ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

by

QIANG LI

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the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Arts

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ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

submitted by Qiang Li, B.A., M.A.

in partial fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of Master of Arts

Thesis Supervisor

Chair, Department of Sociology and
Anthropology

Carleton University

January 13, 1997

DISTRIBU

This is a detailed black and white map of China, showing its geographical features, major cities, and administrative boundaries. The map includes the Yellow River, Yangtze River, and other major waterways. Major cities like Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong are marked. A legend in the bottom left corner identifies various symbols used on the map. An inset map in the bottom right corner shows the South China Sea Islands.

Legend:

- Province
- County
- City
- Town
- Village
- River
- Sea
- Mountain
- Island
- Other

Major Cities and Regions:

- Beijing
- Tianjin
- Shanghai
- Wuhan
- Chongqing
- Chengdu
- Xi'an
- Lanzhou
- Kunming
- Nanning
- Guangzhou
- Shenzhen
- Harbin
- Qingdao
- Shenyang
- Changchun
- Manjiu
- Shijiazhuang
- Zhengzhou
- Hefei
- Nanjing
- Hangzhou
- Chongzhi
- Nanchang
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- Taipei
- Haikou
- Lhasa
- Urumqi

Water Bodies:

- Yellow River
- Yangtze River
- South China Sea
- South China Sea Islands

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the ethnic identification project in the People's Republic of China, which was undertaken during the 1950s-1980s by China's Communist Government (CCG), resulting in the recognition of 56 nationalities (the majority Han and 55 minorities). The CCG applied ethnic identification as a strategy as well as an instrument to integrate China's ethnic groups and to achieve modernization in China's minority areas. Ethnic identification was based on Stalin's definition of nation and a Marxist category of social evolution. The CCG modified Stalin's definition of nation to cope with China's ethnic realities and drew conclusions from the survey data with concerns of ethnic integration. According to the results of ethnic identification, ethnic categories were officially set up and regional linguistic cultural autonomy was implemented in the minority areas. The Marxist classification of the socio-economic levels of the nationalities served in the social programmes to introduce a state-socialism and achieve modernization in the minority areas in the aftermath of sinicization. Consequently ethnology has institutionally become an applied social science and ethnologists have been structural advisors to government decision-makers in contemporary China.

CONTENTS

Map	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Map and Tables	v
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: Ethnic Policy of the CCG	9
1. Traditional Chinese Ethnic Policy	9
2. Marxist-Leninist Theory of National Question	21
3. Ethnic Policy of the CCG	27
CHAPTER TWO: ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION IN THE PRC	48
1. Development of Ethnic Identification	48
2. Survey of Ethnic Identification	51
3. Chinese Concept of Nationality	63
4. Ethnic Identification (1950s-1980s)	70
CHAPTER THREE: EFFECTS OF ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION	81
1. Effects on Ethnic Consciousness	82
2. Effects on Autonomous Governments	88
3. Effects on Linguistic Cultural Autonomy	95
4. Effects on Social Programmes	106
5. Effects on Chinese Ethnic Studies	112
Conclusion	118
APPENDIXES	121
BIBLIOGRAPHY	142

LIST OF MAP AND TABLES

Map: Distribution of China's Nationalities

Table 1. Glossary of China's Nationalities

Table 2. Languages of China's Nationalities

Table 3. Profiles of China's Minority Nationalities

Table 4. Census Population of China's Nationalities

Table 5. National Autonomous Areas in China

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of the ethnic identification project in the People's Republic of China, which was undertaken by the Chinese Communist Government (CCG) during the 1950s-1980s, resulting in the recognition of 56 nationalities (Majority Han and 55 Minorities). The CCG achieved ethnic identification with the goal of integrating the state and society. Ethnic identification was based on Stalin's definition of nation and a Marxist category of social evolution. The conclusions of ethnic identification were drawn within the cultural and political context of China. In addition, ethnic identification was utilized to exercise regional linguistic cultural autonomy in and to introduce a state-socialist system to the minority areas. This thesis, therefore, will study the Chinese ethnic identification from a perspective of ethnic integration within the context of nationalism and communism in modern China. It will study why and how the CCG applied ethnic identification as a strategy as well as an instrument to integrate China's ethnic groups and to achieve modernization in the minority areas in China. From this point of view, this thesis will survey: 1) the CCG ethnic policy; 2) ethnic identification of China's 56 nationalities; and 3) the effects of ethnic identification on China's ethnic issues in terms of ethnic consciousness, regional linguistic autonomy, social programmes, and ethnic studies.

Ethnic integration may be defined as a process in which ethnic groups move their loyalties, expectations, and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions assume sovereignty over and responsibility for the ethnic groups (Haas 1958:16). Theoretically ethnic integration may happen among some equal ethnic groups, but it in fact involves majority-minority situations. According to Louis Wirth:

We may define a minority as a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in a society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. The existence of a minority in a society implies the existence of a dominant group with higher social status and the greater privileges. Minority status carries with it the exclusion from full participation in the life of the society. (See Simpson and Jinger 1985:9)

Ethnic integration can be generally divided into three types: pluralism, accommodation, and assimilation (Simpson and Jinger 1985, Dreyer 1976). Pluralism means that minority groups retain their distinguishing features, presumably with the full approval of the majority group. Accommodation refers to the situation that minority groups accept certain characteristics from the majority group, such as language or style of clothing, while still maintaining many elements of their traditional cultures and various degrees of ethnic identity. Assimilation means that members of minority groups have absorbed the features of the dominant group to the exclusion of their own and become indistinguishable from the members of the majority. Accommodation and assimilation actually have occurred much often than pluralism in human history.

The study of ethnic integration has been generally related to the modern nation-state and/or nationalism, even though the problems of uniting various ethnic groups into a single political entity are as old as human history. Nationalism is related to the emergence of the modern world since the late 18th century, and it was largely a product of the French Revolution. Nationalism first developed in Western Europe and has since penetrated all regions of the world. Nationalism essentially is "an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, individuality and cohesion for a social groups deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation" (Smith 1976:1). Nationalism assumes the principle that national and state boundaries should coincide--i.e., that the state should be ethnically homogeneous, and the nation should be politically united. In other words, it is the belief that all those who share a common history and culture should be autonomous, united and distinct in their recognized homeland. The growth of nationalism indicates that the old socio-political order is going through a crisis of legitimacy and is no longer accepted. Thus, nationalism can join forces with diverse social groups and political ideologies and exist within the functional context of social democratization and liberalization. Nationalism may also serve to justify and propel dictatorship and conservative social ideologies. Most new-nation-states in the world have been formed on the destruction of multiethnic empires in the 20th century within the different manifestations of modern nationalism. Western scholars (Smith 1979,

Gellner 1933, Hobsbawn 1990) basically agree that: 1) nationalism is becoming a worldwide phenomenon, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist Camp in East Europe; 2) nationalism is related to the disintegration of traditional societies; and 3) it is impossible to separate nationalism from the processes of political, cultural, and technological modernization.

The problem of national minorities or national question is a logical consequence of nationalism. It comes out of the conflict between the ideal of the homogeneous national state and the reality of ethnic heterogeneity. National minorities may be a problem in the modern state because they constitute a standing reminder of the failure to establish a national political identification. The majority tends to resent the presence of an unassimilated minority group in its political body. The minority group may oppose the national state efforts to incorporate it into the state as another nationality. A neighbouring national state may feel aggrieved because a fragment of its nation has been severed by a political boundary. The minority problem is first of all an issue of domestic policy. The conflict of ethnic groups within a state may also be a serious international problem, if a minority makes demands for secession or for union with another ethnically related state.

The complexity of the problem of nationalism is enhanced by the slipshod use of the term in both English and Chinese. In the English world, **nation** originally refers to a human grouping whose members share an intuitive sense of kindredness or sameness, predicated upon a myth of common descent (Smith 1986, Kosing 1976).

It does not refer to any collection of people who are conscious of their multiethnic background (for example, the Canadians), nor does it refer to a state.¹ Now it often refers to all the people who live in a particular country/state. **Nationality** refers a group of people who have same ethnic origins but do not have their own independent country. **Nationalism** originally refers to identity with and loyalty to the **nation**, and it does not refer to loyalty to the state, which is **patriotism**. Now **nationalism** is very often confused with **patriotism** within the context of modern politics.

In Marxist-Leninist literature, the term **nation** is often used interchangeably or synonymously with **state**, **country**, as well as an ethnically heterogeneous **society**. One may find disagreement concerning the special characteristics that are essential to a nation (e.g., language, territory, and the like) in the canons of Marxism-Leninism, but the concept will refer to a people with a sense of national consciousness. In addition, **nationality** can have one of two meanings: a people in a prenation stage of social development; or a segment of a nation living outside the state where the major body of the nation resides. Being classified as a **nationality** rather than as a **nation** can have political implications. For example, communist China refers to all ethnic groups within China as **nationalities** rather than as **nations**, for it rejects to follow the political model of the republics of the Soviet Union.

¹ See the definitions of "nation" and "nationality" in *Collins English Language Dictionary*, London: Collins. 1988:956.

The Western conceptions of nation and nationality essentially are political-subjective. It assumes a group of people form a nation when they do feel that they belong together and are distinct from other groups. Therefore, nation actually means the sum of government plus its people, and nationality means citizenship.

Nevertheless, nationalism is hardly the best term to apply to the case of China. Chinese language has never distinguished between people, nation, nationality, and ethnicity. All those entities are put together into a single term *minzu*. The Chinese term *minzu* is used in a very broad sense, applying to all ethnic groups in various periods of history and in different stages of development from a Marxist perspective. Chinese intellectuals have tried hard but failed to create suitable Chinese words for those terms. To get around the problem of defining nationalism, Chinese scholars have recently begun to give greater attention to patriotism (Yu Danchu 1984), as China is state centred on patriotism under the influence of Confucianism. By professing patriotism, Chinese people usually express loyalty and a desire to serve the state, either as it was or as it would be in its renovated form. In other words, Chinese people never distinguish between nation and state. In the Chinese definition, nation means a historically legitimate region plus the whole population on that territory; and nationality means that someone is a member of an ethnic group that historically is a part of the nation or state. The Chinese definitions of nation and nationality are essentially historical-objective.

The Western political-subjective vs. the Chinese historical-objective perspectives of nation/state is a key for people to understand the ethnic disputes such as the Tibetan issue between the West and China.² From Chinese point of view, all peoples who live in the territories of former Imperial China are considered part of the Chinese people. Tibet has thus belonged to China for a long time. It was the weakness of the latest Qing dynasty and the aggression of the foreign powers that caused the severance of large areas from China in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The western critiques of China's ethnic issues are based on the formation of modern western nations and western international law, both of which differ significantly from those of China.

Moreover, in China, in contrast to the West, the question of national minorities is not a question of race. Race refers to physical traits observed by others. In China, however, what are called "races" do not necessarily have any biological uniqueness; their identity is defined by social and/or cultural perceptions. The overwhelming majority of China's ethnic groups belong to the Mongoloid, or "yellow" race, with straight black hair and a skin colour that is yellowish white.³ Only a few ethnic groups belong to

² The author acknowledges the international debate on the sovereignty of Tibet and Mongolia. This thesis aims to introduce a Chinese perspective. Therefore, the discussions about Tibet and Mongolia may differ from what is familiar to western academia.

³ The race as biological term is questionable in anthropology (Kottak 1991:68), but classifiers (Simpson 1985:31) have defined four major races: Negroid or Black, Archaic White or Australoid, Caucasoid or White, and Mongoloid. I apply this classification here to emphasize that ethnic differences in China are mostly cultural.

an eastern branch of the "white" race, who live in Chinese central Asia and make up a small portion of China's population. China and the West also have different perceptions of racial origins. China believed in polygenism whereas the West was based on the Judeo-Christian view of monogenism (Dikotter 1992:72).

This thesis consists of three chapters followed by a conclusion. The first chapter will survey the development of the CCG ethnic policy. It will examine the relationship between the CCG and traditional Chinese ethnic policies in terms of history, and the relationship between the CCG and the former Soviet Union ethnic policies in terms of social ideology. The second chapter will study ethnic identification as an embodiment of the CCG ethnic policy. After an examination of China's national ethnic survey conducted by the CCG, the study will focus on how the CCG, with Stalin's definition of nation, recognized the 56 nationalities with the concerns of China's ethnic realities and ethnic integration. In addition, it will study how the CCG classified China's ethnic groups with a Marxist category of social evolution to pave the ways for the subsequent social programmes in minority areas. The third chapter will explore the effects of ethnic identification on China's ethnic affairs in terms of ethnic consciousness, self-government, linguistic cultural autonomy, social policy, and ethnic studies. The conclusion will combine the conclusions of the previous chapters in an analysis of Chinese ethnic identification. Lastly, possible means to overcome the limitations of this thesis in future will be entertained.

CHAPTER ONE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CCG ETHNIC POLICY

Modern Chinese ethnic identification was undertaken during the 1950s-1980s, by the Chinese Communist Government (CCG) to achieve China's ethnic integration and modernization. The CCG undertook ethnic identification as a prerequisite to implement its ethnic policy of regional autonomy and to pursue its social programmes in China's minority areas. From a historical perspective, the CCG's ethnic policy of regional autonomy is a continuity of traditional Chinese ethnic policies dealing with minorities in China. Meanwhile, the CCG's policy of regional autonomy is based on the Marxist-Leninist theory of national question and learned from the experiences of the former Soviet Union. Thus, it is necessary to examine the traditional Chinese ethnic policy and the Marxist-Leninist idea of national question with the experiences of the Soviet Union prior to a discussion of the Chinese communist policy.

1. Traditional Chinese Ethnic Policy

1.1 Formation of China

Since ancient times China has been a multi-national country, where apart from the vast majority Han, there have lived many other minority ethnic groups. Over a period of about 3000 years more than 8,000 separate ethnic groups were mentioned in Chinese historical

documents (Dreyer 1976:7). Those ethnic groups were generally referred to by the majority Han as the "Man (South), Yi (East), Di (North) and Jung (West)" or as "the barbarians of the four directions." The formation of China as a nation has taken form after centuries of historical development. To give a full account of the formation of China as a nation would need nothing less than a full history of China. It is not my intention to write such a long history, but certain highlights need to be discussed here. In earliest times, the area that is now China was inhabited by many ethnic groups. The overwhelming majority of them belonged to the Mongoloid race with yellowish skin and black hair, but some other races were represented as well. The "Chinese" states initially occupied only a small area on the Central Plains in the Yellow River Valley of what is currently North China. The concept of China (the Middle Kingdom) was likely developed first as "Hua-Xia," as the Chinese also call themselves "descendants of the Hua-Xia" (*huaxia ernu*). "Hua" is the name of the first dynasty of China (? - about 21th Century B.C.), which available archaeological materials have still not been able to identify precisely. The word *Hua* in Chinese means "flowering" in the sense of beautiful, civilized or refined. This expression may indicate that at that time the Hua were already more advanced from a Marxist point of view than their neighbours as far as written script, social institutions, and production modes were concerned. The Xia dynasty (21th-16th Century B.C.), which succeeded the Hua, was long regarded as marking the

beginning of Chinese history.⁴ The Xia in the Central Plains were surrounded by many other ethnic groups, such as the Dongyu in the Huaishuo River Valley of the East; the Yue, Man, and Sanmiao in the Yangtze River Valley of the South; the Ji in the Southwest; the Wusun, Rong, and Qiang in the Northwest; the Xiongnu (Huns) and Hunzhou in the North; and the Donghu and Sushen in the Northeast. During the later Spring and Autumn and Warring period (770-221 B.C.), the concept of *Hua-Xia* was likely replaced by *Zhongguo* (the Middle Kingdom) or the similar *Zhongyuan* (Plains of the Centre). Because Chinese people also refer to themselves as *zhongguo ren* (the people of the Middle Kingdom). The term *Zhongguo* did not refer to "the state in the middle" as usually understood, but to the cultural area of the *zhongyuan* (central plain) in the midst of a greater *tianxia* (all-under-heaven) (Ying-shih Yuh 1983). The *tianxia* was the world known by the Chinese at that time. The *Zhongguo* includes the political unit of China, the majority Han and the minorities.

In the Chinese definition (ZSM 1981, Tian Xiaoxiu 1991, Jiang Yingliang 1992), the formation of China as a nation is generally divided into three historical periods: creation of China, ethnic incorporation of China, and ethnic unification of China. During the period of the creation of China, which ended around 206 B.C.,

⁴ The 1980s archaeological discovery in China's Liaoning province has proven the existence of Chinese culture long before the Xia dynasty. The discoveries included a goddess temple and sacrificial altar built over 5,000 years ago. The culture of that period is known as "Red Mountain (*hongshan*) Culture." However, the Xia still holds the title of "First Dynasty."

ethnic groups within the core of China became minorities along with the rise of the Chinese states (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:12). After the Hua-Xia dynasties, from the Shang and Western Zhou dynasties to the Spring and Autumn and Warring State periods (16th century-221 B.C.), the Hua-Xia nation came into existence through an enormous merging of the Xia, Zhou, and Shang with many other ethnic groups, such as the Qiang, Rong, Kunji, Miao, and Man peoples. It is said (Ma Yin 1989:10) that once 1,800 small states existed during the Zhou dynasty (11th century-771 B.C.), but the number declined to 100 by the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.). Furthermore, only seven of the hundred states remained in central China through the Warring States Period (475-211 B.C.)

After having unified China in 221 B.C. by his conquest of the other six states, *Qin Shi Huang Di*, the First Emperor of the Qin (Chin) dynasty, centralized the multi-national state under a feudal autocracy by establishing prefectures and counties under direct central authority. The founding of the Qin (Chin) dynasty (221-206 B.C.) started the Chinese state in its modern form. The ancient Indian word for China, *çina*, was derived from the name of this dynasty (Chin),⁵ and the western term "China" may possibly come from the term "Chin" as well.

During the second period of "ethnic incorporation," which lasted from about 206 B.C. to around A.D. 1000, the Hua-Xia group absorbed many other ethnic groups to become the most populous

⁵ "Qin" once was commonly spelled as "ch'in" before the People's Republic of China.

nation known as the Han (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:13). It was during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220) that the Chinese adopted the name Han.⁶ Han culture subsequently means Chinese culture. China then expanded to include the 18 provinces of China Proper, excluding the areas inhabited by strong ethnic groups, such as Inner Mongol, Xinjiang (Chinese Central Asia), and Tibet. During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties periods (A.D.220-581), the various major powers in China fought through 300 years of factionalism, marked by wholesale migrations and national annexation and assimilation. People of many ethnic groups moved across the Great Wall to live commingled with the Han on the Central Plains. The population thus formed consisted of half Han and half other ethnic groups (Ma Yin 1989:11). Remarkable ethnic incorporation was achieved from the following late sixth century to the early tenth century, that is, from the Sui (589-618) to the Tang (618-906) dynasty. The Han assimilated and accommodated many ethnic groups in different parts of the country, such as the Tujue (Turk), the Huihe and the Qing in the Northwest, the Mohe, the Qidan (Khitan) and the Mengwushiwei in the Northeast, the Wuman and the Baiman in the Southwest, the Tufan in the West, and so on. Those groups were the ancestors of many current minority groups in China. For instance, the Huihe were the ancestors of the present-day Uygurs. The Tang dynasty instituted a system of 856 prefectures, sub-prefectures,

⁶ The word "Han" originally was the name of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D.220) only, but not a national name. What "Chinese" later call themselves "Han" may come from cultural usage that the Han wanted to distinguish themselves from the non-Han peoples.

and counties across China (Ma Yin 1989:12). Prefectures and sub-prefectures were also established in many border areas of minority ethnic groups. Tribal chiefs were set up as governors and imperial inspectors, granted hereditary offices, and empowered to rule in their respective areas (ZSM, 8).

The third period of "ethnic unification" covered the time from the 11th century to the 19th century, while China became a unified empire (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:14-16). During the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), provincial governments were instituted and empowered to administer areas where the minorities lived in the Northeast, Mongolia, Xinjiang, Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan and Guizhou. Special administrative departments were established to take charge of affairs in Tibet, the Penghu Islands and Taiwan as well. Tribal chiefs were granted hereditary offices as local rulers and vested with administrative powers to draft soldiers, conscript labour, collect tax, and exact tributes on behalf of the court. During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), centralized control further erode the powers of the individual tribal chiefs. Under the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), China attained its greatest expansion and became the most powerful nation of the world at that time. The Qing regime established sovereignty over the whole of China and brought all the peoples in China under directly centralized rule (Ma Yin 1989:14).

The formation of China thus should be viewed as a process involving the ethnic integration of vast migratory movements and the decline, genesis, and fusion of various peoples. The majority Han was itself a product of the intermixing of many ethnic groups

on the territory of what is now China. So were the other minority groups. Chinese scholars (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:8) regard the territory of China Proper as a consequence of "the core of China expanding to all of the four directions." The ethnic integration in China is characterized by the exclusive dominance of the majority Han culture. Han culture did not necessarily relate to Han political control. Some minorities at one time or another established their own states and a few of them even ruled China proper, but they all finally adopted the Han culture. The nomadic minority Manchu, for example, once ruled China for about 250 years during the latest Qing dynasty (1644-1911), but they eventually accepted Han Chinese culture to the exclusion of their explicit ethnic markers. Scholars (Ng-Quinn 1993) generally attribute Han dominance in China's ethnic integration to the employment of the Chinese written script. The Chinese people used the written script to record, spread, and canonize shared values and norms, as reflected in the Confucian classics and other inscriptional materials.

1.2 Traditional Chinese Ethnic Policy

China is called *Zhongguo* ("the Country of the Centre," or "the Middle Kingdom") in Chinese language. According to ancient Chinese, the sky is round and the earth is a flat square plate surrounded by the four seas. China is the centre of the world, and the focal point is in the capital of the country, in theory the emperor's palace; the others, the barbarians, are on the outside of the world, the borders of the world. All human beings are subjects of

the emperor (Yao Peng et al. 1990:971). In a classic book *Zhou Li* (the Rituals of the Zhou dynasty) composed in the third century B.C., the world consisted of squares. China was theoretically divided into "nine provinces." Outside of the "nine provinces" came still further squares, each one several times larger than the preceding one. Square by square, the power of the emperor, and the civilization were generally diminished (Eberhard 1982:99). In the outside squares, peoples might not know China, but in theory still came under the rule of the Chinese emperor. The concept of "border" never existed in ancient China. Even the Great Wall functioned only as a great castle to defeat the uncommitted minority groups. History took different courses, but the idea of "under the heaven, there is no land that is not the monarch's" (*putian zhixia, mofei wangtu*) remained in premodern China.

The Chinese held a strong belief in their superiority over their neighbours mainly for two reasons. One reason was that China had been a cultural and political superpower in East Asia for many centuries prior to the modern times. Another reason came from Confucianism, which became Chinese social ideology during the first century B.C.. From the perspective of Confucianism, civilization was characterized by *wenhua* (culture). The term *wenhua* means the literal transformation of a person, (and by extension to the community in which the person belongs), by training in the moral, philosophical, and ritual principles considered to constitute virtue (Schwartz 1959:52). Therefore, Confucianism instituted a cultural hierarchy to classify peoples. The most civilized people

were those who had the greatest acquaintance with the Confucian classics, namely the scholar-officials who served the imperial court and who functioned as theoreticians of the moral orders. Other Chinese were somewhat cultured, since their family life, religion, language, and other characteristics were similar to those of the literati, although they might have no direct acquaintance with Confucian literature. Non-Chinese were a step down, because they had no indirect acquaintance with Confucian values. In the Chinese language, minority names were customarily written with the word "dog," indicating that the minorities were not real human beings but related to irrational animals. Other names used for minorities usually had a second negative meaning, such as the tribal name Lolo, which implies a meaning of vagrancy.⁷ Non-Han groups were all referred to as uncivilized and irrational "barbarians" and in the final stage were all expected to be sinicized, or civilized. The Han Chinese historically were not interested in minority cultures and only expected minorities to adopt Chinese culture spontaneously. Minority members would be accepted as Chinese, if they spoke Chinese, followed Chinese morality, or behaved like Chinese. Therefore, the concept of "Chinese" is not racial but cultural. The Confucian definition of civilization legitimized the superiority of the Han in China and determined Chinese ethnic policy dealing with the minority groups.

⁷ The people the Chinese called Lolo refer to themselves as Nosu.

Traditional Chinese ethnic policy regarding minorities was a loose model of pluralistic integration aiming at control rather than assimilation. In order to achieve ethnic incorporation, Chinese rulers employed a full range of measures, such as war, diplomacy, marriage ties, military colonies,⁸ and tribute missions (Moses 1976). Once the Chinese had established political rule over the minority areas, they did not aim to change the socio-economic systems of the minorities. Chinese rulers employed traditional minority elites as intermediaries to control the minority areas but showed no interests in institutional sinicization. Instead, the hereditary elites of the strong minority groups of North and Northwest were integrated into imperial systems through the granting of court titles consonant with their ranks in their respective groups. In addition, the native official (*tusi*) system dealt with the smaller and more primitive ethnic groups of South and Southwest. Headmen of those groups were absorbed into the government hierarchy on its lower levels and were given ordinary official titles. In return, the elites and the headmen took the responsibility of taking censuses, collecting tax, and keeping peace. The state avoided interfering with local affairs unless situations there directly threatened imperial control of the area. After the 16th century, the Ming and the Qing courts started to implement a policy of *gaitu guiliu*, which aimed to replace the "tusi" system in minority areas with regular administration, along

⁸ Military agricultural colony refers to the practice that Chinese regimes sent soldiers and prisoners to colonize frontier areas.

with the massive Han settlements in minority areas. Lowland minority members who were brought under the regular government were called *shu* (cooked), or sinicized, and those in highlands who remained in the native official system were termed *shang* (raw). Nevertheless, the "tusi" system remained in many less accessible minority areas until the middle of the 20th century (ZSM, 9).

Generally speaking, the pluralistic policy had been successful at bringing the minorities under the administration of Imperial China and had resulted in the acculturation of the minorities into the Chinese culture.

1.3 The Assimilation Policy of the Republican Government

After the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the Republican Government of the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), which ruled China from 1911 to 1949, proclaimed a radical assimilation policy for the minority groups in China. The nationalists sought to build a new democratic Chinese nation/state under the influence of Western nationalism. Nevertheless, they never confined the new nation to a single ethnic group, due to the pressures of Western aggression and the later Japanese invasion. Instead, they asserted that, in contrast to the situations in other countries, the terms "state" and "nation" meant the same thing in China, since China had developed alone as a single state from a single nation. The ethnic groups who did not belong to the majority Han should be kept within the state by all means and be urged to merge themselves with the Han (Chiang Kaishek 1947:39-40). Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder of

the Republic, first defined the Republic as the Republic of China's five major distinct ethnic groups (Han, Hui, Manchu, Mongol, and Tibetan), which were symbolized as the five colours of the first flag of the Republic. However, from a social Darwinist perspective, he urged to bring China's minorities to a level similar to the majority Han, so that assimilation would be possible (Hsu 1933:168). The five-coloured flag was soon replaced by the Republican flag, which represented the KMT only. General Chiang Kaishek, who was the successor to Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the KMT Chair, furthermore claimed:

"The differentiation among China's five peoples is due to regional and religious factors, and not to race or blood" (Chiang Kaishek 1947:12).

His statement meant that there were no essential ethnic differences between those peoples and that China's minorities were only the offshoots of the majority Han. By simplifying the complicated situations in minority areas, the Republic rejected any demands for secession and regional autonomy from the minorities and adopted the same method of administration that prevailed in non-minority regions (Lipman 1984). The Nationalist government also advocated a policy of **Hanification**, or assimilation of all minority groups into the single nation of Han by "education" and "modernization" (Dreyer 1976:17). Consequently, ethnic disputes were aggravated instead of alleviated. However, the weak republican regime had no actual control over most minority areas and had no chance to pursue its assimilation policy, due to the Sino-Japanese War (1931-1945) and the civil wars, which led to the communist takeover in 1949.

Nevertheless, the republican regime maintained the control over the territory of Imperial China, except for the Outer Mongolia, which became independent in 1913 through the support of Russia and the later Soviet Union.

2. The Marxist-Leninist Theory of National Question

Classical Marxism is actually incompatible with nationalism. Nationalism assumes that the most fundamental human divisions are ethnonational groups. Marxism, by contrast, asserts that the most fundamental human divisions are social class distinctions that cut across national groupings. Based on Lewis H. Morgan's theory of social evolution, Marx asserted that human society has evolved from five types of societies characterized by "primitive," slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism or communism. In each of the three types of societies (slavery, feudalism, and capitalism), there are two primary opposite (oppressing and oppressed) social classes. The class struggle between the two opposite social classes drives social development. Marx and Engels focused on a critique of capitalism and included analysis of societies characterized by slavery and feudalism, but rarely studied the more "primitive" societies. According to Walker Connor (1984), Marx himself did not have a theory of national question, but he developed a strategy to manipulate nationalism into the service of Marxism in some of his political writings such as the famous *Manifesto* (1848) and the *Proclamation of the Polish Question* (1865). It has been pointed out

many times that Marx never defined his concept of "nation," but used the term interchangeably and synonymously with "nationality," "state," "society," and "country." Walker Connor (1984) summarizes the position of traditional Marxism on nationalism as following:

1. The nation and its ideology (nationalism) are part of the superstructure, byproducts of the capitalist era;
2. Nationalism (and perhaps all national distinctions) is therefore an ephemeral phenomenon which will not survive capitalism;
3. Nationalism can be a progressive or reactionary force, the watershed for any society being a point of developed capitalism;
4. Whether progressive or reactionary, nationalism is everywhere a bourgeois ideology pressed into service by that class in order to divert the proletariat from realizing its own class consciousness and interests.
5. The stratagem can not work, for loyalties are determined by economic realities rather than by ethnonational sentiments.
6. Communists may support any movement, nationalist or otherwise, when the movement represents the most progressive alternative;
7. But communists themselves must remain above nationalism, this immunity being their single defining characteristics;
8. An ostensible alignment with national aspirations through the public endorsement of the abstract principle of self-determination is good strategy, but at the nonabstract level, the decision whether or not to support a specific national movement must be made on an individual basis;
9. The ultimate test in determining support or nonsupport is not the relative progressiveness of the specific movement but its relationship to the broader demands of the international movement as a whole.⁹

⁹ See Connor 1984:10-14.

However, Marx did not clarify when and how nationalism and nation would disappear. Thus, the subsequent communist countries produced different versions on this issue. Critiques (Connor 1984) have often pointed out that Marx's belief in the primacy of economic factors led him to undervalue the impact of historic, linguistic, and cultural factors on the national question.

It was Lenin who developed classical Marxism into a national Marxism. Lenin made a significant contribution in merging the colonial and national questions into a Marxist notion of nation. He clearly interpreted the term "self-determination" as the right to independence: "The right of nations to self-determination means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free, political secession from the oppressing nation."¹⁰ Therefore, self-determination became a tool in the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle. Lenin did not clarify what kind of national movements should be supported--that was likely to be left for the individual communist party. According to Lenin, the right to secession and the right to self-determination were important as part of the socialist revolution. The proletariat in all countries were expected to support such struggles for self-determination as it was a struggle against the bourgeoisie.¹¹ Lenin argued that in every nation there are were cultures: that of the bourgeoisie and the reactionary forces, and that of the proletariat.¹² Once a socialist revolution

¹⁰ See Lenin 1951:76.

¹¹ *ibid*, 80-81.

¹² *ibid*, 80.

was achieved and all nations were equal, Lenin believed that the peoples would have no interests in secession but would join the socialist republic voluntarily. Lenin asserted that nationalities problems would last a long time even in a socialist society.¹³ In the transition to communism when the "state withers away," nations and their borders would no longer be important, for socialism would not only bring nationalities close together but also integrate them.¹⁴ Self-determination in a socialist state, according to Lenin, meant the minorities would be given a wide variety of rights in terms of administration, education, and language in the form of territorial autonomy.¹⁵ Within the context of Russia, prior to and after the October Revolution, Lenin promised the right of self-determination, including the right of secession, to all ethnic groups in the former Russian Empire and he committed national equality to those who wished to remain within the state. He urged the majority Russian go beyond equality in treating the minorities in order to atone for past sins.¹⁶

It was Stalin who formulated the Marxist-Leninist theory of national question and became the founder of the Soviet Union. In his famous book *Marxism and the National Question* (1913), Stalin provided the communist world a Marxist definition of nation:

¹³ *ibid*, 87.

¹⁴ *ibid*, 77.

¹⁵ See Lenin, "letter to Shaumyan," May 19, 1914, quoted in Bertrand Wolfe *Three Men Who Made a Revolution*. p. 585.

¹⁶ See Lenin 1969:308-311.

A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, economic life, territory, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture.¹⁷

Stalin agreed with Lenin that, as in any other nation, the minority peoples had the right to secede with self-determination. However, he asserted that the demand for secession in a socialist country was "counter-revolutionary" in the interests of the masses after a socialist revolution.¹⁸ His version of self-determination put an emphasis on territorial rather than a cultural autonomy,¹⁹ and, on development rather than freedom: "The national problem... can be solved only by drawing the backward nations and peoples into the common stream of a higher culture."²⁰ By "higher culture" Stalin possibly meant Russian culture. Stalin attacked both right and left views: the rightists who were susceptible to local nationalist influences and the leftists who refused to integrate the bourgeois-democratic elements into state institutions.²¹ National development would be impeded by the economic backwardness of national areas, the weakness of local proletariat, lack of Marxist literature in native languages, weakness of party education work, and survival of nationalist traditions.²² Thus, it was vital to train communist cadres among minorities, to strengthen education work, and to

¹⁷ See Stalin 1934:8.

¹⁸ *ibid*, 79-80.

¹⁹ *ibid*, 33.

²⁰ *ibid*, 40.

²¹ *ibid*, 179.

²² *ibid*, 142.

enhance the studies of minorities.²³ The Soviet Union had to make itself comprehensible to local peoples by taking into account of local customs and national peculiarities, when dealing with the minorities who had not yet reached the stage of industrial capitalism.²⁴ Stalin concluded:

"Proletarian culture does not cancel out national culture, but lends it content. National culture, on the other hand, does not cancel proletarian culture, but lends it form."²⁵

Stalin assumed that the Soviet nationalities would take a process of assimilation along with the development of a proletarian culture.²⁶ He viewed the minorities in the former Russia Empire as being doubly oppressed by the capitalists as they were toiling masses and by Russian chauvinists as they were minorities.²⁷ He urged going beyond legal equality in treating the Soviet minorities in order to amend their grievances caused by czarist oppression.²⁸

Based on Stalin's definition of nation, Soviet federalism was established as the Soviet Union. The "self-determination" theory was developed into a policy of "regional autonomy," which was implemented in minority areas. The Soviets defined the term **nation** as a synonym for the term **people**. In the Soviet Union (Gerhard

²³ See Stalin 1934:116.

²⁴ *ibid*, 83.

²⁵ *ibid*, 209.

²⁶ *ibid*, 211.

²⁷ *ibid*, 185.

²⁸ *ibid*, 104.

Simon 1991:14), the minimum number of people necessary to form a nation is 80,000 to 100,000. All ethnic groups, who are considered nations, were entitled to establish the Union Republics and/or Autonomous Republics. The Soviet system took the form of a union which, nominally at least, recognized the independent status of the participating member units and even accorded them the right of secession and the right to self-determination. Nationalities are those ethnic groups who are at a lower stage of development and thus only lend their names to Autonomous Regions and Territories or have none of their own administrative areas. The terms "tribe" and "clan" are used to refer to those "primitive" ethnic groups.

3. The Ethnic Policy of the Chinese Communist Government (CCG)

The early Chinese communist view of national question during the 1920s and 1930s used a Soviet model of self-determination. In contrast to the assimilation policy of the nationalist (KMT) government, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) declared:

The Soviet Government of China recognizes the right of self-determination of the national minorities in China, their right to complete separation from China, and to the formation of an independent state for each national minority.... The Soviet regime of China will do its most to help the national minorities in liberating themselves from the yoke of imperialists, the KMT militarists, tusi, the princes, lamas, and others, and in achieving complete freedom and autonomy. The Soviet regime must encourage the development of the national cultures and of the respective languages of these peoples.²⁹

²⁹ See "Constitution of the Chinese Soviet Republic," November 7, 1931 in Brandt et al. (eds), *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*. 220-221.

This CCP's ethnic policy showed the CCP's effort to apply the Marxist-Leninist theory to solve China's national question. It also served in winning support from minorities against the nationalist regime. Nevertheless, after the Sino-Japanese War (1931-1945) occurred, in order to enter into an alliance with the nationalist government and to gain support from the majority Han, Mao Zedong, the CCP Chairman, began to advocate self-determination as well as Chinese nationalism. "Minorities must be allowed to have equal rights with the Han. Under the principle of common struggle against Japan, they have the right to control their own affairs, and at the same time, unite with the Han people to build a unified country."³⁰ The CCP's commitment to self-determination remained silent mostly in its ethnic policy and somewhat helped the CCP's development and military victory in the western minority areas during the wars. However, before 1949, the CCP had no chance to formulate and pursue its ethnic policy, except for a few individual cases. This was due to the fact that the CCP came to power mainly from the eastern areas, where the vast majority Hans were concentrated.

In 1949, after twenty-two years of bloody wars, the CCP finally defeated the nationalist government and established the People's Republic of China (PRC). China's Communist Government (CCG) now controls the territory of Imperial China, except for Taiwan and the Outer Mongolia.³¹ In modern Chinese terminology,

³⁰ See Mao Zedong, *Collected Works*, 5-6:173.

³¹ Taiwan has been occupied by the exiled nationalist government since 1949, and the Outer Mongol has been independent since 1913.

ethnic minorities are all referred to as "minority nationalities" (*shaoshu minzu*). The term "liberation" is used to refer to the time of the establishment of the PRC in 1949. The minorities constituted only 6 percent of the whole population in China (1950), but "minzu wenti" (ethnic issue) has occupied a very important role in the CCG's policy making for strategic, economic, and political reasons.

Strategic considerations are due to the fact that minority nationalities mostly live on the frontiers of China. In many cases, current frontiers divide a minority into two and even more states. In southwestern Yunnan province, for example, there are 14 cross-border minorities, and the minorities constitute 20 percent of the provincial population (You Zhong 1985:231). The Dais live in China, as well as in Laos, Vietnam, Burma, and Thailand. Mongols dwell in North China, but also in Russia and the Mongol People's Republic. Moinbas are scattered throughout Tibet and India. The Sino-Soviet and Sino-India border disputes bear witness to the high border controversies in these areas. The commitments of these minorities have direct impacts on the defence of China's frontiers and national unity.

Economic consideration must deal with the land and its resources. They form only 6 percent of China's population (1950), but the minorities occupy 60 percent of China's land. Although many minority areas consist of inhospitable mountainous or desert areas, considerable portions of the 60 percent can absorb enormous numbers of emigrants from overpopulated Han areas. China's resources are mostly concentrated in minority regions. The minority areas are

rich in resources as far as forestland, mineral deposits, and animal husbandry are concerned. For instance, the minority areas account for an estimated 40 percent of the national coal deposits and 52 percent of the national water resources. China's key water power projects and five leading livestock centres are located in the minority areas (QACNM, 6). The minority areas account for about half of China's timber reserves. China's modernization has heavily relied on the utilization of the natural resources in the minority areas. For example, the timber supplies of minority areas' forests have been on a rapid increase as shown in the following figures: 2.33 million cubic metres for 1952; 6.45 million cubic metres for 1957; 8.58 million cubic metres for 1965; 15.9 million cubic metres for 1979; 16.19 million cubic metres for 1980 (QACNM, 111).

Politically the CCG must incorporate all minorities within Imperial China into the PRC. Moreover, the CCG needs a stable domestic political situation to undertake modernization in the form of socialism in all of China, including the minority areas.

Nevertheless, after the founding of the PRC, the CCG rejected explicitly self-determination and secession and, instead, decreed ethnic equality and regional autonomy as its fundamental ethnic policy for the minorities in China. In 1956, Chang Chih-i, a high Chinese Communist official with expertise on national question, defended the Chinese broken promise of self-determination as orthodox Marxism: "Marxists have never regarded the demand for the right to national self-determination as an invariable thing; generally it has been regarded as a factor in the struggle for

democracy and socialism." After citing Lenin and Stalin to this effect, he concluded:

The principal aim of Marxist-Leninists in insisting on the necessity of recognizing the right of national self-determination is that of opposing imperialism by seeking to make allies of the oppressed nationalities in the socialist revolution of international proletariat; it is clearly not their aim to advocate indiscriminately the separation of each nation nor to urge the establishment of a great number of small nation-states. On the contrary, while supporting the right to national self-determination, Marxist-Leninists have constantly stressed the question of whether or not a special nationality, depending on the actual circumstances of time and place and the interests of the revolution, ought to be separate: only then can the question of its independence be decided.³²

He explicitly made clear that secession was not supported if the time was postrevolutionary and if the place was the territory of a multinational state:

With each nationality in the country having achieved liberation, with the system of nationalities oppression basically abolished, and with the nationalities of our country having already entered the era of nationalities equality, can "national liberation" still be regarded as the task of each national minority? Of course, it cannot. Since the system of nationalities oppression no longer exists, the aim of national liberation has been already achieved ... This concept must be made clear absolutely for otherwise individual reactionary elements within some nationalities might take advantage of it.³³

The 1957 speech of Premier Zhou Enlai further responded to the question dealing with the broken promise of secession:

³² See Chang Chih-i, "A discussion of the national question in the Chinese revolution and of actual nationalities policy" in Moseley (trans). *The Party and the National Question in China*. 70.

³³ *ibid*, 58.

China finds itself in various historical circumstances. Although in old China, there was the reactionary rule of first the warlords and later the KMT, who oppressed the working people and the fraternal nationalities, the whole country was one that suffered imperialist aggression, one that had been a semi-colony, or in some areas, a colony. We were liberated under these situations. The revolution developed differently from that of the Soviet Union. We did not win political power by staging uprisings in big cities or in the industrially developed areas first; instead, we established revolutionary base areas mainly in the countryside and won liberation after 22 years of revolutionary wars.... In short, the Chinese as a whole has long been a nation suffering external imperialist oppression; our various nationalities have shared weal and woe and cemented a militant friendship in the revolutionary wars, completing in the liberation of this big family of nationalities. The links among ourselves and our relations with the outside world do not require us to adopt the policy as was followed by Russia at the time of October Revolution, which laid emphasis on self-determination and at the same time allowed the secession of nationalities.

History has provided us with conditions for national co-operation while the development of our revolutionary movement has also provided us with the basis for such co-operation. So, since liberation, we have adopted this system of national regional autonomy suitable to Chinese conditions and favourable to national co-operation. We do not lay emphasis on the secession of nationalities. If we do now, imperialism will take advantage of this.³⁴

Therefore, the CCG adopted a policy of denying the autonomous governments the right of self-determination and the right of secession in the interests of the state. It can justify the policy as well since the population of China's minorities is very small and the minority areas have been ethnically diluted through the historical resettlements of Han.

³⁴ See Zhou Enlai, "Some questions on policy toward nationalities," in *Peking Review* March 3, 1980.

The CCG's ethnic policy is officially committed to the three principles of the Marxist-Leninist theory of national question: 1) the legal equality of nationalities; 2) self-determination, which was developed as "regional autonomy" by the Soviet Union; and 3) a classification of the production modes of nationalities in Marxist category of social evolution. The theory of this policy is summed up in Stalin's word, "National in form, Socialist in content." This policy is based mainly on the experience of the Soviet Union, but modified according to Chinese situations.

The policy of ethnic equality and regional autonomy was laid out in the first laws of the PRC: the 1949 Common Programme, the 1952 General Programme for Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities, and the 1954 Constitution. Regional autonomy in China means that the minorities are permitted to establish their own governments and exercise normal governmental powers and functions in conjunction with the total leadership of the CCP and the CCG. Unlike the Soviet Union, which nominally recognized the right of self-determination and the right of secession, the CCG stresses that all territories of the national minorities are integral parts of China.

The 1949 Common Programme was produced as a provisional constitution for the PRC, by the First Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which included members of the Mongol, Hui, Tibetan, Uyгур, Yi, Bai, Miao, Man, Li, Korean, Gaoshan, and Uzbek minorities (ZSM, 12). It stipulated:

Article 50. All nationalities within the boundaries of the PRC are equal. They shall establish unity and mutual aid among themselves, and shall oppose imperialism and public enemies in their midst so that the PRC will become a big fraternal and co-operative family comprising all its nationalities. Greater nationalism and local nationalism shall be opposed. Actions involving discrimination, oppression and splitting the unity of the various nationalities shall be prohibited.

Article 51. Regional autonomy shall be exercised in areas where national minorities are concentrated, and various kinds of autonomous organs for the various nationalities shall be set up according to the size of the respective populations and regions. In places where different nationalities live together and in the autonomous areas of the national minorities, the various nationalities shall each have an appropriate number of representatives in the local organs of state power.

.....

Article 53. All national minorities shall have freedom to develop their spoken and written languages, to preserve or reform their traditions, customs, and religious beliefs. The people's government shall assist the broad masses of all minorities to develop their political, economic, cultural, and educational construction work.³⁵

Declaring all nationalities of the PRC to be equal, the 1949 Common Programme affirmed the indivisibility of their territories from China. "Greater nationalism" (*da minzu zhuyi*) and "local nationalism" (*difang minzu zhuyi*) were both opposed.³⁶ The policy of regional autonomy was provided for areas where minorities were concentrated, with the level of the autonomous organs involved to

³⁵ The text can be found in *Policy Towards Nationalities of the People's Republic of China*. 1953:1-2.

³⁶ The Chinese term "greater nationalism" (*da minzu zhuyi*) refers to the discrimination of a nationality against some other smaller nationalities. Within the social context of China, it mostly refers to Han chauvinism, while local nationalism (*difang minzu zhuyi*) often implies to the nationalism of the minorities against the majority Han.

depend on the population and size of a given region. Minorities were guaranteed representatives on government proportional to their percentage of the population in the area involved. Minorities were guaranteed the freedom to develop languages and to preserve and reform their customs, habits, and religious beliefs as well. All the self-governments were under the leadership of the CCG. The CCG was charged with the task of helping the minorities develop their political, economic, cultural, and educational work.

Accordingly, in 1951, the CCG issued a directive ordering the abolishment of terms of address, placenames, inscriptions on stone tablets and scrolls demeaning to minorities.³⁷

The 1952 Programme for Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities in the PRC was a formulation of the ethnic policy in the Common Programme.³⁸ The programme stipulated that self-governments are established in areas inhabited by: 1) one minority; (e.g., a Miao Autonomous County might be set up in a predominantly Miao area.) or 2) one large minority, including the areas inhabited by other minorities with very small populations who shall enjoy regional autonomy; (e.g., a Yi Autonomous County might exist under the jurisdiction of a Miao Autonomous Prefecture) or 3) several separate minorities. (e.g., a Yi-Yao Autonomous County might exist under the jurisdiction of a Yi Autonomous Prefecture, or Miao Autonomous County under a Miao-Yao Autonomous Prefecture). Self-

³⁷ The text can be seen in *Minzu Zhishi Shouce*. p. 744.

³⁸ The text can be found in *Policy Towards Nationalities of the PRC*. pp. 1-13.

governments are established at three administrative levels: 1) region at provincial level, 2) prefecture, and 3) the county where minorities live. Self-governments are formed mainly with personnel from the majority ethnic groups, with a proper representation from the other nationalities in the area. Self-governments in autonomous regions use one or several languages commonly used by the minority nationalities in the localities concerned. Self-governments give full consideration to the traditions, customs, and traits of the minorities, enacting specific autonomous regulations and local laws. Self-governments enjoy more financial power than other local governments at the same level.

In 1952, the CCG issued the "Decision Protecting People of All National Minorities Living in Scattered Groups to Enjoy the Right of Equality."³⁹ It stipulated that minorities living in scattered groups have all the rights their majority Han counterparts enjoy. They were guaranteed a greater representation in governments and the right to preserve or change their ways of life, customs, and religious beliefs.

The 1953 Electoral Law further stipulated that each minority nationality living in a compact community would be represented at the local People's Congress.⁴⁰ According to the law, when the total population of a minority nationality living in a compact community or in scattered groups represents less than 10 percent of the total

³⁹ The text can be found in *Policy Towards Nationalities of the PRC*. pp. 19-21.

⁴⁰ The text can be found in *Selected Legal Documents of the PRC*. Wang, Joseph, (ed). 251-272.

population in a locality, the number of inhabitants represented by each deputy from the minority nationality may be less than half that represented by other deputies to the local People's congress. Elections can be held separately or jointly to have minority deputies elected, taking account of the population and the relation between various nationalities in respective localities.⁴¹

The first Constitution of the PRC, which was adopted by the National People's Congress in 1954, incorporated the ethnic policy in the Common Programme. As stated in the Constitution, the ethnic tasks of the PRC during the transitional period of the 1950s were: to consolidate the unity of the country and the cooperation of the various nationalities in a common effort to rebuild the motherland; to safeguard the right of equality among the various nationalities and practise regional autonomy; to help the national minorities carry out reforms in their economic, political, and cultural development, so that they could all develop into socialism.⁴²

From that time on, all versions of the PRC Constitutions have affirmed the indivisibility of the minority territories from China and guaranteed the policy of ethnic equality and regional autonomy to China's minorities.⁴³ The 1952 Programme for the Implementation

⁴¹ In 1979, a new provision was added to the 1953 Electoral Law. It states that a minority nationality with exceptionally small population "shall have at least one deputy" to the National People's Congress. The text can be found in *China's Minority Nationalities*, Ma Yin. 1989:23.

⁴² See "Constitution of the PRC" (1954 edition) in Wang, Joseph (ed) *Selected Legal Documents of the PRC*. 1-59.

⁴³ See the relevant articles in the constitutions of the PRC in 1954, 1975, 1978, and 1982.

of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities was incorporated into the 1984 Law on Regional Autonomy.⁴⁴

In China's history, the CCG's policy of regional autonomy is the first one which grants minorities legal equalities with the majority Han. It differs significantly from the assimilation policy of the previous nationalist government.

Nevertheless, the implementation of regional autonomy is a formulation of Stalin's statement "national in form, socialist in content." The evolution of the CCG ethnic policy is divided into three periods by Chinese scholars (ZSM, 13-25). The first period covers the years from 1949 to 1956. The second dates roughly from 1957 to 1976, and the third begins in 1977.

The first period of the "democratic reform" was characterized by the CCG's great efforts to integrate minority areas into the socialist state. During this period, the CCG implemented regional autonomy in minority areas with the goal of integrating the state and society. Nationalities Affairs Commissions were set up at all governmental levels. Cadres were instructed to "do good and make friends with the minorities" in order to clear up the distrust of the minorities to the majority Han and the new PRC. Han chauvinism, rather than local nationalism, was regarded as major danger for the unity of the country (ZSM, 15). Missions were sent to make the PRC and its ethnic policy comprehensible to the minorities (ZSM, 14). Ethnic "characteristics" of the minorities got official approval. Minority cadres and indigenous leaders were carefully nurtured and

⁴⁴ See *Minzu Zhishi Shouce*. p. 807.

absorbed into governments at all levels, from central to local. National ethnic survey and language investigations were conducted for identifying minorities and for instituting regional autonomy. More than 30 ethnic groups were recognized as nationalities. Autonomous governments were set up on the basis of "democratic centralism" and the "people's congress" at three levels: region (province), prefecture, and county in minority areas. Those self-governments ruled more than 90 percent of the population of the minorities (ZSM, 16). Minority nationalities were exempt from the marriage law and state tax.⁴⁵ National facilities for minorities were established. Great efforts were made to train minority cadres. Ten institutes (universities) were particularly set up for minority cadre training and ethnic studies (ZSM, 17). Linguistic cultural autonomy was implemented by support for and development of non-Chinese languages. Surveys of the less-developed languages were undertaken. If necessary, a standard dialect was decided or a written script was created. A modern school system that used native languages was established in minority areas. Modern medical and health work was initiated in minority areas. The central government provided a large sum of financial aid to the minority areas to facilitate rehabilitation and development of production (QACNM, 21). A national network of supply and marketing cooperative and state-run trading agencies was also established in minority areas (ZSM, 14-22).

⁴⁵ See *Minzu Zhishi Shouce*. p. 756.

While establishing self-governments, the CCG carried out social programmes, especially "land reform," in minority areas during the transitional period. Instead of instigating the peasants from the lowest level to carry out the struggle against landlords, as happened in most parts of China, a moderate method was adopted. Land reform was accomplished in minority areas by 1956 (ZSM, 23).

The implementation of the PRC ethnic policy in the first period was generally successful. Minority areas were integrated into the PRC through the implementation of regional autonomy. Racial discrimination and oppression were, ostensibly at least, reduced or eliminated. The governmental report made by Liu Ke-ping, Vice-Chairman of China's Nationalities Affairs Commission, in 1951 showed the satisfaction of the CCG in optimism: there were visible changes in the ethnic relations between the minorities and Han, and disputes among the minorities themselves were relatively reduced. Fairly good progress in the fields of economy, culture, education, and health was also achieved.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the implementation of regional autonomy also produced two problems. One was that while minority leaders nominally held high positions in self-governments, power remained in the hands of the Chinese. All actual power of the local government, which is nominally run by the people's congress and the people's council, is kept in the hands of the local Party committees. These committees are under the solid control of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee of the CCP. No decision

⁴⁶ See Liu Ke-ping, Vice-Chairman of the national Nationality Affairs Commission, "Three years of successful work among China's nationalities," in *Policy towards Nationalities of the PRC*. 59-70.

of the local government can be made without fully complying with the interests and desires of the Party. The second problem was that a new tension or discrimination between the Han and minorities began to emerge. While the minority areas forcedly adopted social reform, traditional socio-economic structures of minorities became the target of the CCG.

The second period, dating roughly from 1957 to 1976, was the opposite of the preceding period. This period of socialist reform was characterized by a radical assimilation of the minorities. The CCG aimed to destroy socio-ethnic differences and bring minorities into a homogeneous socialist China with a revolution from above. The regional autonomy policy was replaced by a more-or-less obvious assimilation strategy during the period of radicalization. In 1957 and just following the land reform, the CCG started to abolish the traditional minority socio-economic systems by enforcing state-socialist industrialization and "people's commune" (land collectivization) in minority regions. Private economy was eliminated. Local nationalism was repudiated and suppressed as an attempt to create "splits" or "independent kingdoms" (ZSM 22-23). The carefully nurtured minority elites were eliminated from power. During the Great Leap Forward (1958-1959),⁴⁷ a campaign developed that called for the assimilation of the minorities in order to expedite industrialization (ZSM, 23). During the later Cultural

⁴⁷ Great Leap Forward (1958-1959) was a radical massive social movement conducted by the CCG to achieve rapid development of industry and agriculture in China.

Revolution (1966-1976),⁴⁸ under the pretext that "under socialism there are no such things as nationalities," all nationality schools, institutes, and ethnic facilities, were shut down. Ethnic identification ceased. Under the banner of intensified class struggle, minority elites and minority cadres were attacked and persecuted. For example, according to Chinese sources, in the 1960s "New Inner Mongolian Party" case in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, more than 346,000 Mongolians were accused of "making independent state" and more than 16,000 of them were persecuted to death (QACNM, 24). The CCG sliced huge parts of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region to other provinces in order to stabilize the power of the central government.⁴⁹ Traditional life-styles of the minorities were labelled as "four olds" (old ideas, old cultures, old customs, and old habits). Radical Red Guards smashed temples and made every attempt to destroy the traditional aspects of life and religion of the minorities as they did in other parts of China. Minority languages were vilified as "backward" or "useless," and linguistic autonomy was suspended (Ma Yin 1989:31). Massive numbers of Hans were sent to minority areas to achieve industrialization and assimilation.⁵⁰ The radical assimilation of socialism in China

⁴⁸ Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) was a massive social movement conducted by Mao Zedong, the Chairman of the CCP, and his radical followers Red Guards, with the aim of building a new proletarian culture by destroying all old cultures.

⁴⁹ Those areas were returned to the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in the 1980s when China reaffirmed its policy of regional autonomy. See *Zhongguo Shaoshu Minzu*, p. 23.

⁵⁰ The issue of Han migration into minority areas will be discussed in Chapter Three.

made a total social breakthrough in the minority areas. Minority members were put under governmental control that made organized resistance rarely possible and, more importantly, the institutional sinicization unavoidable. Minority areas forcedly adopted the state-socialist economy, and traditional minority socio-economic structures were ruined. Minority cultures were mostly wrecked. Many members of the minorities, especially the young, were sinicized. Chinese language became the lingua franca of all China. The ethno-geographic distribution tremendously changed: minorities often became minorities in their concentrated areas after the settlements of the enormous Han migrations. For example, in 1982 the Mongols themselves only formed less 10 percent of the total population in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.⁵¹ In the Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan Province, the Hans formed less 1 percent of the population in 1949, but 29 percent in 1982 (Liu Long 1990:141). The radical policy actually created havoc in minority areas. Han chauvinism developed with the increasing ethno-social differences between the Han and the minority groups. Hundreds of thousands of minority members escaped across the borders.⁵² The tension between the minorities and Han increased and demands for secession remained in a few minorities such as the Uygur. Armed

⁵¹ See *Zuixin Shiyong Zhongguo Ditu*, p. 25.

⁵² During the Cultural Revolution, minority members in China's frontier areas largely fled to countries such as Burma, India, the Soviet Union, and the Mongolian People's Republic.

resistance occurred in the Yi, Hui, Tibetan, and Turkic groups.⁵³

The third period, starting from 1977, is characterized by a liberalization of the preceding radical assimilation policy. After the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping came to power and began to pursue his reform with an ambiguous commitment to Marxism. Deng's policy of market economy and political decentralization has led to a liberal ethnic policy towards the minorities. The Constitution of 1982 and the Law on Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities of 1984 reaffirm the equality of nationalities, the indivisibility of the minority territories from China, and regional linguistic cultural autonomy. Minority members have been put in governmental positions again. Schools and institutes for minority cadre training and ethnic studies have been restored. Private and market economy is allowed in minority areas as in other parts of China, with the abolishment of the "People's Commune" in the 1980s. Linguistic cultural autonomy is again encouraged in the minority areas. Large sums for investment have been sent to minority areas, and large numbers of professionals have been sent to help minorities develop modernization (ZSM, 23). This liberal policy has achieved an explicit success in terms of regional autonomy and development of

⁵³ The Yi rebellion occurred in the Liangshang region of the southwestern Sichuan province in 1958 when the CCG abolished the traditional Yi slavery system. The social programme in Tibet caused the rebellion of Tibetan nobles in 1959, and the Dalai Lama has fled to India since then. Among the rebellions of the Muslim Huis in West China, the largest one occurred in the Sadian area of the southwestern Yunnan province in 1975 with the death of thousands of Huis when the authorities attempted to abolish the Huis' religious customs. The demand for secession has remained in the Uygurs, and their exiled government of the Eastern Turkic Republic has been in Turkey since 1947.

production. Industry and living standards in minority areas have developed dramatically (Ma Yin 1989:37). Today total output value for industry and agriculture in minority regions has increased 23.5 times over the 1949 figure. Industry accounts for 66.3 percent of the total value, up from 14.8 in 1949.⁵⁴ However, ethnic problems still remain. The CCG still maintains its supreme power and keeps solid control of the self-governments. The autonomous governments continue to exercise their functions and power only within the limits prescribed by the Party. The increasing socio-economic differences between the Han and minorities along with economic development have contributed to tension between the Han and minorities. The Han have been the dominant force in minority areas during modernization while the minorities have become subordinate social classes. The demands for secession remain in several ethnic groups, such as the Uyгур. Regardless, due to the exclusive Han dominance in terms of population and power, China's minorities are in a process of accommodation along with China's development.

In sum, based on Marxist-Leninist national theory, the CCG has developed a regional autonomy policy to solve the minority problem of China. This policy serves to put China's minorities under the control of the CCG and to bring China's minorities into a socialist China. Regional autonomy accords the minorities some degree of freedom in matters of language, economy, culture, education, custom, and religion. The CCG has used the autonomous governments

⁵⁴ See "China: a united country of 56 ethnic groups," in *China Today*, (1994) 12:7.

to push forward, step by step, the social programmes in minority regions. At the first stage of "democratic reform" (1949-1957), the CCG pursued a pluralistic policy towards the minorities with the implementation of regional autonomy, in order to incorporate all the minorities within Imperial China into the new PRC. Minority elites were absorbed into self-government. The ethnic traits of the minorities got approval and a linguistic regional autonomy was guaranteed. During the second stage of the "socialist revolution" (1957-1978), the CCG practised a radical assimilation policy towards the minorities with the utopian aim of destroying the ethno-social differences by means of industrialization and social revolution from above. That policy brought all minorities into a state-socialist economy with the destruction of traditional minority socio-economic societies, but it failed either to provide a decent material life for the minorities as promised, or to destroy the ethnic differences as expected. During the third period of "economic reform" since the 1980s, the CCG has conducted an accommodation policy for the minorities in China. The CCG has begun to recognize the long-term existence of socio-ethnic differences. Minority leaders have returned to politics. The ethnic traits of the minorities have regained approval and regional autonomy has been reaffirmed. Economic development and decentralization have become mainstream. However, the minorities have been incorporated into China. The minorities have accepted Chinese as a language for modernization. The minorities have been infiltrated and surrounded by the majority Han migrants sent by the CCG. The minorities have

been pushed into a marginal position during development, as they lack the skills possessed by the majority Han. Ethnic consciousness and ethnic differences may remain for a long time with different embodiments, but sinicization has become inevitable for the minorities. Now the CCG calls for a Chinese nationalism rather than Marxism after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist Camp in East Europe. Starting from "National in form, Socialist in content," the CCG has achieved a "Socialism in form, Sinicization in content" in China.

CHAPTER TWO

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION IN THE PRC

1. The Development of Ethnic Identification

After the founding of the PRC in 1949, the CCG proclaimed ethnic equality and regional autonomy as the principles of its ethnic policy for the minorities in China. The implementation of regional autonomy in minority areas immediately became an urgent task for the CCG to integrate minority areas into the new PRC. Along with the national military victory in 1949, the CCG had set up a military control system all over mainland China. At the time of liberation, local People's Conferences were also established under the supervision of the relevant military committee. These conferences, which included "people of all strata," were intended as a transition stage. When the situation became stabilized, the conferences would be replaced by People's Congresses chosen through general elections. Minority areas had historically been out of the effective control of Chinese regimes. The remaining anti-communist forces had fled there (Dreyer 1976:98). Regional autonomy would enable the CCG to institute effective political control over minority areas, to destroy the anti-communist forces, and to pursue the subsequent social programmes in minority areas.

The CCG began to recognize the ethnic complexity in China after the founding of the PRC. Coming to power mainly from East China, where the majority Han were concentrated, the CCG only had very limited knowledge of several well-acknowledged minorities, such as Hui and Yi. On the other hand, the minorities also had serious difficulties understanding and trusting the new CCG, since they had been under the discriminating rules of Chinese regimes for centuries. During 1950-1952, the CCG sent four missions to the minority areas of the Southwest, Northwest, Central South and Southeast, and Northeast and Inner Mongolia areas (ZSM, 14). The missions consisted of scholars, officials, medical teams and entertainment groups. The task of the missions was to investigate ethnic situations and to make the new CCG and its ethnic policy of ethnic equality and regional autonomy comprehensible to the minorities. The mission to the Northwest, for example, met 300 headmen and convened 66 discussion forums with a total attendance of 4,080 delegates of different ethnic groups. Forty-five mass meetings were held with a total attendance of 280,000. Its Peking Opera Corps performed 27 times to audiences over 150,000, and 105 cinema shows were seen by more than 250,000 people. One in 80 of the minorities there was reportedly contacted by the mission.⁵⁵ In addition, minority delegations were organized to visit Beijing and urban centres. From 1949 to 1964, the CCG sent 13 missions in total to minority areas, while 268 minority delegations including approximately 10,000 people visited Beijing and other big cities

⁵⁵ See *Current Background*, no. 109. p. 5.

(ZSM, 14). From the reports of these missions and delegations, the CCG realized that China's ethnic situations were much more complex than they previously understood. One major issue from the reports concerned the complicated names of China's ethnic groups. Many minorities once had had to conceal their ethnic identities to avoid discrimination by Han chauvinism in preceding regimes. Encouraged by the CCG's policy of ethnic equality and regional autonomy, they now openly stated their ethnic identities and proposed names for themselves to the CCG for recognition. The 1951 directive, which ended the application of derogatory names to minorities, brought about far-reaching changes in minority names. By 1953 more than 400 names of ethnic groups were submitted to the CCG for recognition as separate minorities. Southwest China was the most ethnically complicated area, where Yunnan province reported more than 260 ethnic groups, and Guizhou province claimed more than 80 minorities (QACNM, 143). The following 1953 Census Survey reported more than 400 names of ethnic groups, since the CCG agreed to the claims of all the ethnic groups in order to appease minorities (Shi Lianzhu 1989:18). The majority of the reported ethnic groups were unknown by the CCG. Questions arose as to whether there really were that many minorities in China and who they were. Preliminary studies revealed that some minorities were sub-divisions of one and the same minority; other names referred to various localities inhabited by the same ethnic group; and some names were only different Chinese translations.

The CCG therefore decided to undertake ethnic identification for implementing regional autonomy as well as pursuing social programmes in minority areas. Without knowing China's ethnic composition and geographic distribution, the CCG could not implement regional autonomy in minority areas. Moreover, the CCG could not pursue social programmes in minority areas without comprehensive information on all the minorities in China. Shortly after the founding of the PRC, the CCG began to undertake the work of ethnic identification. The ethnic identification project consisted of both ethnic survey and ethnic identification.

2. Survey of Ethnic Identification

In 1953, the CCG began to conduct a national ethnic survey for ethnic identification (Fei Xiaotong 1981:61). The ethnic survey included items of languages, population, place of inhabitation, ways and customs, economic and cultural life, attitudes and beliefs, and so on. It was a western scientific survey of ethnicity in China. However, the task of the national ethnic survey was more than a scientific survey. As the Nationalities Affairs Commission China claimed:

the social and economic structure, the social classes and the customs and traditions of the national nationalities of China will be clearly understood. This will serve as a guide in future ethnic work and will provide concrete and rich data for writing the history of various nationalities and the ancient history of mankind since the days of the primitive commune.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ See *Survey of China Mainland Press*, no. 1316. pp. 26-27.

According to Chinese information (Huang Guangxue 1995:113), thousands of scholars and officials were employed in the survey. They were equipped with cameras, tape recorders, and film equipment. The ethnic survey was undertaken at three governmental levels: national, provincial, and local. The Nationalities Affairs Commission (NAC) China oversaw the national survey and took the surveys in the ethnically most complicated areas with an expert team of about 200 members, which included linguists, historians, anthropologists, and other specialists. In addition, all the provinces such as Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangxi, Sichuan, Hunan, Hubei, Qinghai, Gangsu, Guangdong, Inner Mongol, and Tibet, where minorities were concentrated, created their own survey teams to conduct ethnic surveys in their respective regions. Local governments were all required to collect ethnic data in their respective areas and to cooperate with the work of the national and provincial survey teams.

The national ethnic survey was undertaken in China with full governmental support during the period of 1953-1965. It may be theoretically divided into three periods. The first period during the early 1950s served directly ethnic identification. According to Shi Lianzhu (1989:18), in 1953, the national NAC sent one team to identify the She group in the southern provinces of Zhejiang and Fujian, and another team to examine the Daur in Northeast China. In 1954, the national NAC sent a huge team to identify the reported 260-odd ethnic groups in the southwestern Yunnan province. In 1955, the national NAC sent a team to identify the 80-odd groups in the

southwestern Guizhou province, and another team for the She and Tan groups in the southeastern Guangdong province. In 1956, the NAC China sent a team to identify the Tu people in the central Hunan province. For instance, the Yunnan province, with most of China's minority groups, began its ethnic survey as early as 1952 under the guidance of a Soviet linguist and the experts from the Institute of Languages in Beijing's China Academy of Sciences (Zhou Yu 1991:93). In 1954, in order to identify its reported 260-odd ethnic groups, the provincial NAC made up a survey team of several hundred members to cooperate with a survey team of several hundred members from Beijing. In 1956, when the national NAC sent a 500-member team to undertake a linguistic survey on the ethnic groups in Yunnan, the Yunnan NAC recruited about 300 members to conduct a nine-month language survey among 10 major minorities with the team from Beijing. The local governments of the Yunnan province fully cooperated by providing translators and other facilities for the survey teams both from Beijing and the province.

The second period of the survey during the late of the 1950s was focused on the implementation of linguistic cultural regional autonomy. Linguistic issue occupied an important role in the ethnic survey. Following Stalin's definition of nation, the CCG took language as a key issue of ethnicity. Great efforts were made at collecting and analyzing the linguistic data of the minorities during the ethnic survey. In Yunnan province, for example, the ethnic survey began from the 1952 linguistic survey and developed largely with the 1958 linguistic reform project for minorities

(Huang Guangxue 1995:353). After the first recognition of the 38 distinct and large minorities in 1954, the national ethnic survey primarily worked for the implementation of linguistic regional autonomy in minority areas. In 1955, the national NAC organized a survey team, which included more than 700 linguists and other experts, to make a linguistic survey of the minorities living in 16 provinces and regions of the country (ZSM, 17). In addition to collecting linguistic data of the minorities, the survey team worked for minority language reform by creating written scripts for minorities and assisting in the implementation of linguistic cultural autonomy in minority areas. The survey teams devised a total of 13 written languages and reformed six written scripts for the minorities (QACNM, 64). Moreover, the survey team also worked as governmental advisors to design and implement the policy of linguistic cultural autonomy. Due to the urgent demand of ethnic identification and the grave shortage of linguists,⁵⁷ linguistic data were somewhat tentative. The CCG often had to conduct the ethnic identification of a group with reference to other issues such as history or common culture rather than language, if the linguistic analysis on the ethnic group was insufficient. The linguistic survey eventually collected enormous ethnographic data on minorities.

⁵⁷ Except for a few linguists, Chinese scholars generally were not able to speak the languages of the ethnic groups they surveyed, but they collected the linguistic data of the minorities with the help of translators provided by the local governments.

The third period of the survey, roughly dating from the late 1950s to the middle of the 1960s, worked for social programmes in minority areas. In 1956, the NAC China incorporated the preceding linguistic survey into an eight-year (1956-1964) national project called "The Survey on the Social History of China's Minorities" to meet the demands of the social programmes occurring in minority areas (Huang Guangxue 1995:113). More than 200 experts were recruited to carry out this project, including ethnologists, historians, linguists, geographers, economists and archaeologists from the China Academy of Sciences, the Central Nationalities Institute and various universities throughout China. This project originally focused on eight areas (Inner Mongol, Xinjiang, Sichuan, Tibet, Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangdong, and Guangxi), where minorities were concentrated. In 1958, thousands of scholars and ethnic cadres were eventually employed by the project, while it expanded to eight other provinces and regions (Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia, Liaoning, Jining, Hailongjiang, Hunan, and Fujian). As the project title indicated, the giant work of the survey was to classify the socio-economic systems of the minorities with a Marxist category of the material stages of social progress (derived from Morgan and Engles and refined by Lenin and Stalin). The data worked directly for the policymaking of the "democratic reform," and "socialist revolution" pursued in minority areas at that time. This project was finished in 1965 along with the basic accomplishment of ethnic identification.

The lack of written documents for most of China's ethnic groups made the survey data tentative in many circumstances. Most ethnic groups in China did not have their own written scripts and historical records. Ancient Chinese documents contained rich but ambiguous accounts of minorities, as preceding Chinese regimes paid little attention to defining the minority ethnic groups. Many ethnic groups were eventually known by the outside for the first time because of the ethnic survey. The survey data became the only reliable source on ethnic groups in Mainland China. The unsolved origins of many ethnic groups become an academic problem as well as a difficult issue for ethnic identification.

The national ethnic survey has provided enormous data on all ethnic groups in Mainland China, except several tiny groups in the border areas of Sino-India.⁵⁸ The socio-cultures of China's ethnic groups were well documented by the ethnic survey. Many minorities were known for the first time as a result of the ethnic survey. These ethnic documents have become unique now, as the minority cultures have largely vanished after 45 years of socialist experiments. The survey data enabled the CCG to conduct ethnic identification, to implement regional autonomy, and to pursue the subsequent social programmes in minority areas.

The ethnic survey eventually provided the CCG with a very complicated ethnic mosaic with certain characteristics:

⁵⁸ Several tiny ethnic groups in the borders of India-Tibet were not covered by the ethnic survey, as Chinese scholars then had no access to these areas. See Chen Jinyuan 1990:6.

1) China's ethnic integration has taken place through a long history of complex changes. China has been a multi-national country since the Qin dynasty in 221 B.C. and China's ethnic groups have undergone a complicated process of growth and decline, settlement, migration and integration. Many once-flourishing ethnic groups, such as the Hun and the Khitan, have completely vanished. The tangled origins of China's ethnic groups remain a research problem as well as a tough issue for ethnic identification (Fei Xiaotong 1981:63). Some presently separated ethnic groups might come from one single ancient people, while one minority, like Yi, were likely to be merged from several ancient ethnic groups.

2) China's ethno-geographic distribution follows a pattern of "wide dispersion, small concentration" with a considerable number of them living in cities and towns (ZSM, 3). The minorities are mostly concentrated in West China, living mostly in highlands, pastoral or forest regions in border areas, while the majority Han are mostly concentrated in East China. Nevertheless, repeated migrations of minority peoples, large-scale forced Han migration into frontier regions and the change of China's dynasties brought about a situation in which various ethnic groups lived in mixed groups or compact communities in most circumstances. Even those areas where a certain minority people lived in compact communities might contain large numbers of other ethnic groups. There were cases in which different minorities dwelt together in a ladder-like distribution arrangement. In Southwest China, for example, the Hans usually lived in towns, cities and plains. The Zhuangs, Bais, and

Dais resided on the plains, and the other minorities dwelt on the hillsides at various levels (QACNM, 2). In Xishuangbanna, a subtropic region of Southwest China, the Dais for the most part inhabited the plain areas, while the other minorities of the Hani, Blang, Jino, Lahu, Miao, Yao, and Va lived in the hills.⁵⁹ Some minorities, such as Manchu and Hui, were divided. Some of their members lived in compact communities in one or several regions, while the rest lived in scattered groups in other parts of China. The majority Han concentrated in the interior and eastern coastal regions, but a great number of Han had lived with other ethnic groups in mixed communities across the country for centuries. In other words, China's minority areas were rarely homogenous.

3) China's linguistic mosaic was very complicated. More than 60 languages were found during the survey (See Table 2). Among the minorities, only the Hui and Manchu spoke Chinese. The other groups spoke their own languages. Twenty-nine ethnic groups dwelling in Central, South, and Southwest China had languages in the Sino-Tibetan language family. Seventeen ethnic groups in North China had languages of the Altaic family. Three ethnic groups in Southwest China had languages in the South Asia Language family. Two groups in Northwest China spoke Indo-European languages. The languages of the minorities in Taiwan belonged to the Indonesian language. The Korean and Jin language could not be classified. In many cases, various minorities spoke each other's languages. For example, the Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Tatars all speak Uygur. Before 1949, there were

⁵⁹ See *Xishuangbanna Daizu Zizhizhou Gaikung*, p. 185.

18 minorities who had their own written scripts. Among them, there were 11 in common use: Mongolian, Xibe, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazak, Dai, Korean, Ozbek, Kirgiz, Tatar, and Russian. Those not in common use were: Yi, Miao, Naxi, Jingpo, Lisu, Lahu, and Va. The Hui, Manchu and She commonly used the Chinese script (QACNM, 62). Some minority scripts are written from the left to the right, some from the right to the left, and some from the top downwards. Some are pictographic or idiographic scripts; others have alphabets or syllabic systems. Some scripts date back to very early times, others have a short history. Some minorities used several written scripts. The Dai, for example, had four scripts (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:395).

With the same script, the Han language (Chinese) has seven dialects which are mutually unintelligible (Ramsey 1987:87): the Northern dialect is spoken in North and Southwest of China, the Wu dialect in the eastern coastal area around Shanghai and Zhejiang, the Gan dialect in the central Jiangxi, the Xiang dialect in the central Hunan. The Hakka (Kejia) dialect is widely found in South China from Sichuan to Taiwan, the Yue (Cantonese) dialect is spoken in the southeastern Guangdong and Guangxi and overseas Chinese communities, and the Min dialect is used in the southern Fujian and coastal areas. Each of the seven dialects in turn consists of several sub-dialects. Except for those of the Northern dialect, the numerous sub-dialects of the other six dialects are mutually unintelligible in most circumstances. Mandarin, one of the Northern sub-dialects but spoken with Peking pronunciation was adopted as China's official language in 1956.

4) The socio-economic styles of China's ethnic groups were different (See Table 3). According to the Chinese scaling of ethnic groups, which was based on a Marxist norm of social evolution (ZSM, 3-5), the socio-economic stage of the majority Han in 1949 was more highly evolved than that of the other minorities. The Han had a well-developed feudal agricultural economy with some elements of capitalism. Sinicized minority members had a similar socio-economy to the advanced Han culture. Minorities who were isolated from external influences remained in a primitive economic state. The Oroqen, Hezhe, and Ewenki in Northeast China had an economy based on primitive fishing and hunting. The Kazak, Kirgiz, Tajik, and some of the Mongol and Tibetan in Northwest China pursued a pastoral life. The Drung, Lhoba, Nu, Lisu, Va, some of the Miao, and Yao in Southwest China practised slash and burn agriculture supplemented by fishing and hunting or gathering. In terms of production mode, in addition to the majority Han, about 30 million of the minorities were under feudal rules, including the Zhuang, Hui, Manchu, Uygur, Tujia, Korean, Bouyei, Bai, Dong, Miao peoples, as well as most of the Mongolians, Lis, and some Tibetans. Four million of the Hani, Tibetan, and Dai were under a "feudal serf system." In some part of Inner Mongolia there was a "feudal pastoral serfdom." Before 1949, a feudal economy was developed among most of the Yi of Southwest China. In the Liangshan Mountains of the southwestern Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, "slavery" was practised among one million of the Yi. In addition, about 600,000 lived in "primitive" societies, in which social classes had not

occurred. The "primitive" ethnic groups included the Drung, Nu, Lisu, Jingpo, Va, and Blang in Southwest, the Oroqen and Ewenki in Northeast China and some of the Yi in the southern Hainan Island.

On August 11, 1956, *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) published an article co-authored by Fei Xiaotong and Lin Yaohua, which reviewed the preliminary national ethnic survey.⁶⁰ The two authors were renowned ethnologists and leaders of the ethnic survey. They reported the problems regarding the ethnic survey:

1) Some Han who had migrated to minority areas and their descendants had retained Han characteristics. But the latter did not know their origins and registered themselves under a name given by other neighbouring peoples. Examples were the Zheyuan group of the southwestern Yunnan and the Dan people of the southeastern Guangdong Province.

2) Different Han groups had migrated to the same minority area at different times. The earlier groups, long cut off from the rest of the Han, had varied from the latter in language and custom, and in some cases, were even discriminated against by the latter group. Thus, the descendants of the earlier groups demanded recognition as separate ethnic minorities. Examples were the Chuangqing of the Guizhou province and the Liuchia of the Guangxi region.

3) Certain minorities were used by Han Chinese rulers to dominate other minorities. The dominated groups refused to accept

⁶⁰ See Fei Xiaotong and Lin Yaohua, "Guanyu shaoshu minzu shibie wenti de yuanjiu" (A study of the problems of ethnic identification of the minorities in China. *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) August 10, 1956.

the oppressor groups as minorities under the new PRC. That was the case of the Tujia people in the central Huan Province.

4) Some minorities had scattered over the course of history, mixed in their compact communities with the Han, and long been influenced by the Han culture. Those groups had changed their languages, discarded many of their national characteristics, and become economically inseparable from the Han. But they were discriminated against by the Han, and still lived in their own communities and regarded themselves as distinct minorities. An example was the She people in Central and Southeast China.

5) Segments of a single ethnic group had broken off and migrated to various regions of China. Though all of them had generally retained the same language, customs, and historical legends, they had various names in their respective places under which they registered with the CCG. The Yao of South China, for example, reported at least 30 names based on their dress, methods of production, customs, and adornments. Other examples were the Buzhuang in the southeastern Guangxi region and the Busha and Bunong in the southwestern Yunnan.

6) Sections of individual peoples distributed in a number of regions had assimilated to their neighbouring peoples. But they still spoke their original languages and were known by the same names. An example was the Xifan people in the southwestern provinces of Sichuan and Yunnan.

7) Segments of ethnic groups which scattered over wide regions had formed many disconnected communities whose language and culture

showed both similarities and large differences. The dispersed groups with the same ethnic origin had been known by the same name among other peoples and considered themselves one nationality. One example was the Miao in Southwest China.

8) Opinions differed about whether some ethnic groups such as the Daur were independent or part of another group.

The Chinese ethnic situations were extremely complicated as far as the elements of ethnic origin, language, custom, economic life, geographic distribution, and common culture were concerned. Some ethnic groups were obviously distinct, but some were very difficult to identify.

Ethnic identification in China eventually came to answer two basic questions: 1) Is the ethnic group a national minority or is it just part of the majority Han? 2) Is it a minority by itself or is it a part of another minority? The two questions actually depend upon another question: What is a nationality in China.

3. The Chinese Concept of Nationality

As mentioned before, Chinese language has never distinguished between peoples, nation and nationality. All those entities are put together into a single modern term *minzu*.⁶¹ The Chinese term *minzu* is applied to all ethnic groups in various stages of development in

⁶¹ See Han Jinchun and Li Yifu "Hanwen 'minzu' yici de chuxian jiqi zaoqi shiyong qingkuang" (the emergence of the Chinese term *minzu* and its early employment), *Minzu Yanjiu*, 2(1984), pp. 36-43.

a Marxist category, and in different periods of history.⁶²

At the beginning of the 1950s, under the influence of the Soviet Union, Chinese scholars discussed the definition of *minzu* and attempted to invent respective Chinese terms to correspond to the western terms with regard to ethnic groups. The term *minzu* was once used only for "nation;" but *buzu* for "nationality;" *shizu* for "clan;" and *buluo* for "tribe." Nevertheless, in 1953, Chairman Mao Zedong ordered the CCG that "academic discussion about the terms for ethnic groups is necessary, but politically it is better not to classify among nation, nationality, and clan."⁶³ Since then the CCG has used the term *minzu* only to refer all ethnic groups in China. The academic debate of the term *minzu* subsequently ceased.⁶⁴ The term *minzu* is officially translated as "nationality" in English, and minorities in China are all called "minority nationalities" (*shaoshu minzu*). That means all of China's separate ethnic groups are exclusively referred to as nationalities regardless of their various levels of social development in Marxist gauge. The English translation of *minzu* as "nationality" rather than "nation" clearly indicates that the CCG maintains China's tradition of a united multi-national state without any consideration of the Soviet model of federalism.

⁶² See Lin Yaohua "Guanyu 'minzu' yici de shiyong he yiming de wenti" (about the problems of the synonyms and the use of the term *minzu*), in *Lishi Yanjiu*, 2(1963), pp. 171-190.

⁶³ See Shi Lianzhu 1989:19.

⁶⁴ Until the early 1980s, Chinese scholars began to discuss the term "*minzu*" again.

The Chinese official criteria used to classify nationalities in China are those outlined in Stalin's definition of nation:

A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, economic life, territory, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture.⁶⁵

According to Stalin, common language, common territory, common economic life, and common culture are four decisive and necessary criteria for determining a nation. Stalin asserts that "it is only when all these trait are present that we have a nation."⁶⁶

Nevertheless, Stalin's "best known" definition of nation hardly applies to the Chinese situations. Chinese scholars (Huang Guangxue 1995:133-142) generalize the reasons as follow:

(1) Lack of common language. Most of the ethnic groups in China have their own common languages, but some are exceptions. In China there are some minority ethnic groups who speak Chinese such as the Manchu and Hui. In the case of some other minorities, one section of a minority speak different languages from another. For example, half of the Yao speak the Yao language, half speak Miao or Dong languages.

(2) Lack of common territory. Because of migration and refugee movement, China's minorities are distributed in the pattern of "wide dispersion, small concentration." The Hui, for example, are scattered over the whole country, though they retain common social ties and ideas. Some segments of minorities live in different separated areas, in some cases quite far from one another. The

⁶⁵ See Stalin 1934:8.

⁶⁶ *ibid*, 9.

examples are Miao, Yao, and She. It often occurs that several ethnic groups live in one village, town, or country. In these cases, there is no common territory for one single ethnic group.

(3) Lack of common economic life. According to Marxist definition, prior to 1950, all China's minorities were at the precapitalist stages of society. Most of them lived near each other for centuries. In minority areas, a unified economic life often evolved for several ethnic groups, with common market places or economic centres. Han merchants often lived in the market places and controlled the economic centres in minority areas, owning some portion of the land. Common economic life was hardly ever found among China's ethnic groups.

(4) Lack of a common culture in terms of psychological traits. Due to their abstract nature, the psychological traits were most difficult to define. In many cases, several ethnic groups lived in mixed regions. The influence of the majority groups on the minority group was obviously significant. In addition, for centuries, the Han culture had heavily influenced most minorities who in many ways were sinicized.

The CCG also had theoretical difficulties in applying Stalin's criteria to China. According to Marxism, nations are traits of the bourgeois-capitalist stage of society, but China's ethnic groups had only evolved in a formative period of precapitalist stages.

In the 1950s, there was a debate over the definition of nation and Stalin's criteria, along with the discussion of the term *minzu*

in China.⁶⁷ Chinese scholars mostly agreed that Stalin's definition had its origins in European conditions and referred specifically to capitalist societies. The western idea of nation was rooted in the rise of the nation/state of Western Europe. The multinational states of East Europe adopted the term *nation* of West Europe, even they were marked by uneven development among various ethnic groups. Thus the Eastern European countries, including the Soviet Union, had to use other terms for precapitalist ethnic groups, such as "tribe" for those in primitive societies and "nationality" for those in slave or feudal societies. Due to the ethnic situations in China, Chinese scholars intended to take Stalin's definition as a reference or guideline rather than as a universal criterion for defining nationalities in China. The CCG did not allow the debate to be made public in order to maintain its image of Orthodox Marxism until 1979 when China began a new era of reform. The debate on the definition of nation continues today.

The CCG finally concluded that the western criterion of nation and/or nationality, even in terms of Marxism, was insufficient for its ethnic identification, as China's ethnic groups were all at precapitalist stages of society and thereby could not fully meet the nationality traits Stalin set. In theory, the CCG took Stalin's definition as criteria of nationality. In reality the CCG modified it to serve Chinese ethnic situations. In the CCG's interpretation, the ethnic characteristic of "psychological make-up" referred to

⁶⁷ See Yang Kun, "Guanyi minzu he minzu gongtongti de jige wenti" (about the problems on the definition of minzu and ethnic groups) in *Xueshu Yanjiu*, 1(1964), 7-10.

the ethnic identity of an ethnic group. This would be whatever made the group subjectively regard itself as distinct from others and might objectively be revealed in its social life in areas such as customs, religions, festivals, history, clothing, and so on. In other words, whatever could help define an ethnic group may be put into the basket of "psychological make-up." Stalin's view of nation thereby became a flexible gauge for nationality, which enabled the CCG to undertake ethnic identification without theoretical restrictions. In addition to Stalin's criterion, for the purpose of ethnic integration, the CCG put a heavy emphasis on the "will" or ethnic identity of the ethnic groups involved in ethnic identification, with a careful consultation of the notions of the ethnic groups. Thus scientific criteria under the name of Stalin's criterion and the notion of the ethnic group involved were regarded as two key issues at recognition. In order to maintain its image of Orthodox Marxism, the CCG did not claim this significant shift from Stalin's criterion during ethnic identification. After 30 years, in the official document "the Report on Ethnic Identification and the Changes of the Nationalities Names in Our Country," which was issued on June 12, 1986, the national NAC finally admitted:

In the ethnic identification in our country, we never did imitate the Soviet's experience to classify nation, nationality, clan, and tribe. Instead, we used the Chinese term "minzu" for all separate ethnic groups. Considering our ethnic situations, referring to the four traits (common language, common area, common economy, and common psychological make-up) of modern nation, taking into account of the issues of history, ethnic origin, political system, and ethnic relation, we identified each ethnic group into one of the three categories: a minority; a branch of a minority; or the majority Han. The recognition of each ethnic group was undertaken with

the rules of 'respecting the notion of the ethnic group involved' and 'name determined by the group themselves.'⁶⁸

In reality, during ethnic identification, the CCG approached the linguistic and historical data first with references to other concrete information, such as customs, religions, clothing, and geographic distribution. The survey data actually enabled the CCG to classify most ethnic groups without theoretical difficulties. For example, more than 20 ethnic groups under various names in the southeastern Guangxi, were defined as different branches of the Zhuang and were all granted "Zhuang nationality" (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:587). The Tujia in central China, which had been long regarded as part of the majority Han, were recognized as a separate minority nationality in 1956, according to their traits of common ancient language, common mythology and certain customs (Huang Guangxue 1995:112). Whenever the academic conclusion differed confidently from the self-reported name of an ethnic group, the CCG would carefully convince the ethnic group to accept the academic conclusion and then grant them the official status according to the academic opinions. Whenever the survey data were insufficient to define an ethnic group, the group remained as an unidentified minority and enjoyed the right of regional autonomy, waiting for a further survey. An example was the Kucong in Yunnan.⁶⁹

Ethnic integration seemed to be a major governmental concern during ethnic identification. First, following the traditional

⁶⁸ The text can be found in Huang Guangxue (eds) 1995:156.

⁶⁹ See *Yunnan Shaoshu Minzu*, 1983:263.

Chinese historical-objective perspective, the CCG maintains that all ethnic groups within the territory of Imperial China are the nationalities of the CCG. One such case is the Tibetan. Second, whenever Stalin's definition of nation failed to work out in some circumstances, the recognitions were made with consideration for the ethnic groups' own notions rather than the concrete ethnic characteristics. For example, the Miao on the southern Hainan Island, who are from a scientific perspective Yao, were granted as Miao, because the ethnic group insisted upon it. Another explicit case is the Hui. The Hui are Chinese Muslims who are not ethnically or linguistically distinguishable from the majority Han and are scattered all over China. They are granted a minority nationality due to their religious belief and their strong identity as a separate group.

4. Ethnic Identification (1950s-1980s)

The CCG undertook ethnic identification in China during the 1950s-1980s with an interruption of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The CCG has eventually recognized 56 nationalities, the majority Han and 55 minorities. With a modified Stalin's definition of nation, ethnic identification was to define the 400-odd ethnic groups initially reported in the 1953 Census Survey. The process of identifying an ethnic group usually began with an ethnic survey, which was conducted by a central or provincial governmental survey team with the cooperation of the local government. Then the data

collected were analyzed and studied. Before any conclusion was drawn from the data, the minority leaders and ordinary local people were invited to give their opinions. According to the report submitted by the survey team, the local government would make a decision concerning the status of the community involved. If the conclusion reached was that the ethnic group was a separate one, this finding was subject to approval of the central government (QACNM, 144).

The ethnic identification project was generally divided into three periods. The first period dated from 1949 to 1954, shortly after the 1953 Census Survey. The second period covered the time from 1955 to 1965, shortly after the 1964 Census Survey. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), ethnic identification was abandoned. The third period of ethnic identification began in 1979 and eventually ended with the 1982 Census Survey.

The first period of ethnic identification in the early 1950s was characterized by the recognition of some distinct ethnic groups (Shi Lianzhu 1989:22). In 1953, the CCG granted the She in South China the status of a minority nationality, rather than considering them as a branch of the Han or the Yao. It also granted the Daur in Northeast China a minority status rather than including them as a branch of Mongols. According to the data of the 1953 Census Survey and the preliminary study of the 400-odd reportedly ethnic groups, the CCG ruled 38 distinct ethnic groups as minority nationalities in 1954, in addition to the majority Han (Huang Guangxue 1995:156). These minorities included Mongol, Hui, Tibetan, Uygur, Miao, Yi,

Zhuang, Bouyei, Korean, Manchu, Dong, Yao, Bai, Kazak, Hani, Dai, Li, Lisu, Va, Gaoshan, Dongxiang, Tu, Naxi, Lahu, Shui, Jingpo, Kirgiz, Tajik, Uzbek, Tatar, Ewenki, Bonan, Qiang, Salar, Russian, Xibe, Yugur, and Oroqen.

The 38 minority nationalities formed the vast majority of China's minorities in terms of population and territory. The recognition of the 38 minorities eventually provided a national base for the practice of regional autonomy in minority areas. During the 1950s, regional autonomy was subsequently implemented in these minority areas, except for Tibet.⁷⁰ In the case of the ethnic groups claiming to be separate nationalities but remaining to be identified, the CCG granted them the same treatment as minority nationalities (QACNM, 144).

The second period of ethnic identification began after the First People's Congress in 1954 and ended in 1965, shortly after the Second National Census Survey of 1964. During this period, along with the implementation of regional autonomy in most minority areas in the 1950s, the national ethnic survey further continued and collected enormous data on all the ethnic groups in mainland China. Among the 183 ethnic groups reported in the 1964 Census Survey, the CCG granted 15 ethnic groups the status of "minority nationality." These minority nationalities included Tujia, She, Daur, Mulam, Blang, Gelo, Jing, Achang, Nu, Pumi, Benglong (later

⁷⁰ The CCG took over Tibet in 1951, but its "social reform" caused the rebellion of the Tibetan nobles and the exile of the Dalai Lama in 1959. The Tibetan Autonomous Region was established as late as September 1965.

renamed as De'ang), Drung, Hezhe, Moinba, and Mannan. In addition, 74 of the reported 183 ethnic groups were classified into the recognized 53 minorities and the majority Han (Huang Guangxue 1995:150). The ethnic identification project during this period was focused on classifying various branches under various names of one minority into the status of one nationality. For example, the 260-odd ethnic groups reported in the southwestern Yunnan province were subsequently classified into 22 minority nationalities (Huang Guangxue 1995:149). For example, several dozens of ethnic groups under various names were classified as various branches of the Yi and were granted "Yi" nationality after all. However, 56 ethnic groups remained for further identification (QACNM, 22). Compared with the 38 minority nationalities recognized in 1954, these 15 minorities were generally small and lived mainly in much less accessible regions. After granting the 15 minorities the status of minority nationalities, the CCG accomplished ethnic identification at a national scale, except for some small controversial cases. Only two groups were later recognized as minority nationalities.

In August 1965, the CCG granted the tiny minority Lhoba in Tibet the status of minority nationality (Huang Guangxue 1995:150).

Ethnic identification was abandoned during the radical "Cultural Revolution" (1966-1976), under the pretext that "under socialism there are no such things as nationalities."

The third period of ethnic identification, dating from 1979 to 1982, was characterized by defining controversial ethnic groups. After reaffirming the ethnic policy of ethnic equality and regional

autonomy in the late 1970s, the CCG resumed the unsolved ethnic identification work. In 1979, the tiny group Jino in Yunnan was granted the status of minority nationality (QACNM, 144). From then and until now the CCG has recognized in total 56 nationalities, including the majority Han and 55 minorities.

Ethnic identification in the early 1980s focused on the identification of the controversial ethnic groups. More than five million people appealed for reexamination of their ethnic status by the time of the 1982 Census Survey (Shi Lianzhu 1989:22). In the southwestern Guizhou province, for example, more than 80 ethnic groups with a total population of over 900,000 appealed again.⁷¹ The CCG has totally converted the ethnic status of more than 2.6 million people from one to another since 1982. These people include the Manchu groups in Hebei and Liaoning provinces; the Tujia groups in the joint areas of Hunan, Hubei, Guizhou, and Sichuan provinces; the Miao and Dong groups in Hunan and Guizhou provinces; and some small ethnic groups in Yunnan province (Huang Guangxue 1995:160). The reasons for the change of status vary with individual groups. According to Chinese scholars (Huang Guangxue 1995:157-158), in some cases, some Han, who lived with minorities in mixed regions, once registered as minority members for the benefits of special policies favouring minorities. They often caused tension in local ethnic relations and damaged the trust of the minorities with regard in the CCG government. The CCG has taken these cases seriously by cancelling their status of minority nationalities. In

⁷¹ See *Guizhou Minzu Yanjiu*, (1981)3:96.

some cases, early recognitions were made only according to the criteria of history or language, resulting from the simple application of Stalin's criteria. In some cases, in order to get minority status, local governments encouraged people to recover their own ethnic traits, which had vanished long ago.

Nevertheless, the CCG has denied the appeals of about 2.4 million people. Among them, about 1.8 million live in Hunan, and 0.6 million in Guizhou province (Shi Lianzhu 1989:23). The Chuangqing of more than half million in Guizhou province, for example, appealed for recognition as a separate nationality, but the CCG upheld the original academic conclusion that the Chuangqing were essentially just a group of Han emigrants in minority areas without obvious traits of a separate nationality (Huang Guangxue 1995:159). Another example was the Moso people in Yunnan, who are still regarded as a part of the Naxi nationality rather than an independent minority (ibid, 159).

In addition to those who appeal for reexamination of their status of nationalities, there are still some unidentified ethnic groups in China. The status of ethnic minorities in Taiwan and the Sino-India border areas remains to be identified, because the CCG can not conduct an ethnic survey there. The CCG continues to call the ethnic minorities in Taiwan "the mountainous people" (*gaoshan zu*). It is not an appropriate term, for anthropological findings clearly suggest that in Taiwan there are at least ten distinct aboriginal ethnic groups (Ami, Atayal, Paiwan, Bunun, Rukai,

Puyuma, Tsou, Yami, Saisiyat, and Pinpu).⁷² There are still about 0.8 million people unidentified, according to the 1990 Census. These include:

- the "Pingwu-tibetan" in the border area between Sichuan and Gansu, numbering a few thousand in 1982 (Fei Xiaotong 1981:73);

- the Deng, a group of about 20,000 in 1982 on the Sino-India border (ibid, 74);

- the Laji, a group of about 1,500 in 1982 in the Maguan district in Yunnan province;⁷³

- the Khmu, numbering about 1,800 in 1982, in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan province;⁷⁴

- the Kucong, with a population of 25,000 in 1982 in Yunnan province (ibid, 263);

- the Hu, a group of about 2,000 in 1982 in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan province;⁷⁵

- the Sherpas, a group of about 400, who emigrated from Nepal to Tibet about 300 years.⁷⁶

These unidentified ethnic groups constituted less 0.01 percent of China's population in 1990. Ethnic identification continues to be a part of governmental work, but it is rather academic than

⁷² See Xi Liangguo, "Taiwan shaoshu minzu minchen yu shibie wenti qianyu" (on the names and classification of the aboriginal peoples in Taiwan), in *Minzuxue Lunwen Xian*, pp. 45-54.

⁷³ See *Shijie Zongjiao Yanjiu*, (1984)4:140.

⁷⁴ See *Yunnan Shaoshu minzu*, p. 415.

⁷⁵ See *Zhongyang Minzu Xueyuan Xuebao*, 3(1985):97.

⁷⁶ See *Zhongyang Minzu Xueyuan Xuebao*, 4(1983):44.

political. It remains as an issue for Chinese scholars to resolve the definitional problem of nation and nationality within the cultural context of modern China. Ethnic identification was basically accomplished during the 1950s, for it directly functioned to serve regional autonomy in minority areas. This was why ethnic identification was slowly undertaken after the 1950s, but the great governmental efforts, including the giant national ethnic survey, were put in place to implement linguistic regional autonomy and pursue social reform programmes rather than ethnic identification.

The governmental concern of ethnic integration was reflected not only in the careful consultation of the minorities involved in ethnic identification, but also in the official names the CCG granted to the minorities. Ethnic identification has resulted in significant discrepancies between self-identity and official status of ethnicity under certain circumstances: 1) When the CCG defined various ethnic groups under different names into one single nationality and granted them minority status under the name of one nationality. For example, the names of the Miao groups vary greatly with the scattered regions where they reside, but they were all identified as Miao and granted the status of "Miao" nationality (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:507); 2) The CCG has granted some minorities new Chinese official names, abolishing traditional Chinese discriminatory appellations for the minorities. Among the 55 recognized minorities, thirty of them continue to take their original Chinese names without discriminatory meanings as their official status of nationalities, but 25 of them were given their

new Chinese names by the CCG at official recognitions. The 25 minorities include: Hezhe, Yugur, Dongxiang, Tibetan, Yi, Va, Lahu, Jingpo, Naxi, Pumi, Blang, Achang, Nu, De'ang, Yao, Dong, Gelo, Zhuang, Mulam, Maonan, Jing, Tujia, She, Miao, and Li. Each of them once had their own name(s) or some other names with discriminatory meanings applied by other peoples, often Han, living together with them. With the agreement of the minorities involved, the CCG granted these minorities their new Chinese official names at recognition. In the cases of Hezhe, Nu, Lahu, and Pumi, the CCG granted their new Chinese official names by generalizing the different names used by the minorities themselves. For example, the official name "Lahu" was generalized from "lahula," "lahuxi," and "lahupu," which are all used by the group for itself (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:423). In the cases of Blang, Archang, Gelo, Jingpo, and Naxi groups, where each minority has several names varying with the areas where they live, the CCG finally chose one from several as the official name for a nationality. For example, the official name Blang was chosen from "blang," "wu," "arwa," "wa," and "wonghong," which are all used by the Blang people (ZSM, 393). In the cases of Tibetan, Zhuang, She, Yao, Li, Benglong (De'ang), Dong, Mulam, and Maonan, the CCG followed the traditional Chinese appellations for those minorities at recognitions. The Tibetan, who call themselves "boba," were granted as "Zang," a popular traditional Chinese appellation for Tibetan (ZSM, 257). In the cases of Dongxiang, Jing, Yugur, Yi, Tujia, and Miao, the CCG granted them new Chinese names without any reference to their past Chinese names. The Yi,

for example, call themselves many names, such as "Nuosu," "Nasu," and "Niesu." They used to be called "Luoluo" with pictograph "dog" or "pig" by Han and other peoples before. They were also referred to as "Yi" (barbarian) in ancient Chinese documents. The CCG finally chose another Chinese word with the same pronunciation of "Yi" as the official name of this ethnic group (Ma Yin 1989:232). These new Chinese names have been adopted by the minorities. The exception was the Benglong, who live in Yunnan province with a population in 1990 of 13,000. They were first recognized in 1964 as a separate nationality under the name "Benglang," which was taken from the traditional Chinese name for this minority. This ethnic group insisted on registering as De'ang, the name for themselves. The CCG finally changed their name to "De'ang" in 1985 (Huang Guangxue 1995:160). This indicates that the minorities have had more freedom to determine their official names under the liberal ethnic policy.

The 56 recognized nationalities vary greatly in population. According to the 1990 Census Survey (See Table 4), the majority Han nationality alone constitutes about 92 percent of China's total population of 1.16 billion, while all the other 55 minorities make up only 8 percent. Among the minorities, the Zhuang has the population of 15 million, while the smallest minority Lhoba only numbers about 2,000. Eighteen of the 55 minorities number over one million, sixteen from 100,000 to one million, fifteen number more than 10,000 each, and six less than 10,000.

In 1986, the CCG summarized the ethnic identification as follows:

The task of ethnic identification in our country was basically accomplished during the 1950s. The problem of changing the ethnic status of nationalities has been basically solved. Our future work is to carefully solve the complicated problems left with the full concern of ethnic integration.⁷⁷

With the recognition of 56 *minzu* (nationalities), the CCG has basically accomplished ethnic identification with a classification of the ethnic composition of mainland China. Ethnic identification has had a tremendous impact on ethnic relationships in China. It enabled the CCG to implement the linguistic regional autonomy and to pursue the social programmes in minority areas. In addition, it has also greatly influenced ethnic studies in China. All of these will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁷⁷ See the internal official document "Report on the Ethnic Identification and the Changing of Nationalities Names in our Country," issued by the Nationalities Affairs Commission China on June 12, 1986. The text can be partly found in Huang Guangxue (eds) *Ethnic Identification in China*. 1995:156.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EFFECTS OF ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION

The studies of ethnic relations have long included how one's ethnic status and what might be called the ethnic order have influenced the distribution of rewards. This chapter will study how ethnic identification in China has influenced the ethnic issues in China. Ethnic identification was undertaken, as a prerequisite for the implementation of regional autonomy and the pursuit of social programmes in China's minority areas. Ethnic identification basically attained two goals: 1) identification of the status of China's ethnic groups with a modified Stalin's criteria of nation; and 2) classification of China's ethnic groups with a Marxist category of social evolution. In theory, the first goal served to implement regional autonomy, and the second goal to pursue social programmes in minority areas. In reality, ethnic identification, regional autonomy, and social programmes were three aspects of the CCG's ethnic work (*minzu gongzuo*) to achieve China's ethnic integration and modernization in minority areas during the 1950s-1960s. Most often, the three events worked for each other and occurred simultaneously. Consequently, ethnic identification has influenced China's ethnic issues including the development of ethnic consciousness, the establishment of self-governments, the implementation of linguistic cultural autonomy, the practice of social reform programmes, and ethnic studies.

1. The Effects on the Development of Ethnic Consciousness

The definition of ethnic consciousness or ethnicity is hotly debated in the social sciences of the west (Lian 1982). Scholars seem to define ethnic consciousness as the awareness of belonging to an ethnic group which believes that its members share common descent and certain kinds of common customs or habits as ethnic markers. Also ethnic consciousness occurs when various ethnic groups meet each other. Then each group will develop a sense of who they are and what differences they have. Within the context of modern nation/state, ethnic consciousness usually arises out of majority/minority situations. We must examine the concept of ethnic consciousness in relation to the term *minority*. Ethnic groups are not necessarily minority groups, but many of them are. The official status of minority ethnic groups in a modern state represents the attitude of the dominant ethnic group(s) towards the minorities and influences the ethnic consciousness of the minority groups.

Ethnic identification in the PRC has identified the population within China's borders into 56 nationalities (the majority Han and 55 minorities), so every citizen of the PRC is defined as belonging to a nationality. Ethnic identification has sharpened the ethnic consciousness of China's ethnic groups in three respects.

First, it has officially divided the majority Han and non-Han minority groups. In contrast to the majority Han, the minorities have since then all been called "minority nationalities" (*shaoshu minzu*), and entitled to the exclusive policy of regional autonomy.

The official collective term "minority nationalities" and the special policy of regional autonomy for minorities have eventually sharpened the ethnic division between the Han and the non-Han groups in China. Some groups have had to accept being parts of Han rather than "minorities" as they had regarded themselves before. For example, the 200,000 Chuanqing group in southwestern Guizhou Province, who had long been regarded as a highland minority by themselves and other peoples, were identified in 1955 as the descendants of ancient Han migrants (Fei Xiaotong 1981:67). The Chuanqing have insisted on their minority status (Huang Guangxue 1995:157), however, they have been excluded from the rights of regional autonomy and must start to develop a sense of being part of the Hans rather than being a separate ethnic group.

Second, since ethnic identification, the minority groups have begun to acknowledge their "minority" status and to develop their sense of being minorities in the PRC. As mentioned before, the remote minority areas had been beyond the effective control of the former Chinese regimes, and ethnic identification was the first step in bringing all minorities directly under the administration of the CCG. Accordingly, the minority groups have been accepted that they are "minorities" in China. In the subsequent official histories, China has been portrayed as a united multi-national state since ancient times. All non-Han states of the past have been classified as "local governments" (*difeng zhengfu*). The central government is always China, even though it may occasionally include some local units. For example, the ancient Nanzhao State (650-902

A.D.) of the Bei group in Southwest China and the Tufan (Tibet) are described as local governments under the supervision of Imperial China (Ma Yin 1989:250). Moreover, in order to promote a Chinese nationalism, the CCG uses the Chinese term "Chinese nation" (*zhonghua minzu*) synonymously with the term "the descendants of Hua-Xa" (*huaxia ernu*) to imply a common origin of China's ethnic groups in its official propaganda. Since the 1950s, all non-Han movements have been accused of betraying the "Chinese nation."

Third, the minorities have since begun to develop their ethnic identities under the names offered by the CCG. The discrepancies between the official names and the names used by the minorities themselves occurred often after identification. Consequently, each minority has developed a sense that they belong to the group named by the CCG. The Yao groups, for example, have been called dozens of names by other groups and by themselves (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:585). During identification, they were told that, according to the "scientific standards," all of them belonged to same ethnic group, even though many of them had never known each other before and had different languages and customs. They have since come to develop a sense of belonging to the same ethnic group, and they must identify themselves legally as Yao, which is their official Chinese name offered in identification. After the 45-year implementation of regional autonomy, which includes the enforcement of the official ethnic status, the minorities have become used to their official names. In other words, the development of ethnic consciousness of China's ethnic groups has come through their official status.

In addition, the development of ethnic consciousness in the PRC has been influenced by the classification of the production modes of China's ethnic groups in Marxist terms of social evolution during ethnic identification. Ethnic identification informs China's ethnic groups not only who they are but also what differences they have in terms of production mode. To examine the consequences of that classification, we need to discuss the Marxist theory of social evolution, which is the cornerstone of the developmental theory as well as of the social sciences in communist China.

The Marxist theory of social evolution is based on Lewis Henry Morgan's theory of evolution and Engels' reworking of Morgan in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1883).

Morgan's theory of social evolution suggested that culture generally develops (or evolves) in a uniform and progressive manner. It was thought that most societies pass through the same series of stages, to arrive ultimately at a common end. In his best-known work, *Ancient Society* (1877), Morgan outlined three main stages--savagery, barbarism, and civilization. The Savages referred to the peoples without agriculture or herding. Groups that had domesticated plants and animals but had not invented writing or a state were called Barbarians. Only the Western states (e.g., Greece and Rome) and certain non-Western societies with a similar level of achievement (e.g., India and China) were regarded "civilized." Moreover, Morgan postulated several sequences in the evolution of human culture. For example, he assumed that family evolved through six stages. Human society began as a "horde living in promiscuity,"

with no sexual bans and no real family structures. Then, a group of brothers was married to a group of sisters and brother/sister matings were permitted. In the third stage, group marriage was practised, but the matings of brother/sisters were not allowed. The fourth stage, which evolved during barbarism, was characterised by a loosely-paired male and female who still lived with other people. Then came a husband-dominant family, in which the husband could have more than one wife simultaneously. Finally, the civilization stage came with the marriage pattern of a monogamous family, with one wife and one husband who were relatively equal in status.⁷⁸

Marxist universal theory of social evolution was derived from Morgan's evolutionism. Inspired by Morgan's theory, Marx claimed that human society evolved from the stages characterized as "primitive," slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism (communism). Marx and Engels further devised a theory that the institutions of monogamy, private property, and the state were responsible for the exploitation of the working class in modern industrialized societies. They extended Morgan's evolutionary diagram to include a cultural evolution in which monogamy, private property, and the state would cease to exist and the "communism" of primitive society would come into being again.⁷⁹

The social evolutionism of Morgan and others of the 19th century is largely rejected today in the West. In the first place, their theories fail to account for cultural variation. Secondly,

⁷⁸ See Morgan 1985 (1877).

⁷⁹ See Engels 1972 (1883).

their theories can not explain why some societies have regressed or even become extinct. Finally, other societies may have progressed to "civilization," but some of them have not passed through all the other stages (Schultz and Lavenda 1987:271-275). The Marxist theory of social evolution is also in a grave crisis, especially after the worldwide failures of the communist experiments in the 1990s.

Notwithstanding, the production modes of China's ethnic groups were classified in terms of social evolution at identification. China's ethnic groups were all classified at precapitalist stages of history. The majority Han (along with the Man and Korean) was classified at a late feudal stage with certain capitalist elements, but the other minority groups were all placed at various lower stages, at the time of identification (Ma Yin 1989:4-8). China's minority groups have been taught that the Han are socially and culturally much more advanced than the other minorities, according to the "scientific" Marxist theory of social evolution. Thus, the Han have become the logical leader and model for minorities to achieve modernization in China. In subsequent official histories, minority groups are portrayed as "ancient" and "backward" peoples, and many aspects of their cultures later became the targets of the social programmes, which were undertaken on the implicit assumption that the Han culture is better and more modern. In an 1987 article in *Minzu Yanjiu*, for example, Long Yuanwei suggests that "an inability to administer production," "closed-mindedness," and "objectionable customs" have impeded the development of a commodity economy in minority areas (Long Yuanwei 1987:20-21). The results of

the Marxist classification fit the traditional Chinese view that Han culture represents true culture and is therefore a model for other minorities to follow. Thus, the 1950s campaign against the officially called "greater Han chauvinism" did little to challenge traditional Chinese prejudice against minorities. Consequently, the minority groups in China have developed a "stigmatized identity" (Eidheim 1969) that they are less civilized, backward, dirty, stupid, and so forth, even though the CCG grants full legal equalities to the minorities. The Marxist classification has in fact legitimated the superiority of the Han and produced in the minority groups an inferior sense of ethnic consciousness.

2. The Effects on the Establishment of Self-Governments

The CCG professed a policy of regional autonomy for the minority groups in China. Regional autonomy enables minorities to take part in the political life of the PRC as a whole as well as to manage their own affairs by establishing autonomous areas where their own populations live in compact communities. Nevertheless, it also enables the CCG to establish central governmental control over minority areas and then to pursue social programmes for minorities without organized resistances. The former Chinese regimes had never changed traditional minority political systems and maintained their rules over the minorities only by controlling minority elites, but the CCG has incorporated all traditional minority political systems into the form of self-governments.

Ethnic identification directly served to establish self-governments in minority areas. Only the minorities who were recognized as "minority nationalities" during the identification were entitled to the rights of regional autonomy. According to the data on China's ethnic demography from ethnic identification, self-governments were subsequently established in minority areas, along with the accomplishment of ethnic identification during the 1950s-1980s. As early as May 1, 1947, the Chinese Communist Party helped establish the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the earliest and then the largest autonomous region in China. However, the formal establishment of self-governments in the minority areas in the PRC began with ethnic identification in the 1950s. By 1953, one hundred and thirty autonomous areas at the county level and below had been founded.⁸⁰ By the end of 1958, regional autonomy included in fact over 90 percent of the population in minority areas along with the recognition of 38 minority nationalities (Ma Yin 1989:25). The establishment of self-governments was abandoned during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), but again in 1979, the CCG resumed this ethnic work. In 1990, China had in total 5 autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures, and 122 autonomous counties or "banners," which are at the status of county in Mongolian areas, (See Table 5). There were also more than 1,200 nationalities townships. In 1987, the autonomous areas covered a total area of 6.1 million square kilometres (about 64 percent of the territory of China) and

⁸⁰ See Liu Ke-ping, "Three years of successful work among China's nationalities," In *Policy Towards Nationalities of the PRC*. p. 59.

comprised a population of 142.5 million people, including more than 62.5 million minority members.⁸¹ Except for some small and scattered minorities, forty-four minorities have had their own self-governments.⁸² Some self-governments, such as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and South Gansu Yugur Autonomous County, have been established in favour of a single major minority in the given area where, in most cases, there are communities of several other nationalities. Autonomous areas have also been established jointly by two or more minorities, such as the Dehong Dai-Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture, or the Menglian Dai-Lahu-Va Autonomous County. In addition to regional autonomy, the minorities have been ensured representation in the governments at all levels. Chinese sources report that minority representatives have always made up about 14 percent of the members of the national People's Congress (QACNM, 36).

The CCG has achieved its control over the minority areas by the establishment of self-governments. According to information from ethnic identification, the CCG applied certain strategies to ensure central government control over the self-governments.

First, the CCG determined the borders, administrative status, and the official names of self-governments with a concern to ethnic integration, according to the Chinese ethnic demography provided by ethnic identification. As mentioned before, the detailed ethnic demography from ethnic identification shows that China's minority

⁸¹ See *Minzu Tuanjie*, (1989)2:37.

⁸² See *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily), March 23, 1996.

areas are rarely homogenous within a pattern of "wide dispersion, and small concentration" and also contain a great number of Han who had long lived in their communities with the minorities. The CCG thus fractionalized the minorities by increasing the Han ratio in the autonomous areas through adjusting the boundaries and administrative status of the self-governments. Accordingly, Han were the majority population in many autonomous areas. Then the CCG could legally arrange enough Han deputies to control or, at least, effectively influence the self-governments. Often one minority has been put under several autonomous units. For example, the Zhuang is the largest minority in China with a huge population of 15 million (1990). More than 90 percent of them concentrate in the western Guangxi province and a small salient group in the eastern Yunnan province. When setting up the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region from the Guangxi province in 1958, the CCG kept the traditional Chinese provincial borders to merge the highly Han-populated East Guangxi into the autonomous region and to separate the Zhuang in Yunnan province into a joint unit (the Winching Zhuang-Miao Autonomous Prefecture) in Yunnan province.⁸³ The Zhuang in each of the two segments have subsequently become a minority in their respective autonomous areas. Another example is the Hui. With a population of 8.6 million (1990), the Hui are an Islamic minority with a wide dispersion over China but a concentration in the Ningxia, Qinghai, and Gansu provinces of Northwest China. The Ningxia Hui Autonomous

⁸³ See Zhou Enlai, 1957, "Some questions," in *Peking Review* (1980) March 3.

Region was created in 1958. It is an autonomous region where Huis form only about one-third of the total population in that region, but the Hans account for about two-thirds (QACNM, 160). This autonomous region only holds 10-15 percent of the total Huis in China, while the other Huis are put in autonomous prefectures and/or counties in other provinces. The same tactic was employed by the CCG in creating the autonomous prefectures and counties. For example, the Miao of 7.4 million (1990) in Southwest China are not given an autonomous region. They instead have been placed into some autonomous prefectures and counties in the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (Tian Xiaoxiu 1991:344). Several minority groups are often put into a jointly autonomous unit (prefecture and county). The traditional political systems of the minorities have since been incorporated into a new self-government. Such administrative arrangements have effectively prevented the growth of local nationalism among minorities and ensured state control over the minorities.

Second, in order to ensure the central governmental control over minority areas, the CCG determined time requirements in establishing a self-government. The 55 recognized minorities are entitled to the rights of regional autonomy, but whether, when and how they could have their self-governments depends on the CCG's approval. So far only 44 out of the 55 recognized minorities have had their self-governments. In addition, fifty-two autonomous counties were set up as late as the 1980s, and the minority members in those counties in fact had been excluded from regional autonomy

for 30 years. More than 90 percent of the autonomous areas were established by 1958 (See Table 5). Self-governments in fact were established after the CCG had successfully employed land and other social reforms in the minority areas. Those social programmes allowed the CCG to gain support from the masses (oppressed social classes) and to recruit cadres from the minorities. For example, the CCG took over Tibet in 1951, but established the Tibetan Autonomous Region in 1965 after the CCG carried out "democratic reform," which abolished traditional Tibetan serf system, and quelled the rebels of Tibetan nobles in 1959. Ethnic identification served in the establishment of self-governments in two ways: 1) it provided the CCG information about the social development, classes, political systems, customs, and religious beliefs of minorities. Thus the CCG could decide appropriate strategies and methods to conduct its "social reforms" prior to the establishment of self-governments; 2) the survey teams often functioned as "working teams" to make the CCG and regional autonomy policy comprehensible to the minorities and to involve themselves in the social reforms; and 3) many members of the survey teams worked as advisors for self-governments.

Third, the CCG has controlled the power of the autonomous areas by appointing the congress members of self-governments. Social conditions at minority areas did not allow for elections at the time of establishing self-governments. The minorities had never heard of elections before. All the congress members of self-governments were appointed by the CCG. The congress members usually

included: 1) members of the traditional elite(s), who cooperated with the CCG; 2) members of the oppressed masses or minority cadres, who depended on the CCG; and 3) the Han deputies. At the beginning of self-governments, the CCG had to rely heavily on the so-called upper strata or elite. Cooperative minority leaders were all given prominent positions in new self-governments, due to their social influence on their peoples. However, the members of the "oppressed masses" started to be arranged into self-governments by the CCG. They were minority communists or "minority cadres" in Chinese terms. Ethnic identification significantly contributed to recruiting minority cadres, for many minority cadres were recruited initially as translators for the ethnic survey teams. The ratio of "minority cadres" in self-governments increased rapidly. The Han deputies held powerful positions in self-governments. Since the Han were in the majority in many autonomous areas, due to historical reasons and the administrative arrangements of the CCG, they had legally their representatives in local self-governments. The Han ratios in self-governments increased along with the organized massive Han migrations into minority areas during the 1950s-1970s.

Fourth, the power in the autonomous areas remains in the hands of the CCG. The power structure of the CCG is not a form of People's congress, but a leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Functioning as rubber-stamps, administrative units are subordinate to the relevant committees of the CCP. Self-governments in minority areas are no exceptions. All the proposals made by self-governments must be approved by the relevant CCP committees.

3. The Effects on the Linguistic Cultural Autonomy

The CCG granted linguistic cultural autonomy to the minorities in China. Linguistic cultural autonomy means that the minorities can preserve and develop their own languages and cultures under the central leadership of the CCG. I will first discuss the language issue separately, since cultural autonomy is a complicated issue.

According to official policy, self-governments of minorities employ the spoken and written language or languages in common use in the autonomous areas. The CCG respects and protects the freedom of all minorities to use and develop their own spoken and written languages, assists those minorities who have no written languages in creating one or adopting a new suitable one, and assists those minorities whose written scripts are imperfect in improving or reforming them. The CCG supports the minorities' cultural and educational undertakings using their own languages and encourages the Han in minority areas to study the languages of the local minorities.⁸⁴

The CCG has used the linguistic data from identification to implement linguistic cultural autonomy. At the beginning of the ethnic survey in 1953, the CCG integrated the linguistic survey for ethnic identification with the implementation of linguistic autonomy in minority areas.⁸⁵ In 1956, the CCG established the

⁸⁴ See the relevant articles in "The 1952 General Preamble of the PRC from the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities," in *Policy towards the Nationalities of the PRC*.

⁸⁵ See *Minzu Zhishi Shouce*, p.750.

Institute of Minority Languages in Beijing's China Academy of Sciences and recruited more than 700 linguists and other experts to undertake a linguistic survey in 16 provinces and regions of China, where minority groups traditionally concentrated.⁸⁶ The research teams collected an enormous amount of linguistic data and worked on linguistic analysis for ethnic identification. They also formulated proposals for language reform and linguistic autonomy in minority areas (Zhou Yu 1991:94). According to the survey (QACNM, 64), there were 20 minorities who had their own written scripts. Among these scripts, there were 11 (Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazak, Korean, Xibe, Dai, Ozbek, Kirgiz, Tatar, and Russian) in common use but nine (Yi, Va, Miao, Naxi, Jingpo, Lisu, and Lahu) not in common use. The CCG began its language reform with these existing minority scripts. By 1957, the CCG devised a total of 13 written languages based on the Latin alphabet for nine minorities, namely the Zhuang, Bouyei, Li, Miao, Naxi, Lisu, Hani, Va, and Dong. In addition, the CCG revised five minority written scripts (Uygur, Kazak, Dai, Lahu, and Jingpo) and standardized the written language of the Yi of the Liangshan area in Sichuan. A plan was made for the Uygur and Kazak to replace their Arabic alphabet with a Latin alphabet script.

The process of ethnic identification was related to the implementation of linguistic cultural autonomy in minority areas. During the 1950s and 1960s, the CCG established ten institutes for nationalities at university level (QACNM, 123):

⁸⁶ See *Minzu Zhishi Shouce*, p.759.

- (1) The Central Institute for Nationalities in Beijing;
- (2) The Northwest Institute for Nationalities at Lanzhou, Gansu Province;
- (3) The Southwest Institute for Nationalities at Chengdu, Sichun Province;
- (4) The South-Central Institute for Nationalities at Wuhan, Hubei Province;
- (5) The Guangdong Institute for Nationalities at Guangzhou, Guangdong Province;
- (6) The Guangxi Institute for Nationalities at Nanning, Guangxi Autonomous Region;
- (7) The Yunnan Institute for Nationalities at Kunming, Yunnan Province;
- (8) The Guizhou Institute for Nationalities at Guiyang, Guizhou Province;
- (9) The Qinghai Institute for Nationalities at Xining, Qinghai Province;
- (10) The Tibet Institute for Nationalities at Hanyang, Shanxi Province.

The tasks of the ten nationalities institutes include: 1) to train senior and medium-level minority cadres for service in minority areas; 2) to conduct systematic research in minorities' oral and written languages, history, culture, and society; and 3) to compile and translate works on minority nationalities.⁸⁷ The ten institutes were the bases for ethnic identification. Scholars and

⁸⁷ See QACNM, 123.

students were employed into the programmes relating to ethnic identification and the implementation of linguistic autonomy in minority areas, in areas of ethnic education, publishing, broadcasting, and ethnic studies.

There are some problems with the minority language reform. In devising new written scripts for some minorities, for example, the CCG failed to give due consideration to the role played by existing written scripts and consequently made excessive changes or was overly hasty in carrying out reform. The newly devised Dai script, for example, is very different from classical Dai script, which has documented the Dai literature and Buddhist canons for centuries. The official adoption of the new Dai script resulted in confusion in education and ethnic tension as well. Furthermore, after implementing certain reforms, the CCG failed to properly handle problems arising from the simultaneous use of the reformed language and the original one. Thus, certain planned linguistic reforms such as the reform of the Uygur and Kazak written script have had to be delayed, as the replacement of the Arabic alphabet from their original language was an offense to their Islamic belief. The CCG finally decreed that the Arabic alphabet remain in use (QACNM, 63).

The implementation of linguistic autonomy has varied with the change of the CCG ethnic policy (QACNM, 66-67). The CCG first show great enthusiasm in implementing the linguistic autonomy policy during the late 1950s and 1960s. The manpower for the linguistic survey was mostly employed in the implementation of linguistic autonomy. Commonly used languages in the minority areas were used

for interrogation, announcement of court verdicts, notices, bulletins and other legal documents. All the successive National People's Congresses issued their documents in Mongolian, Tibetan, and Uygur, as well as in the Chinese and provided simultaneous interpretation equipment for the Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur and Yi deputies. In the autonomous areas inhabited by Mongol, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazak, and Korean, the education in primary and middle schools or colleges was entirely or partially taught in their respective languages. In the areas of the Xibe, Dai, Jingpo, Yi, Zhuang, Lisu, Lahu, Kirgiz, or Va, the primary schools were taught in their respective languages. Some minority groups, while themselves using textbooks written in Han or other languages, used their own spoken languages as supplementary means of teaching. China Broadcasting had programmes in Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazak, and Korean. Radio programmes were also produced in one or more minority languages by regional and prefectural broadcasting stations in Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Yunnan, Qinghai, Sichuan, and Gansu. During the 1949-1964 period, China published 13,855 titles with a total of 150 million copies in 19 minority languages. During the same period, 34 magazines and 37 newspapers were published in 11 minority languages. In 1965, 1,694 titles of books with a total of 24.8 million copies in minority languages were published (QACNM, 65-68). The language reform work and linguistic policy were abandoned during the radical Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Since the linguistic policy resumed in 1979, the CCG has lost enthusiasm in minority language reform work.

Linguistic autonomy has obtained much less governmental support than before. The CCC has given up to create written scripts for the small minorities who do not have their own written languages. Now there are still more than 30 minorities who do not have their own written scripts. Those minorities have been encouraged to learn the languages, most often Chinese, of their neighbouring groups. The CCG has encouraged the minorities to learn Chinese as a tool for modernization. The reason for that is because the linguistic policy is only literately possible among a few of the 55 recognized minorities. Another reason is that Chinese has become the common language in the minority areas. In 1956, Mandarin, which is based on North Chinese dialect with Beijing (Peking) pronunciation, was adopted as official language in all of China. After the 45-year socialist experiment with organized giant Han migrations into minority areas, Han have been in the majority status in most minority areas. The CCG intends to use the Chinese language as a tool to promote a national culture and to modernize the minorities.

The implementation of cultural autonomy in minority areas in China is summed up in Stalin's statement "national in form, socialist in content." According to Marxist-Leninist theory, the CCG claims that "minzu" or nationalities will remain for very long time during the transition to communism. It is thus important to preserve the differences of "minzu" in order to promote national ethnic integration; but some "minzu" differences will get in the way of progress, so these must be eliminated. The things that remain are those that foster ethnic pride, but do not impede

progress (ZSM, 18). The CCG in fact only promotes selected aspects of minority cultures. In addition, the CCG has strongly promoted a national socialist culture, which in fact mostly derives from the (Confucian) traditions of Han culture. Being advisors to government policymakers, Chinese ethnologists have played a central role in framing "cultural autonomy" within a Morgan-Engelsian framework. The concept of "culture" has been introduced as a Stalinist term, though it is usually phrased as "customs and traditions" (*fengsu xiguan*) since "culture" (*wenhua*) carries the meanings of "civilization." The survey of ethnic identification not only documented all the minority cultures in China, but also classified the different aspects of ethnic cultures within the Morgan-Engelsian theory. Chinese scholars have focused on "concrete issues" of economic organization, social organization, literature, history, local customs, and traditions, but have not addressed the "abstract issues" such socialization, worldview, values, symbolic systems, personhood, or similar topics which might distinguish minorities from each other in terms of shared cultural behaviour and meanings. Such tendencies were determined by the official perspective that a socialist national culture could be mostly achieved through the elimination of old social institutions. The findings and conclusions of ethnic identification have been used to implement cultural autonomy.

Under a Marxist classification, the traditional economic and political systems of minorities were first transformed into a state-socialist economy of "people's communes" with the form of

self-government generally during the 1950s (ZSM, 19),⁸⁸ since they were directly related to societies at the precapitalist stages of history. The CCG allows the existence of minority religions but regards religion as "opium of the people," according to the Marxist ideology. Therefore, the CCG has strongly promoted atheism in both education and propaganda. In addition, Marxist theory of social evolution was applied to define minority religions: institutional religions such as Islam are embraced by ethnic groups in quite "advanced" levels of social development but "primitive" religious beliefs are held by those in "less advanced" or "primitive" groups. The CCG has show more tolerance to instituticnal religions than to "primitive" religious beliefs and practices, which are labelled "superstitions" and "objectionable customs." After minority cadres came to power in self-governments along with the fall of minority traditional elites, many of whom were religious leaders in their respective communities, minority religions have been shrinking institutionally. This position led during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) to the condemnation and prohibition of all forms of religious activities. The CCG has since 1979 promised freedom of religion to minorities. However, with the exception of the highly institutional Islam and Tibetan Buddhism, minority religions have gradually lost their attraction to the members of minorities, who face pressure from the propaganda of atheism and the Han culture moving in with massive Han settlements. For example, following

⁸⁸ The Tibetan Autonomous Region was the only exception, transformed into a socialist economy as late as 1975.

Morgan's theory, monogamy becomes the only legal form of marriage, and the other marriage patterns in minorities are pressed to give in. Consequently, in the implementation of cultural autonomy, the CCG has promoted only selected aspects of ethnic cultures such as ethnic house-styles, dancing, costumes, handicrafts, unusual food, and festivals (i.e. annual rituals with the religious content largely extricated) rather than religious or other "objectionable customs" (*louxi*), which might hinder development. Moreover, even these relatively superficial ethnic markers are transformed to appeal to Han standards. It is important to note that the so-called minority "objectionable customs" are implicitly defined with a Han Chinese (Confucian) norm by Chinese scholars and the CCG, whenever they do not fit the Marxist category. The case below illustrates the dynamics of cultural autonomy in China.

Being questionably classified as a part of Naxi nationality, the Mosuo group in the Yongling basin and Lugu Lake regions in the Ninglang County in Southwestern Yunnan Province practice an institutionalized sexual relationship called *zouhun* (walking marriage).⁸⁹ With the *zouhun* custom, the man visits the woman and may spend the night, but they maintain separate residences in their natal households, and any children born of the relationship are raised in their mother's house. In the official survey data on Mosuo, "zouhun" relationships represent an evolutionary stage only slightly more advanced than that characterized by Morgan's

⁸⁹ See "Survey reports on the social and marital systems of the yongling Mosuo people" (1986), in *Survey Data on the Social History of the Minority Nationalities in China*.

hypothesized "consanguine family"--what Chinese scholars call "group marriage." The group marriage involves the collective marriage of the men belonging to one "gens" to the women of another. Since individual marriages are not recognized, paternity is always in question and descent is reckoned in the matriline. The model implies widespread sexual promiscuity. During the 1960s and 1970s Mosuo couples maintaining *zouhun* relationships were pressed to enter into "formal marriage" relations and to build their households. After the Cultural Revolution, this policy has been discontinued with the result that most marriages formed during that period are being dissolved and fewer new ones created. During this process, the works of Chinese scholars were used to validate a policy that derived primarily from an incensed Confucian moral sensibility.

Ethnic identification has also contributed to minority cadre training. Minority cadres are political workers and specialized personnel who are loyal to the CCG. They are not only familiar with the history, customs, outlooks and sentiments of their peoples, but also fluent in their own native languages and have a good knowledge of the geography and natural resources of their areas. However, minority cadres are trained to learn their own cultures and to manage their self-governments from a Marxist perspective of social evolution. This training model is actually based on the implicit assumption that Han ways are better and more modern ways. Minority cadres consequently are encouraged to act like Han, in order to lead their communities towards modernization, because it is Han

culture that sets the standard. Minority cadres rule not only on behalf of the state, but also on behalf of the cultural autonomy policy. They have become the leaders of the minorities after establishing self-governments. As early as 1949, the CCG Chair Mao Zedong said: "without a large number of cadres recruited from the minorities, we can never succeed in fully solving the minority problems or in completely isolating the reactionaries of the nationalities."⁹⁰ According to Marxist theory of social class, minority cadres are basically recruited from the oppressed masses of the minorities, although a small number of minority elites have been accepted as minority cadres after they acquired the full trust of the CCG.

The minority cadre recruitment began soon after the founding of the PRC. In November 1950, the CCG approved two directives, entitled "Tentative Measures for Fostering Minority Nationalities Cadres" and "Tentative Measures for Founding the Central Institute for Nationalities," to meet the needs of ethnic identification and the implementation of regional autonomy in minority areas.⁹¹ Ten nationalities institutes were then set up at key points throughout China during 1950-1960. These institutes served in minority cadres training and ethnic studies. By 1978, a total of 94,000 student had been graduated and assigned work in minority areas. In 1980, the 10 institutes had more than 2,940 teachers and 12,000 students which encompassed all of China's nationalities (QACNM, 123). The data and

⁹⁰ See *Minzu Tuanjie* (1955) 8:13.

⁹¹ See *Minzu Zhishi Shouce*, p. 35.

scholarship from ethnic identification have been employed into minority cadres training. The survey teams functioned as "working teams" to recruit minority cadres during ethnic identification. This work usually started from inviting minority members to be guides, translators, and/or advisors for the survey. Cooperative minority headman were often invited as advisors. Most scholars in the areas of ethnic studies were employed in the ten institutes to undertake ethnic identification and to be involved in minority cadres training. Those scholars have often become the advisors and sometimes the officers for the self-governments, because of their comprehensive knowledge of minority cultures.

4. The Effects on the Social Programmes

The CCG grants the policy of regional autonomy policy to foster ethnic integration and modernization, or control and development in minority areas. The establishment of self-governments have incorporated all ethnic groups into the political system of the PRC. The implementation of linguistic cultural autonomy indicates the transformation of minority cultures in communist China. In addition, the CCG has pursued several social programmes to bring a state-socialism to minority areas in China.

Ethnic identification worked as the prerequisite for the CCG to carry out the social programmes in minority areas. From the perspective of the CCG, it was necessary to transform socio-economic systems of the minorities into a state-socialist economy

in order to achieve modernization. On this point, the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai stated in 1951:

Appropriate reforms within a minority nationality are a necessary stage through which it must pass, in order to develop and progress and reach the level of the more advanced nationalities. But these reforms must suit the characteristics of the present stage of development of the nationality concerned. They must accord with the will of the majority of the minority nationality concerned. To carry out these reforms, suitable measures must be adopted and the minority cadres concerned relied on.⁹²

The 1950 Land Reform Law initiated social reform in China, except for minority areas,⁹³ for the CCG waited for information from ethnic identification. During the 1950s-1960s, the CCG applied different strategies to pursue "democratic reform" and "land collectivization" in minority areas, based on the ethnographic information from ethnic identification. The items of the ethnographic information included:

- (1) the degree of assimilation of an ethnic group to Han Chinese society at the liberation in 1949;
- (2) lack of cohesiveness of the culture of a given ethnic group;
- (3) the degree of distribution of minority members among the Han Chinese;

⁹² See Zhou Enlai (Chou En-lai), "Relations among nationalities," which was a part of his political report made on October 23, 1951 at the Third Session of the First National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. The text can be found in *Policy towards Nationalities of the PRC*. pp. 22-25.

⁹³ The article 36 of the Land Reform stipulated: "this did not apply to the minority areas in China."

- (4) the socio-economic level of an ethnic group in Marxist classification;
- (5) the number of the communists of the ethnic group;
- (6) the physical separation of an ethnic group from Han;
- (7) the pressures from the members of the same ethnic group living outside the borders of China.

In the areas where the minorities had the same or similar socio-economic structures as those in the Han areas, land reform was accomplished with methods somewhat along the lines of the Han and almost simultaneously with that of the Han during 1950-1954 (ZSM, 19). The lands and properties of the landlords were taken and distributed to land-poor and/or landless peasants. All the feudal privileges, formerly enjoyed by the landlords, were abolished. These minorities included the Zhuang, Hui, Uygur, Bai, Korean, Man, Bouyei, Tujia, Dong, and Miao as well as most of the Li and Mongolian. By 1957, collectivization was accomplished in those areas with the establishment of "people's commune."

In the places inhabited by the Tibetan, Dai, and Yi peoples, where feudal serfdom or slavery existed, careful steps were taken by the state (Ma Yin 1989:29). Tibet, for instance, was taken over in 1951, but abolition of its serfdom was gradually carried out only in 1958. The Great and Small Liangshan Mountains were "liberated" in 1950, but abolition of the Yi slave system began only in 1956. After in-depth preparatory work, a redemption policy was employed toward the traditional elites of those minorities. Reforms were carried out by consultation between the labouring

people and the upper strata elements. All forms of exploitation and privileges formerly enjoyed by the slave-owners and feudal owners were abolished, and their lands were distributed to the land-poor and land-less masses. All serfs and slaves were "liberated" to live in political equality. Those "social reforms" caused rebellions among the Tibetan and Yi elites. In Tibet, the "social reform" resulted in an armed rebellion in 1959 by the forces loyal to the Dalai Lama, Tibet's traditional spiritual leader. The rebellion was soon quelled by the Chinese army. After the Dalai Lama and his followers fled to India, land reform and the total abolition of serfdom were carried out. The properties and lands of the rebelling elites were confiscated by the government. The establishment of the Tibetan Autonomous Region in 1965 marked the social transformation in Tibet. The CCG quelled the insurrection among the Yi in 1957 and carried out "socialist reform" there in 1958 (Zhou Yu 1991:66).

In the pastoral areas, a more moderate policy for reform was carried out (ZSM, 20). A policy of rehabilitation was employed toward all herd-owners, as pastoral economy relied heavily on weather and livestock breeding could be easily damaged. Confiscation and redistribution of herds did not occur. The feudal privileges of the herdowners and chieftains were abolished. Pasture was put under public ownership, and free grazing was given to herdsmen. Governmental aid was provided to poor herdsmen to compensate for their former suffering. The herdsmen were organized into mutual-aid teams, then cooperatives, and finally the socialist "people's communes" by 1957.

In the areas inhabited by the Jino, Lisu, Drung, Nu, Blang, Va, Jingpo, Orogen, Ewenki, and some of the Li retaining vestiges of primitive communalism, a "direct transition" policy was introduced (ZSM, 20). Social reforms were carried out to organize the masses and leading social figures to promote production through mutual-aid teams, co-operatives and finally to the "people's commune" of socialism in 1957.

Traditional socio-economic systems of the minorities were subsequently abolished. The social programmes were accomplished with the establishment of self-governments and state-socialist economy of "people's communes" in minority areas.

Second, China's modernization has resulted in massive Han migrations into minority areas. China's modernization has heavily relied on the natural resources in minority areas. The CCG has employed massive Han manpower to develop industrial projects in minority areas, as minority members lack necessary skills and technologies. The Han migrations were called "zhibian" (developing frontier areas), systematically resettling Hans from the densely populated Han areas of East and Central China to the Northwest and Southwest China, where minorities were traditionally concentrated. Tibet was the least affected by Han migrations because of its geographical location.⁹⁴ In 1951, the national NAC Chair described Han migrations into minority areas as "beneficial both to ethnic

⁹⁴ Because most Hans get altitude sickness in Tibet, the CCG has encouraged Han professionals working in Tibet by providing special allowances and vacations.

solidarity and construction of the autonomous regions."⁹⁵ Based on the ethnographic data from ethnic identification, organized massive Han migrations began shortly after the establishment of the PRC and developed substantially during the Great Leap Forward in 1958 and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

Below are the substantial number of Han migrations into minority areas from Chinese official sources: 22 million in 1954, 25 million in 1955, 30 million in 1956, 33 million in 1960, 19 million in 1961, 13 million in 1963, 15 million in 1965, 14 million in 1966, 5-6 million between 1967-1969, 11-16 million between 1970-1976, and 14-23 million between 1977-1984.⁹⁶ The Han migrations have produced three consequences: 1) to decrease the heavy population pressures of the densely populated Han areas; 2) to develop industry in the minority areas; and 3) to accelerate the sinicization of the minorities. According to official statistics, in 1987 the autonomous areas contained a population of 142.5 million people, including 62.5 million members of minorities.⁹⁷ That means the Hans are generally in majority status in the minority areas. For example, the Han in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region accounted for only 3 to 5 per cent of the total population in 1949,⁹⁸ but 40 per cent in 1982. The Uygur have lost their majority

⁹⁵ See Richard K. Diao, "Minorities and Chinese" p. 17.

⁹⁶ See Renkou Yu Jingji, (1987) 2:3.

⁹⁷ See Minzu Tuanjie (1989) 2:37.

⁹⁸ See Stephen Osofsky, "Soviet Criticism of China's National Nationalities Policy" p. 913.

status, as the other eleven minorities in Xinjiang account for one fourth of the total population.⁹⁹

5. The Effects on Ethnic Studies

The review of anthropology or ethnology in modern China will help us understand ethnic studies in communist China. Western ethnology or anthropology was introduced to China in the early 20th century. In the 1930s, various theories of western ethnology and sociology were introduced to China. They included the Evolutionary School (Tylor), the Diffusionist School (Graebner), French School (Durkheim), the Historical School (Boas), and the Functionalist School (Malinowski, Radcliff-Brown). The Functionalist School and applied anthropology later became dominant in China's ethnology and sociology. Ethnologists had a close link with the government, and ethnology focused on China's minorities rather than the majority Han. In the Chinese language, the term "ethnology" (*minzu xue*) was used synonymously with the term "ethnic studies" (*minzu yuanjiu*). During the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), most Chinese ethnologists migrated to Southwest China with the Republican government. They were involved in the governmental project of "Constructing Southwest China," which aimed at developing the southwestern minority areas. This phenomenon must be understood within the historical and cultural context of China. During the early 20th

⁹⁹See "Xinjiang Release Population Census Results," in JPRS 82402, December 7, 1982, p. 111.

century, China suffered from civil wars, the Japanese invasion, and aggression of Western powers. Patriotism is a Chinese tradition at the centre of Confucianism for two thousand years. Nationalism has been the main theme of China in the 20th century. Chinese scholars were eager to save China through their social involvements, and the motivation for ethnological study was the desire for national salvation. Nevertheless, before 1949, anthropology was only taught at a few universities, and ethnic studies were conducted in a small scale at the Institute of Linguistic History at the China Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. Several ethnologists made some small surveys, mostly in Southwest China.¹⁰⁰

Ethnic studies in modern China have been greatly affected by ethnic identification. After the establishment of the PRC in 1949, Chinese scholars in the areas of ethnic studies have been employed institutionally by the CCG to work for ethnic identification and linguistic cultural autonomy in minority areas solely within the theoretical framework of Marxism. Ethnology has entirely become an applied science, and ethnological literature exclusively reflects the government's interests in resolving what it calls the "ethnic question" (*minzu wenti*). The "ethnic question" essentially concerns the mutual integration of all nationalities (the majority Han and non-Han minorities), but the discipline of ethnology has been only charged with the study of China's minority nationalities. The study of the majority Han has been delegated to the areas of history,

¹⁰⁰ See Chen Yonglin and Wang Shouyi, "China's ethnology in the early 20th century," pp. 72-111.

philosophy, economics, political sciences, and demography. The separation of majority and minority studies into different academic disciplines is rooted in Marxism. The CCG considers different societies to be characterized by one of five broad types of "social formations," each representing a different stage in a Marxist universal history of social evolution. In the study of China's nationalities, the social stages have been reduced to two: modern or partially modernizing societies (as typically represented by the Han majority) and culturally and economically "backward" (*luohou*) or premodern societies (including almost all of China's minority nationalities).¹⁰¹ For the Marxist theory of social evolution is based on the work of Lewis H. Morgan, Morganian theory of social evolution has been the cornerstone of Chinese ethnology for forty years. Chinese ethnologists have spent tremendous time and energy assessing the general levels of socio-cultural development of different minorities and to identify factors that may be residing evolution progress. In modern Chinese ethnological literature, minorities are generally described as "ancient" and "backward" groups. The usage of Morganian theory has precluded the development of the appreciation of the minority cultures in their own terms. The diverse features of minority cultures have been overgeneralized in the Morgan-Engelsian framework, with facts at odds either ignored completely or explained away as the aberrant "survivals" of a hypothetical earlier stage.

¹⁰¹ Only Korean and Man were defined at the same level of social development of the Han at ethnic identification.

Regardless, China's ethnic study has developed tremendously during ethnic identification, due to the strong support of the CCG. Shortly after the founding of the PRC in 1949, Chinese ethnologists were employed in the CCG's missions to minority areas. They worked as advisors and officers collecting and analyzing data for the new government. Later they were gathered at the Central Institute for Nationalities in Beijing, which was established in 1951 as headquarters of national ethnic studies to oversee the national ethnic survey under the supervision of the national NAC. Nine institutes for nationalities were also set up in key points throughout China during the 1950s-1960s. The Institute of Minority Languages and the Institute of Ethnology were set up in the China Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing in 1956 and in 1958 respectively to meet the needs of ethnic identification and the implementation of regional autonomy (Wang Penying 1983:63). In addition, many research institutes were established in the areas where minorities are concentrated. In Yunnan, for example, there are the Yunnan Institute for Nationalities, the Institute of Ethnology in the Yunnan Provincial Academy of Social Sciences, and the Research Institute in the Yunnan Nationalities Affair Committee of Yunnan Provincial Government. Self-governments, even at the county level, were required to establish their own research institutes. The CCG provided generous funds for these ethnic studies institutions. Consequently, ethnology became the largest discipline in China's social sciences in the 1950s-1960s. During the Cultural Revolution, most of those research institutes were closed

down, but they were restored in the 1980s. Ethnology maintains its primary position in China's social sciences today.

The scholarship in ethnic studies has developed tremendously during ethnic identification. Thousands of scholars and ethnic cadres were employed in ethnic identification. The number of Chinese ethnologists initially was far behind the needs of the national ethnic survey in the early 1950s. Thus, many scholars in other areas, such as history and economics, were employed in the ethnic survey. Moreover, the CCG recruited researchers from minority members. Many ethnologists were trained during ethnic identification. The emergence of minority ethnologists, however, has ended the complete dominance of Han scholars in ethnology and thus has promoted China's ethnology.

Ethnic identification has produced enormous ethnic data for China's ethnology. China's ethnic identification was universally unique as far as time, ethnic groups and population, and data are concerned. The ethnic groups in mainland China were all well-documented. Many of them were reported to the outside for the first time. More than 10 films were made to record the socio-cultures of those minorities.¹⁰² The ethnic data collected during ethnic identification were published--first as "internal" (*neibu*) reports, and later publicly in revised edition--in more than 340 volumes, divided into five main categories.¹⁰³ These include: 1) a general one-volume encyclopedia on minority nationalities (*zhongguo shaoshu*

¹⁰² Lin Yaohua, "ethnology in new China and its future," p.6.

¹⁰³ *ibid*, p.5.

minzu); 2) brief histories (jiangshi); 3) minority language summaries (yuyan jounce); 4) country profiles of minority autonomy areas (zizhiqu gaikuang); and 5) fieldwork reports on society and history of minorities (shehui lishi diaocha baogao). These data have mostly become unique, as the original socio-cultures of the minorities have largely vanished during the 45-year communist experiments. However, these materials rarely give reference to either the dates when particular ethnic groups were granted nationality status, or the persons involved, and the procedures followed in the decision-making process. While other significant dates and figures in a minority's past have been generally noted and incorporated into these official histories, the omission of this material serves to mystify the process of identification, giving the impression that the established ethnic categories are timeless, scientifically impeccable, and agreed upon by all.

Ethnic identification has consequently left some questions for China's ethnologists: 1) the definition of nation and nationality within the cultural context of China; 2) the scope and methodology of ethnology within the cultural context of China after a full involvement in governmental work; 3) an in-deep analysis of the enormous data from the survey; 4) the study of the majority Han; 5) the study of western theories after a 30-year separation.

CONCLUSION

After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, taking Marxism as official ideology, the CCG maintains the territory of Imperial China and grants a policy of regional autonomy to the minorities in China. Regional autonomy serves for the CCG as an instrument to achieve ethnic integration and modernization in China. During the 1950s-1980s, ethnic identification was carried out as a prerequisite to implement regional autonomy and social programmes in minority areas in China. Ethnic identification was undertaken with Stalin's criteria of nation and a Marxist theory of social evolution. It provided the CCG with a concrete ethnic demography on all the ethnic groups in mainland China. However, China's ethnic groups were in precapitalist societies and did not fit in the Stalin's criteria, which is rooted in Western capitalist nation/states. The CCG creatively applied Stalin's criteria to Chinese situations and recognized 56 nationalities, the majority Han and 55 minorities. Thirty-eight distinct ethnic groups were designated as minority nationalities in the 1950s, fifteen in 1960s, and one in 1979. Ethnic identification remains to be a governmental work at only a small and/or individual scale.

Ethnic identification has officially set up the ethnic categories between the majority Han and non-Han minorities and had the non-Han groups develop a sense of "minority nationalities" in China. With a Marxist classification of social development, ethnic

identification has rationalised the CCG's modernization project, in which the Han culture occupies a central role and the non-Han minorities are expected to sinicize themselves during development. Based on the results of ethnic identification, regional autonomy was implemented throughout China mainly during the 1950s. By establishing self-governments, the CCG has achieved central governmental control over minority areas through rearranging boundaries and the administrative status of the autonomous areas, in order to increase the Han population and to ensure that power remained in the hands of the CCG. In addition, the CCG has arranged massive Han migrations into minority areas and made developmental plans for the minorities, according to the results of ethnic identification. To transform traditional minority socio-economic systems into a socialist economy, the social programmes varied from area to area with the levels of social development categorized by the identification. Due to ethnic identification, ethnology has institutionally become an applied social science, and ethnologists have become advisors to government policymakers for ethnic work. Moreover, Morgan's theory of social evolution has become the cornerstone of Chinese ethnology for forty years and it has actually promoted a national culture, which derives mainly from the Confucian traditions of Han culture.

In the future, certain improvements of this thesis could be made by: 1) a further discussion on the Chinese ideas of nation and nationality; 2) the mysterious decision-making of ethnic identification; 3) the identification of unidentified groups.

The first modern Chinese ethnic identification provides a significant case for ethnic studies as well as for nationalism. From an anthropological point of view, this ethnic identification is unique in terms of time, people, population, and scholarship. It provides enormous concrete data on all ethnic groups in mainland China, most of whom were actually unknown before. It demonstrates that the Western definition of nation or nationality can never be fully used as a measure of ethnicity in China. It also shows China, as a Third World new nation in the 20th century, has achieved her ethnic integration through the legacy of domestic imperialism and external colonialism as well as the influence of Soviet Union. Furthermore, it shows that communist China's modernization project in a Marxist framework has resulted in an institutionalized sinicization within the cultural context of China. The ethnic identification has been largely ignored by academia for various reasons. The West has seldom known China's ethnic groups and modern Chinese ethnic studies. Chinese scholars have hardly been able to deal with this sensitive ethnic issue until very recently. This thesis may contribute in presenting a comprehensive picture of China's modern ethnic identification.

GLOSSARY

Nationality	Chinese
Achang	阿昌族
Bai	白族
Blang	布朗族
Bonan	保安族
Bouyei	布依族
Dai	傣族
Daur	达斡尔族
De'ang (Benglong)	德昂族 (崩龙)
Dong	侗族
Dongxiang	东乡族
Drung	独龙族
Ewenki	鄂温克族
Gaoshan	高山族
Gelo	仡佬族
Han	汉族
Hani	哈尼族
Hezhen	赫哲族
Hui	回族
Jing	京族

Nationality	Chinese
Jingpo	景颇族
Jinuo	基诺族
Kazak	哈萨克族
Kirgiz	柯尔克孜族
Korean	朝鲜族
Lahu	拉祜族
Lhoba	珞巴族
Li	黎族
Lisu	傈僳族
Manchu	满族
Maonan	毛难族
Miao	苗族
Moinba	门巴族
Mongolian	蒙古族
Mulam	佤族
Naxi	纳西族
Nu	怒族
Oroqen	鄂伦春族
Pumi	普米族

Nationality Chinese

Qiang羌族

Russian俄罗斯族

Salar撒拉族

She畲族

Shui水族

Tajik塔吉克族

Tatar塔塔尔族

Tibetan藏族

Tu土族

Tujia土家族

Uzbek乌孜别克族

Uygur维吾尔族

Va仡族

Xibe锡伯族

Yao瑶族

Yi彝族

Yugur裕固族

Zhuang壮族

TABLE 2 LANGUAGES OF CHINA'S NATIONALITIES

Language Group	Nationalities
Sino-Tibetan Family	
I. Chinese Group	Han, Hui, She and Manchu*
II. Zhuang-Dong Group	
1. Zhuang-Dai Branch	Zhuang, Bouyei and Dai
2. Dong-Shui Branch	Dong, Mulam, Shui and Maonan
3. Li Branch	Li
III. Tibetan-Burmese Group	
1. Tibetan Branch	Tibetan and Moinba
2. Yi Branch	Yi, Lisu, Naxi, Hani, Lahu, Jino and Bai
3. Jingpo Branch	Jingpo and Drung
4. Qiang Branch	Qiang and Pumi
5. Unidentified Branch	Lhoba, Nu and Achang
Altaian Family	
I. Tujue Group	Uygur, Salar, Uzbek, Kazak, Tatar and Yugur ***
II. Mongolian Group	Mongolian, Dongxiang, Daur, Bonan, Tu, Yugur ***
III. Manchu-Tungusic Group	
1. Manchu Branch	Xibe, Hezhe and Manchu*
2. Tungusic Branch	Oroqen and Ewenki
3. Unidentified Branch	Korean
IV. Miao-Yao Group	
1. Miao Branch	Miao and She
2. Yao Branch	Yao**
3. Unidentified Branch	Tujia and Gelo
Indian-European Family	
I. Slavonian Group	Russian
II. Iranian Group	Tajik
South Asian Family	Va, De'ang and Blang
Nandao Family	Gaoshan
Unidentified Language	Jing

Source: Ma Yin (ed) *China's Minority Nationalities*, 1989:449-450.

* The Huis and most of the Manchus speak Chinese while a small number of Manchu stick to their native language.

** The Yaos have three languages. The Lajia language belongs to the Zhuang-Dong Language Group and the Bunu to the Miao Language Group.

*** The Yugurs speak two languages that fall into two different language groups.

Table 3 China's Minority Nationalities

Name	Languages	Major Festival	Religious Belief	Area of Distribution	Major Economy
Achang	Language of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; spoken Han and Dai in use; written Han also in use	Sowing Festival, Changxin (Taste the New Crop) Festival	Polytheism, Hinayana	Yunnan	Agriculture with handicrafts as subsidiary
Bai	Yi of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in use	3rd Month Fair, Torch Festival, Yutan Fair	Polytheism, Buddhism, Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture
De'ang (Benglong)	Language of Mon-Khmer branch, South Asian family; written Dai and Han in use	Water-Splashing Festival (New Years' Day)	Hinayana Polytheism	Yunnan	Agriculture
Blang	Language of Mon-Khmer branch, South Asian family; Dai, Va and Han in use; no written language	Water-Splashing Festival Open-Door and Close-Door Festivals	Hinayana Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture
Bonan	Language of Mongolian branch, Altaic family; written Han in use	Molid Nabawi, Bairam, Corban	Islam	Gansu	Agriculture
Bouyei	Language of Zhuang-Dong branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in use	3rd Day of 3rd Month, 6th Day of 6th Month, 8th Day of 4th Month	Polytheism and Taoism (with a small following)	Guizhou	Agriculture
Dai	Dai of Zhuang-Dong branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Dai in use	Water-Splashing Festival (New Years' Day), Open-Door and Close-Door Festivals	Hinayana	Yunnan	Agriculture
Daur	Language of Mongolian branch, Altaic family; written Manch once in use, now written Han in common use	Spring Festival	Shamanism, Lamaism	Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Xinjiang	Agriculture, animal husbandry and hunting on a limited scale

Table 3 China's Minority Nationalities (cont.)

Name	Languages	Major Festival	Religious Belief	Area of Distribution	Major Economy
Dong	Dong of Zhuang-Dong branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in use	Reed-Pipe Fair, Firework Fair, Sacrifice to Cow God, Dawu Mountain Singing Concert Chixin	Polytheism, worship of the goddess	Guizhou, Hunan, Guangxi,	Agriculture with forestry
Dongxiang	Language of Mongolian branch, Altaic family; written han in common use	Molid Nabawi, Bairam, Corban	Islam	Gansu, Xinjiang	Agriculture animal husbandry
Drung	Language of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; no written script	Kaqawa	Polytheism, Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture
Ewenki	Tungus of Tungus-Manchu branch, Altaic family; written Mongolian and Han in common use	Mikuolu	Shamanism, Lamaism, Eastern Orthodox	Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang	Hunting, animal husbandary, agriculture
Gaoshan	Language of Indonesian branch, Austronesian family; no script	Spring Festival	Polytheism, ancestral worship	Taiwan, Fujian	Agriculture
Gelo	Language not yet classified; written and spoken Han in use	6th day of 6th Month, 7th day of 7th Month	Polytheism, ancestral worship	Guizhou	Agriculture
Hani	Yi of tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-tibetan family; written Han in common use	10th Month (New Year's Day), 6th Month (God-Worshipping Festival)	Polytheism, ancestral worship	Yunnan	Agriculture
Hezhen	Manchu of Tungus-Manch branch, Altaic family; written Han in common use	Spring Festival	Shamanism	Heilongjiang	Fishing, hunting, farming

Table 3 China's Minority Nationalities (cont.)

Name	Languages	Major Festival	Religious Belief	Area of Distribution	Major Economy
Hui	Han, written and spoken, in common use	Molid Nabawi, Bairam, Corban	Islam	Ningxia, Yunnan Henan, Qinghai, Xinjiang, Hebei, Beijing, Tianjin Shandong, Gansu	Farming, trading and hawking in urban areas
Jing	Language not yet classified; written and spoken Han in common use	Ha Festival	Polytheism, Taoism	Guangxi	Fishery, farming
Jingpo	Jingpo of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Jingpo in use	Munao Festival	Polytheism, Christianity	Yunnan	Animal husbandry
Jino	Language of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; no script of its own	Datie Festival, Torch Festival	Ancestral worship	Yunnan	Agriculture
Kazak	Language of Turkic branch, Altaic family	Molid Nabawi, Bairam, Corban	Islam	Xinjiang, Gansu, Qinghai	Animal husbandary, agriculture on limited scale
Kirgiz	Language of Turkic branch, Altaic family; written Kirgiz in use	Molid Nabawi, Bairam, Corban	Islam	Xinjiang	Agriculture
Korean	Korean (under what linguistic branch and family, still in dispute)	Spring Festival, 15th Day of 1st Month, Duanwu, Qiuxi	Buddhism, Christianity	Jilin, Liaoning, Heilongjiang, Inner Mongolia	Agriculture
Lahu	Yi of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Lahu in use	Torch Festival	Buddhism, Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture, with hunting in limited scale
Lhoba	Language of Tieto-Burman branch, Sinot-Tibetan family, no written script	New Year's Day, Xudulong,	Lamaism	Tibet	Agriculture and hunting

Table 3 China's Minority Nationalities (cont.)

Name	Languages	Major Festival	Religious Belief	Area of Distribution	Major Economy
Li	Li of Zhuang-Dong branch, Sino-Tibetan family; spoken and written Han in use	3rd Day of 3rd Month	Polytheism	Guangdong	Agriculture
Lisu	Yi of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Lisu in use	Torch Festival, Harvest Festival	Polytheism, Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture
Manchu	Manchu of Tungus-Manch branch, Altai family; written Manchu once in use, now spoken and written Han in common use	Spring Festival	Shamanism	Liaoning, Beijing, Heilongjiang, Jilin, Inner Mongolia, Hebei,	Agriculture
Maonan	Language of Dong-Shui group, Zhuang-Dong family; spoken Han and Zhuang in common use, written Han in use	Temple Festival	Taoism, Polytheism	Guangxi	Agriculture
Miao	Miao of Miao-Yao branch, Sino-tibetan family; written Miao gone out of use; written Han in common use	New Year's Day, 8th Day of 4th Month, Dragon Boat Fair, Good Harvest Fair, Flower Hill Fair, Chixin Fair	Polytheism, Christianity professed by some	Guizhou, Yunnan, Guangxi, Sichuan, Hunan, Guangdong	Agriculture
Moinba	Language of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Tietan in use	New Year's Day by Tibetan calendar	Lamaism	Tibet	Agriculture, hunting
Mongolian	Variation of Mongolian branch, Altaic family; written Han in common use	New Year's Day, Nadam Dair	Lamaism, Shamanism	Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai, Liaoning, Gansu, Heilongjiang, Jilin,	Crop farming, animal husbandary
Mulao	Language of Dong-Shui group, Zhuang-Dong branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in common use	Yifan Festival, Youth Festival	Taoism, Buddhism	Guangxi	Agriculture

Table 3 China's Minority Nationalities (cont.)

Name	Languages	Major Festival	Religious Belief	Area of Distribution	Major Economy
Naxi	Yi of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in common use	Farm Tool Fair, Dragon King Fair, Mule and Horse Fair	Dongba, Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture, with animal husbandry as subsidiary
Nu	Language of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; no script of its own; spoken Lisu and written Han in common use	Flower Festival	Polytheism, Lamaism, Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture
Oroqen	Tungus of Tungus-Manchu branch, Altaic family; no written language	Spring Festival	Shamanism, ancestral worship	Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Xinjiang	Hunting, forestry, agriculture
Pumi	Language of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sini-Tibetan family	Spring Festival, Dashiwu, Changxin Fair	Lamaism	Yunnan	Agriculture
Qiang	Qiang of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in use	Spring Festival, Qinming, Duanwu Fair	Polytheism	Sichuan	Agriculture with animal husbandry
Russian	Russian of Slay branch, Indo-European family	Easter	Eastern Orthodox Christianity	Xinjiang	Agriculture, animal husbandry
Salar	Language of Turkic branch, Altaic family; written Han in use	Corban	Islam	Qinghai, Gansu	Agriculture
She	Language of Sino-Tibetan family, written Han in use	Spring Festival, Fenglong Festival	Taoism and wizardry worship	Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Guangdong	Agriculture
Shui	Shui of Zhuang-Dong branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in use	Duan Festival	Polytheism	Guizhou	Agriculture

Table 3 China's Minority Nationalities (cont.)

Name	Languages	Major Festival	Religious Belief	Area of Distribution	Major Economy
Tajik	Language of Iranian branch, Indo-european family; written Uygur in use	Corban	Islam	Xinjiang	Animal husbandary
Tatar	Language of Turkic branch, Altaic family, written Uygur and Kazak in use	Corban	Islam	Xinjiang	Handicrafts, agriculture
Tibetan	Language (with a script) of tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family	New Year, Onggo, Xodoin, Sagadawa, Bcayma	Lamaism	Tibet, Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, Yunnan	Agriculture and animal husbandary
Tu	Language of Mongolian branch, Altaic family; written Han in common use	Spring Festival, Duanyang, Naduan Fair	Lamaism	Qinghai, Gansu	Agriculture
Tujia	Language of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; spoken and writtne Han in use	3rd Day of 1st Month, 15th Day of 5th Month, 6th Day of 6th Month, 15th Day of 7th Month	Polytheism, ancestral worship	Hunan, Hubei	Agriculture
Uygur	Language of turkic branch, Altaic family; written Uygur in use	Corban	Islam	Xinjiang	Agriculture, trading, handicraft
Uzbek	Language (with a script) of Trkic branch, Altaic family; written Uygur and Kazak also in use	Corban	Islam	Xinjiang	Agriculture, trading on limited scale
Va	Language of Mon-Khmer branch, South Asian family; written Va in use	Torch Festival	Hinayana Buddhism, Christianity	Yunnan	Agriculture, with hunting on limited scale
Xibe	Manchu of Tungus-Manch branch, Altaic family; written Xibe in use	18th Day of 4th Month	Shamanism, Lamaism, ancestral worship	Xinjiang, Liaoning	Agriculture

Table 3
China's Minority Nationalities (cont.)

Name	Languages	Major Festival	Religious Belief	Area of Distribution	Major Economy
Yao	Yao of Miao-Yao branch, Sino-Tibetan family, for about half of the people; a dialect similar to Miao for about 2/5; a dialect similar to Dong for a limited number; no script; spoken and written Han also in use	Spring festival, Danu, Shuawan, Tanlegui	Polytheism, ancestral worship	Guangxi, Hunan, Yunnan, Guangdong, Guizhou	Agriculture, with animal husbandry as subsidiary
Yi	Yi of Tibeto-Burman branch, Sino-Tibetan family; written Han in common use; a "standardized Yi script" also used in Liangshan area	Torch Festival	Polytheism Christianity	Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangxi	Agriculture, with animal husbandry as subsidiary
Yugur	Language of Altaic family; language of Mongolian branch used by Yugur in east; language of Turkic branch used by Yugur in west; written Han in use	Spring Festival, Moon Festival	Shamanism. Lamaism	Gansu	Animal husbandry
Zhuang	Zhuang (with a script) of Zhuang-Dong branch, Sino-tibetan family; written Han in use	Gexu (Song Fair)	Polytheism	Guangxi, Yunnan, Guangdong, Guizhou	Agriculture

Source: Minzu Zhishi Shouce (1990:829-841)

TABLE 4 CENSUS POPULATIONS OF CHINA'S NATIONALITIES
(1953, 1964, 1982, AND 1990)

Nationality	Population (1953)	Population (1964)	Population (1982)	Population (1990)
Han	547,283,057	654,565,495	936,674,944	1,042,482,187
Zhuang	6,611,455	8,402,483	13,388,118,	15,489,630
Manchu	2,418,931	2,700,725	4,304,981	9,821,180
Hui	3,559,350	4,488,015	7,228,398	8,602,978
Miao	2,511,339	2,788,800	5,021,175	7,398,035
Uygur	3,640,125	4,000,402	5,963,491	7,214,431
Yi	3,254,269	3,388,940	5,543,564	6,572,173
Tujia	—	525,348	2,836,814	5,704,223
Mongol	1,462,956	1,973,192	3,411,367	4,806,849
Tibetan	2,775,622	2,504,628	3,847,875	4,593,330
Bouyei	1,247,883	1,351,899	2,119,345	2,545,059
Dong	712,802	838,254	1,426,400	2,514,014
Yao	655,933	857,866	1,411,967	2,134,013
Korean	1,120,405	1,348,594	1,765,204	1,920,597
Bai	567,119	709,673	1,132,224	1,594,827
Hani	481,220	630,245	1,058,806	1,253,952
Kazak	509,375	491,867	907,546	1,111,718
Li	360,950	439,587	887,107	1,110,900
Dai	478,966	536,399	839,496	1,025,128
Lisu	317,465	270,976	481,884	574,856
She	—	234,320	371,965	630,378
Gelo	—	26,852	54,164	437,997
Lahu	139,060	191,241	304,256	411,476
Dongxiang	155,761	147,460	279,523	373,872
Va	286,158	200,295	298,611	351,974

TABLE 4 CENSUS POPULATIONS OF CHINA'S NATIONALITIES**(1953, 1964, 1982, AND 1990) (cont.)**

Nationality	Population (1953)	Population (1964)	Population (1982)	Population (1990)
Shui	133,566	156,388	286,908	345,993
Naxi	143,453	157,862	251,592	278,009
Qiang	35,660	49,241	102,815	198,252
Tu	53,277	77,484	159,632	191,624
Xibe	19,022	33,451	83,683	172,847
Mulam	—	52,949	90,357	159,328
Kirgiz	70,944	70,175	113,386	141,549
Daur	—	63,595	94,126	121,357
Jingpo	101,852	57,891	92,976	119,209
Salar	30,658	34,680	69,135	87,697
Blang	—	39,411	58,473	82,280
Maonan	—	22,419	38,159	71,968
Tajik	14,462	16,236	26,600	33,538
Pumi	—	14,298	24,238	29,657
Achang	—	12,302	20,433	27,708
Nu	—	15,047	22,896	27,123
Ewenki	—	9,695	19,398	26,315
Jing	—	4,293	13,108	18,915
Jino	—	—	11,962	18,021
Benglong (De'ang)	—	7,261	12,297	15,462
Uzbek	13,626	7,717	12,213	14,502
Russian	22,656	1,326	2,917	13,504
Yugur	3,861	5,717	10,568	12,297
Bonan	4,957	5,125	9,017	12,212
Moinba	—	3,809	1,140	7,475
Oroqen	2,262	2,709	4,103	6,965

TABLE 4 CENSUS POPULATIONS OF CHINA'S NATIONALITIES

(1953, 1964, 1982, AND 1990) (cont.)

Nationality	Population (1953)	Population (1964)	Population (1982)	Population (1990)
Drung	—	3,090	4,633	5,816
Tatar	—	2,294	4,122	4,873
Hezhe	—	718	1,489	4,245
Gaoshan *	329	366	1,650	2,909
Lhoba	—	—	1,066	2,312
Others	1,385,702	17,706	799,705	749,341
Indeterminate	—	15,802	—	—

Sources: *Zhongguo Shaoshu Minzu Gaiguan* (1988:456-459); *Minzu Zhishi Shouce* (1990:842), and *Zhonghuo Minzu* (1991:758-760).

Notes:

- * All the Census Surveys exclude the population of Taiwan. The 1964 Census China suggests that the Gaoshan (minorities) in Taiwan may have a population of 200,000.
- * The 1982 Census Survey excluded a population of 28,601 in Tibet, among whom there were 5,099 of Moinba and 1,000 of Lhoba.
- * According to the Census China of 1982, the majority Han constitutes 94 percent of the total population, and the minority nationalities form 6 percent of the total.
- * According to the Census China of 1990, the majority Han constitutes 92 percent of the total population in China, and the minority nationalities form 8 percent of the total.
- * The population of China's minorities in 1990 has at a significant increase of 35.52 percent than that of 1982. That was partly because of the official alternation of the ethnic status of some ethnic groups.

Table 5 National Autonomous Areas in China

Name	Province or Autonomous Region	Date of Establishment (mm/dd/yy)
Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (capital Hohhot)		05/01/1947
Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (capital Urumqi)		10/01/1955
Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (capital Nanning)		03/15/1958
Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (capital Yinchuan)		10/25/1958
Tibetan Autonomous Region (capital Lhasa)		09/09/1965
Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture (capital Yanji)	Jilin	09/03/1957
Exi Tujia-Miao Autonomous Prefecture (capital Enshi)	Hubei	12/01/1983
Xiangxi Tujia-Miao Autonomous Prefecture (capital Jishou)	Hunan	09/20/1957
Hainan Li-Miao Autonomous Prefecture (capital Tongshen) *	Hainan	07/01/1952
Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Kangding)	Sichuan	11/24/1950
Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture (capital Xichang)	Sichuan	10/01/1952
Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Barkam) *	Sichuan	01/01/1953
Qiandongnan Miao-Dong Autonomous Prefecture (capital Kaili)	Guizhou	23/07/1956
Qiannan Bouyei-Miao Autonomous Prefecture (capital Duyun)	Guizhou	08/08/1956
Qianxinan Bouyei-Miao Autonomous Prefecture (capital Xingyi)	Guizhou	05/01/1982
Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture (capital Jinghong)	Yunnan	01/24/1953
Dchong Dai-Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture (capital Luxi)	Yunnan	07/24/1953
Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture (capital Liuku)	Yunnan	08/23/1954
Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture (capital Dali)	Yunnan	11/22/1956
Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Zhongdian)	Yunnan	09/13/1957
Honghe Hani-Yi Autonomous Prefecture (capital Gejiu)	Yunnan	11/18/1957
Wenshan Zhuang-Miao Autonomous Prefecture (capital Wenshan)	Yunnan	04/01/1958
Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture (capital Chuxiong)	Yunnan	04/15/1958
Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Hess)	Gansu	11/19/1956
Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture (capital Linxia)	Gansu	11/19/1956
Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Yushu)	Qinghai	12/25/1951
Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Gonghe)	Qinghai	12/06/1953

Table 5 National Autonomous Areas in China (cont.)

Name	Province or Autonomous Region	Date of Establishment (mm/dd/yy)
Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Tongren)	Qinghai	12/22/1953
Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Haomen)	Qinghai	12/31/1953
Guoluo Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Maqen)	Qinghai	01/01/1954
Haixi Mongol-Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (capital Delingha)	Qinghai	01/25/1954
Bayingol Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture (capital Korla)	Xinjiang	06/23/1954
Bortala Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture (capital Bole)	Xinjiang	07/13/1954
Kizilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture (capital Artux)	Xinjiang	07/14/1954
Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture (capital Changji)	Xinjiang	07/15/1954
Ili Kazak Autonomous Prefecture (capital Gulia)	Xinjiang	11/27/1954
Mengcun Hui Autonomous County	Hebei	11/30/1955
Dachang Hui Autonomous County	Hebei	12/07/1955
Qinglong Manchu Autonomous County	Hebei	05/10/1987
Fengning Manchu Autonomous County	Hebei	05/15/1987
Kuancheng Manchu Autonomous County	Hebei	06/16/1990
Weichang Manchu-Mongolian Autonomous County	Hebei	09/12/1990
Harqin Zuoyi Mongolian Autonomous County	Liaoning	04/01/1958
Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County	Liaoning	04/07/1958
Xinbin Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/07/1985
Xiuyan Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/11/1985
Fengcheng Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/13/1985
Beizhen Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/03/1990
Qingyuan Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/06/1990
Benxi Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/08/1990
Hengren Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/10/1990
Kuandian Manchu Autonomous County	Liaoning	06/12/1990
Qian Gorlos Mongolian Autonomous County	Jilin	09/01/1956
Changbai Korean Autonomous County	Jilin	09/15/1958

Table 5 National Autonomous Areas in China (cont.)

Name	Province or Autonomous Region	Date of Establishment (mm/dd/yy)
Yitong Manch Autonomous County	Jilin	08/30/1989
Durbud Mongolian Autonomous County	Heilongjiang	12/05/1956
Jingning She Autonomous County	Zhejiang	12/24/1984
Changyang Tujia Autonomous County	Hubei	12/08/1984
Wufeng Tujia Autonomous County	Hubei	12/12/1984
Tongdao Dong Autonomous County	Hunan	05/07/1954
Jianghua Yao Autonomous County	Hunan	11/25/1955
Chengbu Miao Autonomous County	Hunan	11/30/1955
Xinhuang Dong Autonomous County	Hunan	12/05/1956
Zhijiang Dong Autonomous County	Hunan	09/24/1987
Jingzhou Miao-Dong Autonomous County	Hunan	09/27/1987
Mayang Miao Autonomous County	Hunan	04/01/1990
Liannan Yao Autonomous County	Guangdong	01/25/1953
Lianshan Zhuang-Yao Autonomous County	Guangdong	09/26/1962
Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County	Guangdong	10/01/1963
Longsheng Multi-nationalities Autonomous County	Guangxi	08/19/1951
Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County	Guangxi	05/28/1952
Rongshui Miao Autonomous County	Guangxi	11/26/1952
Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County	Guangxi	12/03/1952
Longlin Multi-nationalities Autonomous County	Guangxi	01/01/1953
Du'an Yao Autonomous County	Guangxi	12/15/1955
Bama Yao Autonomous County	Guangxi	02/06/1956
Fangcheng Multi-nationalities Autonomous County	Guangxi	05/01/1958
Fuchuan Yao Autonomous County	Guangxi	01/01/1984
Luocheng Gelo Autonomous County	Guangxi	10/01/1984
Huanjiang Maonan Autonomous County	Guangxi	11/24/1987
Dahua Yao Autonomous County	Guangxi	12/23/1987

Table 5 National Autonomous Areas in China (cont.)

Name	Province or Autonomous Region	Date of Establishment (mm/dd/yy)
Muli Tibetan Autonomous County	Sichuan	02/19/1953
Maowen Qiang Autonomous County	Sichuan	07/07/1958
Xiushan Tujia-Miao Autonomous County	Sichuan	11/07/1983
Youyang Tujia-Miao Autonomous County	Sichuan	11/11/1983
Ebian Yi Autonomous County	Sichuan	10/05/1984
Mabian Yi Autonomous County	Sichuan	10/09/1984
Penghui Miao-Tujia Autonomous County	Sichuan	11/10/1984
Qianjiang Tujia-Miao Autonomous County	Sichuan	11/13/1984
Shizhu Tujia Autonomous County	Sichuan	11/18/1984
Weining Yi-Hui-Miao Autonomous County	Guizhou	11/11/1954
Songtao Miao Autonomous County	Guizhou	12/31/1956
Sandu Shui Autonomous County	Guizhou	01/02/1957
Zhenning Bouyei-Miao Autonomous County	Guizhou	09/11/1963
Ziyun Miao-Bouyei Autonomous County	Guizhou	02/11/1966
Guanling Bouyei-Miao Autonomous County	Guizhou	12/31/1981
Yuping Dong Autonomous County	Guizhou	11/07/1984
Yinjiang Tujia-Miao Autonomous County	Guizhou	11/20/1987
Yanhe Tujia Autonomous County	Guizhou	11/23/1987
Wuchuan Gelo-Miao Autonomous County	Guizhou	11/26/1987
Daozhen Gelo-Miao Autonomous County	Guizhou	11/29/1987
Eshan Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	05/12/1951
Lancang Lahu Autonomous County	Yunnan	04/07/1953
Jiangcheng Hani-Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	05/18/1954
Menglian Dai-Lahu-Va Autonomous County	Yunnan	06/16/1954
Gengma Dai-Va Autonomous County	Yunnan	10/16/1955
Ninglang Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	09/20/1956
Gongshan Dulong-Nu Autonomous County	Yunnan	10/01/1956

Table 5 National Autonomous Areas in China (cont.)

Name	Province or Autonomous Region	Date of Establishment (mm/dd/yy)
Weishan Yi-Hui Autonomous County	Yunnan	11/09/1956
Lunan Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	12/31/1956
Lijiang Naxi Autonomous County	Yunnan	04/10/1961
Pingbian Miao Autonomous County	Yunnan	07/01/1963
Hekou Yao Autonomous County	Yunnan	02/28/1964
Cangyuan Va Autonomous County	Yunnan	02/28/1964
Ximeng Wa Autonomous County	Yunnan	03/05/1965
Nanjian Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	11/27/1965
Mojiang Hani Autonomous County	Yunnan	11/28/1979
Yuanjiang Hani-Yi-Dai Autonomous County	Yunnan	11/22/1980
Xinping Yi-Dai Autonomous County	Yunnan	11/25/1980
Weixi Lisu Autonomous County	Yunnan	10/13/1985
Yangbi Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	11/01/1985
Luquan Yi-Miao Autonomous County	Yunnan	11/25/1985
Jinping Miao-Yao-Dai Autonomous County	Yunnan	12/07/1985
Pu'er Hani-Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	12/15/1985
Jingdong Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	12/20/1985
Jinggu Dai-Yi Autonomous County	Yunnan	12/25/1985
Shuangjiang Lahu-Wa-Blang-Dai Autonomous County	Yunnan	12/30/1985
Lanping Bai-Pumi Autonomous County	Yunnan	05/25/1988
Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County	Gansu	05/06/1950
Ganbei Mogolian Autonomous County	Gansu	07/29/1950
Dongxiang Autonomous County	Gansu	09/25/1950
Zhangjiachuan Hui Autonomous County	Gansu	07/06/1953
Gannan Yugur Autonomous County	Gansu	02/20/1954
Aksay Kazak Autonomous County	Gansu	04/27/1954
Jishishan Bonan-Dongxiang-Salar Autonomous County	Gansu	09/30/1981

Table 5 National Autonomous Areas in China (cont.)

Name	Province or Autonomous Region	Date of Establishment (mm/dd/yy)
Menyuan Hui Autonomous County	Qinghai	12/19/1953
Huzhu Tu Autonomous County	Qinghai	02/17/1954
Hualong Hui Autonomous County	Qinghai	03/01/1954
Xunhua Salar Autonomous County	Qinghai	03/01/1954
Henan Mongolian Autonomous County	Qinghai	10/16/1954
Minhe Hui-Tu Autonomous County	Qinghai	06/27/1986
Datong Hui-Tu Autonomous County	Qinghai	07/10/1986
Yanqi Hui Autonomous County	Xinjiang	03/15/1954
Qapqi Xibe Autonomous County	Xinjiang	03/25/1954
Mori Kazak Autonomous County	Xinjiang	07/17/1954
Hoboksar Mongolian Autonomous County	Xinjiang	09/10/1954
Taxkorgan Tajik Autonomous County	Xinjiang	09/17/1954
Barkol Kazak Autonomous County	Xinjiang	09/30/1954
Oroqen Autonomous Banner (County)	Inner Mongolia	08/01/1951
Ewenki Autonomous Banner (County)	Inner Mongolia	08/01/1958
Morin Dawa Daur Autonomous Banner (County)	Inner Mongolia	08/15/1958
Ledong Li Autonomous County	Hainan	12/28/1987
Dongfang Li Autonomous County	Hainan	12/28/1987
Qiongzong Li-Miao Autonomous County	Hainan	12/28/1987
Baoting Li-Miao Autonomous County	Hainan	12/30/1987
Changjiang Li Autonomous County	Hainan	12/30/1987
Baisha Li Autonomous County	Hainan	12/30/1987
Lingshui Li Autonomous County	Hainan	12/30/1987

Source: *Minzu Zhishi Shouce* (1990: 843-851, 886-887)

Note:

- * The Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture was transformed into the Aba Tibetan-Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in the late 1980s.
- * The Hainan Li-Miao Autonomous Prefecture was cancelled when Hainan became a province in 1987.
- * There were five autonomous regions, thirty autonomous prefectures, and one hundred and twenty-two autonomous counties in China by June 1990.
- * The nationalities without self-governments include: Gaoshan, Achang, Pumi, Uzbek, Russian, De'ang, Tatar, Hezhen, Moinba, Lhoba, Jinuo

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