangri-La Wine Company's development scheme, though in fact also mentioned that at the time when that research was conducted in 2011, my information was based mostly upon the direct experiences of village farmers, due to a lack of access to government and company officials, (Galipeau, 2015). More recently in 2014, due to better research permission and access, I was able to conduct such interviews and re-tell the story of Shangri-La Wine and village development here, drawing upon an interview with a public official named Litsing Gerong working in the Deqin County biological resource office. Litsing Gerong is an easily identifiable public figure and also heavily featured in an article from 2012 in the China Daily, crediting him with putting Deqin on the map as a wine region, so I've used his real name since he'd already be easily identifiable by description, (Xiao and Li, 2012). According to Litsing, grapes and wine first began with a pilot project in 2000 which included land in one village named Bu along with Cizhong. Based on my own work it is important to note here that this did not involve simply promoting the growing of 'Rose Honey' grapes, but rather introducing Cabernet varieties to Cizhong to sell to wineries as a new means of income, which for the most part actually failed in Cizhong with most Cabernet often becoming too diseased without heavy fertilizer and pesticide use. Thus most villagers in Cizhong have abandoned the state promoted growing of Cabernet and just produce their own wines to sell to tourists, though unlike Wu Gongdi some do still grow more Cabernet and use more chemicals to do so.

The original pilot project involved over 200 *mu* of land, though another former county agriculture worker in Bu told me only 60 *mu* were planted in each village. In 2002 Shangri-La Wine was then begun based on the initial observed successes with the pilot project and the government partnered with the Huaze (华泽), a barley liquor company formed near Shangri-La/Zhongdian in 1999, to form Shangri-La Wine Company as part of a national liquor conglomerate named VATS. By 2013, there were 130,000 *mu* of vineyards being grown in the region. Litsing has also explained that his own wine and grape expertise has often been exaggerated, a-la the China Daily article featuring him and crediting him with the introduction and success of this industry, (Xiao and Li, 2012). He began working for the county biological

resources office in 2003 and was basically told to learn about grapes and wine then. In September 2013 though, he and others did recently visit wineries, restaurants, and chateaus in California to learn more about wine making. In his position, by introducing wine and grapes as a new form of village agriculture, Litsing suggests the local government has been able to significantly increase household incomes across the region, something my own survey research (see Galipeau, 2015) confirms, but there are costs to this potential success discussed in the next section. Despite a variety of concerns highlighted below regarding the motivations and successes of Shangri-La Wine as a household development project in Deqin, Litsing as the organizer of this program at the village level, does come across as carrying a genuine interest in the wellbeing of villagers. He provides every villager with his phone number and prides himself on his direct and personal connection with all the villagers in the region whenever they need assistance.

Three topics regarding the Shangri-La Wine project which I've been particularly concerned about in my own observations are heavy use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in villages selling their grapes to Shangri-La, a lack of support for household wine production in places like Cizhong, especially when sales to Shangri-La are not successful, and the overall stability of the industry in terms of long term outlook and food security described in Galipeau (2015). That is what has happened with little to no subsistence grain (what, barley, and buckwheat) production anymore, and an uneasiness among villagers about being able to sell grapes to Shangri-La. When discussing these concerns with Litsing, he actually provided some keen and fair responses, though not enough to ease my critiques completely. He did indeed admit that buckwheat, a traditional Tibetan staple and culturally significant crop has actually gotten very expensive in Deqin due to being replaced by grapes, and that this is a problem since local people still really like it. He also explained that compared to other parts of China, less pesticides and fertilizers are used in Deqin for viticulture and that here there is also more organic manure which can be used as fertilizer. He went on to explain that in wine regions in the north of China many more chemicals are used, though I have nothing to compare or quantify this against, and have still seen a lot of chemical use, which only a limited number of environmentally active villagers seem to care about. With regards to individual villagers being able to promote their wine, and do so organically like Wu Gongdi and his son Hong Xing in Cizhong, Litsing explained that the government really doesn't encourage household wine making and marketing because it's much harder to meet and uphold health and quality standards. Though this certainly doesn't seem to have prevented virtually all of Cizhong's villagers from making their own wine, something I've recommended elsewhere might actually be beneficial for income diversification in other villages due to the annual instability of selling to Shangri-La, who often shows up late in the season to buy grapes causing concerns over income and food security, (Galipeau, 2015).

Conclusion: Juxtaposing Niche Winemakers and Livelihood Modernization in Cizhong with Corporate and State Based Winemaking

The development of viticulture and wine production in the rest of Deqin outside of Cizhong has followed quite a different path, far less related to individual producer identities, religion, culture, and history, and tied more heavily to the larger national Chinese economy and developing 'Shangri-La.' Grapes have become the crop grown in most abundance, often forming a virtual monocrop of vineyards. Outside of Cizhong, I view the development and promotion of

grape growing as a household form of agriculture and a state methodology by which to enhance Deqin's 'shangrilaization', (Coggins and Yeh, 2015), as a primarily state based top down form of development and also landscape alteration framed in the context of what Yeh (2015) calls 'development as a gift.' In this work, Yeh discusses state territorialization and landscape transformation in central Tibet related to urbanization, vegetable farming carried out first through local household labour and then migrant workers, and village and countryside modernization. Within these three examples, Yeh explains that development as a gift should be viewed in very ambiguous in terms of how it benefits local Tibetan households. Of five key points outlined within Yeh's framework, one is particularly important and pertinent to my own case of wine and landscape change in Deqin: Exploring how tracing agency and power in the production of material landscapes helps to see how development produces contradictory subjects and complex subject positions. We can see that in Cizhong, while drawing upon the state's promotion of Shangri-La, many of the material changes in the landscape have involved the agency of villagers such as Wu Gongdi themselves, building upon their history and identity as Tibetan Catholics. I argue that villagers use their seemingly Catholic-based identity as a marketing instrument for the promotion of household grown grapes and wine. In this sense, the Catholic Tibetans fundamentally behave in the same ways as their non-Catholic compatriots who grow grapes purely as a cash crop, except that they cash in on their Catholic and European connections.

This is a case of agency yet identity is also instrumental in the process. In Cizhong, people will explicitly tell you that for them producing wine has to do with their what I've called historical and religious 'niche' economic identities in larger Shangri-La. This differs greatly from the case of other villages in Deqin, where converting traditional agricultural fields to vineyards has been carried out largely at the suggestion of and through promotion by the state and corporate actors. Transregional religious identity melded with ethnic Tibetan identity, has thus become vital in adapting to and indigenizing modernity for Cizhong wine makers. Along these lines of transregionalism, viticulture and wine also work to encompass and bring household economies and livelihoods into the fold of greater China, though the production of a luxury commodity, for China's emerging consumer classes. For Catholics, this transregionality then also includes historical connections with Europe. This commodity is then also not only marketed as wine, but labelled as Tibetan (and in the case of Cizhong wine as French) from 'Shangri-La', following recent trends among urban Han Chinese who seek to 'consume' Tibet.

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