

## ETHNOLOGISTS IN CHINA

To those who have observed it for a long time, the People's Republic of China today has the appearance of a convalescent who has made his way back from a long illness and is slowly relearning to use his vital organs. And this is the consequence of the decisive and remarkable measures taken after the death of Mao Tse-tung and the subsequent elimination of his abusive widow, Chiang Ch'ing, by survivors of the great cultural revolution, now in the upper circles of the Chinese Communist party. Explanations were provided in the "Resolution on the History of the Chinese Communist Party" adopted June 27, 1981, at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Eleventh Party Congress. But the real turning point dates from 1978, in the historic third session of this same Eleventh Congress when the opposition to Mao's chosen successor, Hua Guo-feng, called upon participants to "liberate their minds and to seek truth in the facts". A new People's China had begun to take shape, and although it is not yet possible to pass judgement on its future prospects, visitors who travel there today can only bear witness to the return of this immense population to existential reality, while little by little the "barracks socialism" of the ultra-leftists is dying out.

Among positive signs in the medical report of the "New China"

Translated by R. Scott Walker.

is one phenomenon which has gone almost unnoticed to Western observers: the rebirth of Chinese ethnology.

#### 1. THE TERRAIN

First of all toward the middle of 1979, the respectable *Minzu yanjiu*, "Studies of Nationalities (or Ethnic Groups)" reappeared. In the Sixties it was still being published by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, but had disappeared in the early days of the cultural revolution. This new series followed closely on the heels of the creation in 1977-78 of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. This new academy took over from the department of philosophical and social sciences of the Academy of Sciences in the Fifties, in which had been created, in 1956 and 1958 respectively, the Institute for Ethnic Minority Languages and the Research Institute for Minorities. During the first decade of its history, the People's Republic had to come to grips with the national question. This had for a long time remained the unresolved problem of the first republic, after 1911. Although Sun Yat-Sen's democracy was not unaware of the existence of China's non-Han population, it acknowledged a truly national character only in the most combative peoples: Mongols, Tibetans, Muslims, Manchu. The others were often mixed together in an inextricable group called the "border peoples". It was under these conditions that ethnology was introduced into China, first of all as a foreign practice primarily involving observation of the Chinese themselves, and then, as scholars who had left to study in Europe or the United States returned to the country, as a university discipline, gradually inserted into each of the country's major universities. Then, in order to serve better a completely new country, and one threatened by colonization, many of them turned to the study of the "border peoples". In this field they encountered a host of Western travelers and missionaries who had laid the foundations of the modern ethnography of these peoples. The period from the Thirties up to the communist victory in 1949 was one marked by interesting research and renewed efforts at forming groups of anthropology and folklore societies. But difficulties in traveling and working in a country increasingly destroyed by the Japanese invasion and then by civil war did not allow the creation of a satisfactory synthesis of this research, doomed to remain incomplete and isolated from other similar studies. It must be admitted that it was only after the creation of

the People's Republic that a national effort combining the efforts of all made possible the classification, identification and study of some sixty different peoples in the territory of China. The method used to determine the official recognition of these peoples was based on Stalinian criteria for identification: "a stable community, historically constituted by language, territory, economic life and psychic formation, which is expressed in a common culture". For it was still the period during which the Soviet model was dominant. However, now it can readily be recognized that none of the peoples considered really corresponded to all these criteria. Moreover, although these were Marxist rules, those responsible for applying them had been trained in the functionalist school of anthropology. They were skillfully able to come up with the necessary compromises. Fei Hsiao-t'ong, a student of Malinowski and author (under the direction of his master) of the famous *Peasant Life in China, a Field Study of Country Life in the Yangtze Valley* (London, 1939), who was vice-director of the Minority (or Nationality) Institute at the time of its creation, as well as member of the Commission on Nationality Affairs of the government's Administrative Council, explained during a trip to Canada in 1979 how in practice the "nationalities" had been identified in the Fifties. Preliminary research, after the Liberation (1949), had recorded no less than 400 names of ethnic groups requesting recognition as "nationalities". The province of Yunnan alone contained 260!

It was necessary, then, to sort through these requests, inspired by the hope (understandable in a period of revolution) of obtaining special treatment. This colossal task of identifying and understanding the non-Han ethnic groups in China, which involved years of work by hundreds of research teams all over China, made it possible first of all to recognize 54 nationalities. In 1979 the figure became 55 with official recognition of the "jinuo" tribe, a small Tibetan-Burman group in south Yunnan. At present there remain 880,000 persons whose nationality must still be determined, concentrated particularly in the border regions of Tibet or Yunnan, where linguistic and ethnological progress (given the number of people) occurred much later, and are only now beginning to yield their fruits.

The purpose of this official recognition of ethnic groups was not simply an academic matter; it was accompanied by development of a policy of equality and autonomy for minorities so recognized. As a result they were represented in the people's Consultative Assembly out of all proportion to their actual numbers within the

country's population. A certain degree of administrative autonomy was granted them in five autonomous regions, thirty departments and 72 subprefectures (present breakdown). And this policy was always less violently revolutionary than the one applied within areas of Han population. It is, in fact, all to the honor of Chinese ethnologists, and their spokesmen within the Party, that they have brought about acceptance of the principle of a differential evolution for non-native populations. Catalogued according to Marxist-Leninist criteria, the sum of these minority societies offers a complete picture of the development of human societies according to Marxist tradition, broken down into "primitive society", "slavery as a system of production", "serfdom" and "feudalism".

"The situation of nationalities in China shortly after the Liberation provided researchers with a veritable *living manual of the history of social development*", noted Fei Hsiao-t'ong in 1979.

For the teams of social workers assigned the responsibility to direct the development of these various societies, this meant making scientific analyses of their systems of production and class relationships (if there were any) and encouraging within the people and the leaders of these ethnic groups a common desire for change. For those closest to the Han, the Tchouang, the Muslims or the Manchus, where the system of production was that of feudal landholding, a simple and rapid extension of agrarian reform was sufficient to bring about profound transformations in the society. But in the more archaic ethnic groups, (the ones classified as primitive communities, slave societies or serfdom), it was necessary to arrange for a gradual evolution in order to achieve a peaceful transformation, without in the least obscuring the fact that they were being made to accomplish a veritable leap in history, across a number of historic periods (in the Marxist scheme for general social evolution).

Fei Hsiao-t'ong, who inspected this work himself in Guizhou and in Yunnan around 1950-51, today still insists on what seemed to him to be the essential element of this experiment. "In other words, the reform of a society must be decided upon and realized by the peoples of the various nationalities themselves... In-depth social reform of a nationality cannot be achieved by proxy. Any reform of this type imposed on a people without consideration for its motives will not take root among the masses, and the fruit of such a reform will be lost, even if it is possible to enforce it for a period of time. To speak in concrete terms, the internal factors for a social reform within a given nationality can include: the awareness of the

masses who demand the reform; the possession by the masses of the physical force, including armed force, to withstand the forces opposed to the reform; and its own national framework for directing and organizing the masses". (Fei Hsiao-t'ong, 1981).

The challenge was a large one, and it must be said that often it was met. However, this "democratic reform" did not always take place as spontaneously as might have been desired. The primary condition was ultimately that every other solution be excluded, or, as Fei continues, "that the part be controlled and led on by the whole". Thus the small minority of slave-owners in the Small and Great Cool Mountains of Yunnan and Sichuan ultimately accepted the liberation of their slaves after four years of "peaceful consultations", because these regions were, on the one hand, controlled by the People's Liberation Army and any armed resistance would have been useless, but also because the Chinese state guaranteed that following the abolition of the former systems of production, there would be a "policy of indemnification of the former exploiting class so as to ensure them proper and honest political treatment and to maintain their standard of living so that they could live in a new society without exploitation in a manner similar to that which they had known in the past". On this latter point, essential for peaceful negotiations, Fei states quite clearly, "The social economy of minorities in China was relatively backward and their population quite limited. The whole of the Chinese people had sufficient means to pay off the limited number of exploiters of these minorities, thereby avoiding any damage or sabotage to an economy already under-developed and undergoing transformation. This was of benefit to the working population of these minorities".

This Chinese alternative to revolution, which cannot be found in a non-synchronous context, succeeded with the Yi who renounced slavery in 1956 after four years of gentle penetration and persuasion. Not every ambiguity was avoided, however, as Winnington reported (1959) after visiting the Little Cool Mountains, for the former slaves tended to consider that the servile link which bound them to their former masters had simply been transferred to Chinese cadre. Elsewhere, among the Tai of Tehong (or Shan) who underwent agrarian reform in 1955, or Sipsong Panna (the Lü) who took similar steps in 1956, the proximity of the borders encouraged the flight of some of the elite. Among Tibetans (after a long hesitation waltz) there was armed revolt in 1959, which led to the intervention of the Chinese Liberation Army.

Nevertheless, other populations had already moved on to the “socialist transformation” phase, with distributed land being re-grouped into production cooperatives before the brutal acceleration imposed by Mao Tse-tung on the entire country brought everyone, majority and minority groups, into the melting pot of the people’s commune. Change without stress and without hate had existed. Although today it is necessary to admit that alongside certain spectacular successes there was a certain number of failures in this minority policy inspired by the program of the United Front of the National Forces (working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie and the national industrial bourgeoisie), the probity of ethnologists and other social workers is not in question. It can be seen today, with the re-publication for the general public and abroad of certain research reports in the series *Research Material on the Societies and History of Minority Nationalities in China*. At the same time, research work by linguists, who patiently untangled the knot of languages and dialects, has for the first time provided a complete classification of minority languages. Practical use of this immense descriptive and analytical work has produced Romanized writings for many of these languages, particularly for those which had no written form or whose traditional written form was little used. For others reforms were reached through simplification. In every case reading handbooks and bilingual dictionaries began to appear here and there. The oral literature of these populations was collected, and the first translations into Chinese often date to this period.

## 2. THE PEOPLE

The first echoes of the development of ethnology in the Western world reached China during the last years of the Manchu Empire with the appearance in 1902 of a translation of the book by the Japanese Ariga Nagao, *The Evolution of the Family*, based on works by Spencer and Morgan. Morgan’s *Ancient Society* and Spencer’s *Principles of Sociology* were soon translated into Chinese, and the influence of Western anthropology and sociology began to make itself felt in the works of the first modern Chinese historians, who enjoyed using such totally new concepts as “totem”, “taboo” and “mana”. Translations of Western authors, such as Westermarch: *The History of Human Marriage* (New York, 1891) and Durkheim: *Les règles de la méthode sociologique*, appeared first in serial form in newspapers.

In four decades the main trends of Western ethnology began to be found represented in China and were spread through a youthful Chinese intelligentsia, eager to discover the secrets of technological progress and social change.

Evolutionism was the first example, spread under the impulse of Ts'ai Yuan P'ei (1868-1940). This great educator and researcher<sup>1</sup> had encountered evolutionist theories between 1908 and 1911 while studying philosophy, literature, the history of civilization and anthropology at the University of Leipzig. After his return to China in 1912, he was named director of the Peking University in 1917. After fulfilling this role for six years, he returned to Europe in 1923 to study systems of education there. At this time he was named to represent China at the International Ethnology Congress on Pre-Columbian America and the Amerindians, held in Stockholm, August-September, 1924.

Influenced by this conference and a subsequent visit to the Hamburg Ethnography Museum, he stopped at the University of Hamburg to study ethnology until a telegram arrived from his government summoning him back to China in early 1926. In the same year he published an article entitled "On Ethnology" in the review *Yiban zazhi* ("In General") which marked a turning point in the history of ethnology in China. On the one hand he denounced the class-conscious nature of Western ethnology, seen as a colonialist's examination of subjugated peoples; on the other he stressed the value of reading the historic documents of ancient China from an ethnological point of view, by introducing, for example, the notions of totem, of the anteriority of uterine filiation, etc. And for the first time, he translated the word "ethnology" into Chinese by *minzu xue*, instead of *renzhong xue* ("raciology") or *renlei xue* ("anthropology") as his predecessors had done.<sup>2</sup> His interest in primitive societies was so keen than in 1928, when he founded the Central Research Institute devoted to law, economy and sociology, he set up within the sociological research center the first ethnology team with himself as director.

<sup>1</sup> See the biography written by Zhou Tiandu, *The Life of Ts'ai Yuan P'ei*, Peking, 1984. For our purposes, it does not add anything to the excellent article by Hu Qiwang, "Ts'ai Yuan P'ei and Ethnology" in *Ethnological Studies (Minzuxue yanjiu)*, 1, 1981.

<sup>2</sup> The memory of this initial phase of indecision about the manner of translating the notion of ethnology into Chinese has remained engraved in French-Chinese dictionaries which, even in the most recently published today, give the definition: *renzhong xue* "raciologie".

In line with the program that he had designed, he successively sent a whole raft of young Chinese ethnologists out into the field. In 1928 Yan Fuli and Shang Chengzu did research on the Yao of Lin Yun; in 1929 Lin Huixiang worked among the natives of Taiwan. In 1930 Lin Chouen-cheng and Shang Chengzu were with the Heche or Goldes in the Lower Sungari region. In 1932 Lin Shunsheng, Ruyi Yih-fu and Yong Shiheng were with the Miao in the west of Hunan. In 1933 they were with the She of Zhejiang. In 1934 Lin Chouen-cheng and Tao Yunkui were with the Yi of Yunnan. Meanwhile translation of major works from the West continued. In 1926 there was *Anthropology* by Tylor, and in 1931 *Anthropology* by Marett and Frazer's *Golden Palm*, the third volume of which, dealing with the psychology of sympathetic magic, was translated and published by Li Anshi in 1931 under the title, *Theory of Magic*. Frazer had a decisive influence on Jiang Shaoyuan in his early works, as later in *The Journey into Ancient China* (1935).<sup>3</sup> A student of A.C. Haddon,<sup>4</sup> Li Xian, clearly illustrates the tendencies and limits of evolutionism in this period, concentrating on research into cultural particularities and "holdovers". From his field work among the Li of Hainan, he brought back successively reports on the "worship of carved wooden statues among the Li" (1935), "tattoos" (1936), the "Jew's harp" (1940), a "preliminary study of their origins" (1940) another on "masks", and a more comparative essay on "traditions of the ancestodog in Asia" (1941-42).

The diffusionism of Father Schmidt and Graebner ultimately found few followers in China even though it was taught at the Furen Catholic University of Peking and in reviews like *Foreign Studies* and *Ethnology*, published in English, French and German and devoted to ethnology, linguistics and archaeology. Its essential themes of cultural strata, areas and circles were found primarily among foreign ethnologists like Dr. Hans Stübel who worked with the Yao of Guangdong and the Li of Hainan and, to a lesser extent, in the work of Tao Yunkui who had studied applied anthropology, ethnology and genetics in Berlin and Hamburg.

Appointed director of sociological studies at the university of Yunnan during the war of resistance against Japan, Tao Yunkui created a research team in human sciences working on border region populations. As managing editor of the review *Humanities of*

<sup>3</sup> Translated into French in 1939 by Fan Jen, republished in Vientiane, 1974.

<sup>4</sup> In 1937 Lu Yizhou translated his *Headhunters of Insulinde*.

*the Borders*, he had much influence<sup>5</sup> until his death in 1944, after having turned over the direction of sociological studies to Wou Wen-tsaio, a refugee from Peking's Yanjing University.

The American school of historical particularism established by Boas and his disciples, although not unknown to Chinese ethnologists, especially for its critique of Morgan's evolutionism, did not have much influence over them. Lowie's *Primitive Society* was not translated into Chinese until 1935, as was Wissler's *An Introduction to Social Anthropology. Anthropology and Modern Life* by Boas himself, translated by Yang Chengzhi, was not published until 1945.

The ideas of Boas and Kroeber about cultural areas and configurations were circulated more in sociological circles where there appeared a trend toward cultural sociology, or even, with Huang Wenshan, simply "culturology". The most influential representative of this school, Sun Benwen, had been a student of Boas at Columbia and headed sociological studies at the central university of Peking. His book, *Principles of Sociology*, served as textbook in a number of universities. Apart from translations and theoretical articles, field research such as that by Wu Zelin and Chen Goujun on Miao societies and those of the Yi of Guizhou was rare. Only Dai Yixuan seemed to have fully used the notion of cultural configuration in his study of the Lao in which he assembled from historical sources a set of cultural traits which described the "Lao configuration": houses built on stilts, bronze drums, tattooing, lacquered teeth, placing of the dead at the edge of a cliff, head-hunting, drinking by the nose, etc. In his study of houses on stilts (*ganlan*), the

<sup>5</sup> His own research into the ethnic minorities of Yunnan ("On the origin of the name of the Mo-so, their geographic distribution and their migrations" and "The Lissou of Mount Poloxue") were often models of the type. In "Divining by chicken bones among populations of the Southwest", he attempts the history of a cultural trait. After having minutely described the custom among the Yi and analyzed its present distribution among the Tai, the Miao, etc., he compared it with historical documents before concluding that it is a practice of non-Han peoples of the Southwest, acquired by them from the Han.

In his classic ethnographic description of the "cycle of life among the Pa Yi of Tch'e Li (i.e. among the Tai of Sipsong Panan)", he attempted to describe the reality of life by taking "a life cycle in longitude (from birth to death) and all aspects of life in latitude". But the goal he sought, which he himself stated in "Border Societies of the Southwest", was not only to know these societies, but to determine the general laws of these societies and human cultures.

“primitive” habitat of southwest China, he researched the center of this cultural configuration, which included south China and all the coastal regions of southeast Asia.

The French school of sociology had an important and long-lasting influence on Chinese ethnologists, especially Durkheim, whose works were almost all translated into Chinese, and Mauss, through his ethnology courses which many of the first wave of Chinese ethnologists had attended in Paris. The work of Lin Chouen-cheng, from his first essay on the Goldes (Heche) of Sungari to his description of the Miao of Hunan together with Ruey Yih-fu, conforms to Mauss’ ideal of meticulously describing every detail of daily living, even the most trivial. Yang Chengzhi, a pioneer in the study of the Yi of Yunnan and Xu Yitang, who worked on the Yao of Guangxi then the Xy of Sichuan, in their field research employed the plan derived from Mauss which Lin Chouen-cheng had developed.<sup>6</sup> For studies of historic ethnology, such as those of Yang Chengzhi on the Yi, the method consisted in a critical ordering of documents gleaned from local monographs. The principal criticism directed today against those who did field research is that they minimized the economic structure by refusing to attempt any explanation for the causes of social development. Others, who were the means for the spread of French ethnology and sociology in China, such as Yang Kun, a student of Mauss and of Granet, professor at the University of Peking and the University of Yanjing, a participant in sinology research at the Franco-Chinese Center of Sinology, or Wei Huilin, professor of culture at the Sun Yat-Sen University in Canton, are criticised for not having used concrete studies taken from the field to illustrate the theories they propounded. In this respect they were one and all quite like French ethnologists of the Thirties and Forties, dominated by respect for the “total social phenomenon”.

Finally, the British functionalist school had the greatest influence in the years preceding the Liberation. Introduced by Wu Wenzao, who wrote several articles about it between 1936 and 1944, the Chinese functionalist school was based in the sociology department of Janjing University. Wou Wen-tsao was not only a

<sup>6</sup> See “Ethnological Field Research Methods”, a research plan published in the first issue of *Ethnological Studies* (1936), which had a total of 842 questions.

follower of Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski, whom he had discovered after having begun his professorial career, but also a field researcher in the rural and urban Han milieu as well as among the Yao, the Yi and the Tai, following his exile to Yunnan. There, with the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation, he set up the Yunnan Research Station. Around him, at Yanjing and later at Kunming, he brought together an elite group of young social anthropologists: Zhang Ziyi, Li Anshi, Li Youyi, Tian Rukang, Lin Yaohua,<sup>7</sup> etc., the best known of whom being the famous Fei Xiaot'ong who was to become his successor as head of the Yunnan Research Station.

With unusual energy between 1943 and 1948, Wu Wenzao and his staff published no less than nine volumes of translations and village monographs in the functionalist manner, research into minority groups such as that of Tian Rukang on the Tai at the Burma border, or that of Lin Yaohua on the Yi of the Cool Mountains.

However, there was still a certain number of ethnologists who were not really attached to any of the major currents coming out of Europe or America. There was Jiang Yingliang, whose research on the Yao, the Yi and Tai of Yunnan are still authoritative; Ma Changshou, who in 1961 published a book on *Slavery and Tribal Organization in the Kingdom of Nantchao*, Cen Jawu and Zhen Xujing. Xu Languang, better known abroad by the name of Francis L.K. Hsü, took advantage of his exile in Yunnan to study the populations of the area around Tali. Later he brought out his famous book, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow*. Likewise at that time, Martin C. Yang wrote his monograph, *Taitou, A Chinese Village, Province of Chantong*.

#### THE 1949 SPLIT

To summarize the situation just before the takeover by the Chinese Communists (since described as the "Liberation"), Chinese ethnologists were divided into several groups, engaged in a parallel manner in reconnaissance activities over an immense area, working from fractions of "terrain" still accessible during the war against

<sup>7</sup> The latter, who also published a community study in English entitled *The Golden Wing*, is likewise known as Lin Yueh-hwa.

Japan and then the civil war. Belonging to one or another school depended as much on interpersonal relations, especially relations between master and student, as it did on outside influence. Wu Wenzao, who had attended Boas' classes at Columbia and received Robert E. Park from Chicago as visiting professor in 1931-32, nevertheless preferred British functionalism and directed his students toward that tendency. Fei Hsiao-t'ong who had studied under Park at Yanjing, went to London to write his thesis under Malinowski.

In the same manner, the staff of researchers set up around Lin Choeun-cheng and Ruey Yih-fu by Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei (died in 1940) remained a cohesive group, and the leading disciples followed the example of their masters. There was an important reason for this: the difficulty, in China as in the West, of finding university positions open in ethnology. Apart from the Institute of History and Philology and the Institute of Social Sciences at the Academia Sinica, there were but fourteen university faculties that hired teachers in ethnology. Given the limited number of chairs available in the field, many of them taught sociology instead. This was especially true of the functionalists who presented their studies of Han communities as "sociology". Competition became even more severe when teams from the north and east returned to the southwest.<sup>8</sup>

The second observation which must be made is that through their studies abroad, their translations of fundamental texts and their contacts with European and American ethnologists working in China, Chinese ethnologists had a rather good idea of the various theses that abounded in the world of social sciences. They selected the ones which suited them, ever hopeful that their own research would also help knowledge to advance.

Although they were not ignorant of Marxist theory, few of them adhered to it, imitating in this respect most sociologists and ethnologists in the West.

Apart from the study by Mao Tse-tung of peasant movements in Hunan, which dates from 1927, followed by his "Glimpse of Hsing-

<sup>8</sup> The Academia Sinica, first created in Nanking (in 1928), was evacuated to Sichuan, Guizhou and Guangxi during the years of the Japanese occupation, beginning in 1937. In 1945 its staff was able to return to Nanking and to Shanghai. In the north ethnologists and sociologists were employed in the major universities of Peking.

Kouo" (1930), during the period preceding the Liberation, there were no other Marxist studies except those of Chen Hanseng. A historian by training, who had studied in the United States and in England, he finally specialized in research on agrarian systems in order to understand the history of China better. His first major studies appeared in English in 1936 with the title, *Landlord and Peasant in China: A Study of Agrarian Crisis in South China*. His international reputation brought him very quickly to head the Institute of Social Sciences at the Academia Sinica, and he became an active member of the Chinese section of the Institute of Pacific Relations, created in 1925 in Hawaii "to study the condition of peoples around the Pacific in order to improve their mutual relationships". In 1939 he published *Industrial Capital and Chinese Peasants: A Study of the Livelihood of Chinese Tobacco Cultivators*, research covering 127 villages and three provinces, examining the influence of modern industrialization on daily living in a semi-feudal context. Finally, after fleeing to the West, he became interested in ethnic minorities and produced two field studies, one on the Tai of Sipsong Panna in Yunnan, and another on the Kamba of Sikiang, published in the same volume by the Institute of Pacific Relations in 1949.

His analysis of classes and systems of production prefigured research that was to be done after the Liberation, leading up to agrarian reform.

The functionalists, enterprising young Turks, also had the ambition of preparing the major social transformations that seemed necessary for the modernization of China. But unlike the Marxists, what they were looking for were not foundations for class struggle but functional levers for the peaceful and harmonious development of traditional societies. This progressive attitude was not far from being a political commitment and it made them suspicious in the eyes of the Kuomintang and the other ethnologists who, with Wang Tchong,<sup>9</sup> thought that the "fervor of political convictions is fundamentally incompatible with the scientific spirit of research in the social sciences".

In their Yunnan exile in the Forties, Fei Hsiao-t'ong and his

<sup>9</sup> "L'enchaînement des problèmes sociaux" in *La Sociologie*, vol. 5, pp. 89-101; 1936.

student Tchang Tse-Yi produced three community studies, which appeared in English in 1945 under the title *Earthbound China*. Fei went even further in "Peasantry and Gentry: An Interpretation of Chinese Social Structure and Its Changes", published in the *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 52, n. 1, 1946. Encouraged by the success he encountered abroad, where he was frequently invited to give lectures on the situation in China, Fei published in rapid succession in 1948<sup>10</sup> *Rural China* and *Rural Reconstruction*. In these works he developed the thesis of a controlled transition for the class of land-owners who made up the traditional elite of rural China.

These positions were now backed up as well by a political commitment. In 1946 Fei rallied the anti-Kuomintang "democratic movement", led by his former teacher and friend P'an Kouang-tan (Quentin P'an) and Wen Yi-touo. Opposition to the Kuomintang brought together the functionalists of the Democratic League, who hoped to be a third force between the communists and the nationalists and who were preaching national reconciliation. This explains their desire to remain and to be a part of the major transformations then taking shape as the communists controlled almost the entire country in 1949. Their leader, Wou Wen-tsoo, stationed in Japan as member of the Allied Council, returned to Peking in 1951 after having declined an invitation from Yale University.

This general attitude of the functionalists contrasted sharply with that of ethnologists from the Academia Sinica, most of whom followed the retreat of the nationalists to the island of Taiwan. In 1955 Ling Shun-Sheng founded an actual ethnology institute in Nan-Kang.<sup>11</sup>

Whether they fled to Taiwan or remained on the continent, Chinese ethnologists made their choice based upon their evaluation of the situation. For some, to remain meant taking part in the revolu-

<sup>10</sup> At that time Fei had spent a total of three years and three months abroad: two years in England (1936-38), one year in the United States (1943-44) and three months again in England (1946-47). See the excellent biography by R.D. Arkush, *Fei Xiaotong and Sociology in Revolutionary China*. Harvard East Asian Monograph, N. 98, Cambridge (Mass.) and London, 1981.

<sup>11</sup> In fact, along with the new Institute of Mathematics, the Institute of History and Philology, which included ethnologists, was the only one to be completely evacuated to Taiwan in 1949.

tion and in national reconstruction in the role of societal specialists. For others, escaping from the power of the communists meant safeguarding freedom of thought and preserving acquired knowledge deemed essential for the country's future. The patriotism of both groups has never been questioned. And although some left their country to seek refuge in America or in England, they did so primarily in order to maintain their professional specialities. The division, no matter how deep it seemed at the time, was superficial. In 1983 at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, there was a conference on modernization and Chinese culture which brought together 36 renowned Chinese university professors and research scholars, from the People's Republic, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong. Fei Hsiao-t'ong and Ruey Yih-fu, among the eldest present, had not been seen for more than thirty years.

### 3. THE IDEAS

Maurice Freedman wrote in 1962 that, "before World War II, apart from America and Western Europe, China was one of the most flourishing sociological centers in the World, at least in terms of intellectual quality". This compliment could be extended, particularly with regard to the functionalists, to all of Chinese ethnology, which had, in just a few years, accumulated a great deal of material and experience in the field.

At the same time, since Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, ethnology had become a recognized force and played a role in the movement of ideas about the modernization of China. Nevertheless, one observation must be made immediately with regard to these laudatory statements. Marxism, whose influence on the political scene was growing with every day, had barely penetrated anthropological theory, even when it had a direct or indirect influence on ethnologists' concerns. Moreover, most functionalist social anthropologists (and a certain number of ethnologists) held chairs of sociology in their universities. But in the Stalinian model that lay behind the Maoism of that time, there was no room for sociology, stigmatized as being a reactionary bourgeois discipline, an ideological shield for capitalism.

The functionalists were caught in their own trap for having

“fraudulently” introduced social anthropology disguised as “sociology”. But they were not alone in the iron cage that closed around them. All non-Marxist university professors and other intellectuals in China were systematically subjected to ideological re-education.

Between 1949 and 1952 there was a period of uncertainty. Yang Ch'ing-K'un took advantage of this to continue his study of village communities near Canton with a group of students, which enabled them to measure the impact of the Liberation in this village up until 1951.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, Fei Hsiao-t'ong and his friends at the universities of Yanjing, Quinghua and Furen were leading a rear-guard effort to attempt to rescue their discipline by adapting it to the current tastes. Their efforts were in vain, for sociology was definitively eliminated from university curricula in 1952. This irreversible evolution forced Yang Ch'ing-K'un and Francis L.K. Hsü to leave the country and settle in the United States.

Wou Wen-tsoo, Lin Yao-hua and Quentin P'an were transferred to the Central Minorities Institute that had been opened in Peking (in 1951). Also in 1952 Tch'en Han-seng was named vice-president of the editorial committee of the review *China Reconstructs*. Later he was also named assistant director of the Institute for Research on International Relations at the Academy of Sciences, reorganized by Kouo Mojo in 1955. As for ethnologists from provincial universities, many were able to join one of the nine nationality institutes set up in the provinces between 1951 and 1961. In this way they participated, either directly or through their students, in the major research campaigns of the Fifties. Those who preferred to teach in their universities were forced to recycle themselves into the teaching of history.

#### FIRST OUTLINE OF A MARXIST CHINESE ANTHROPOLOGY

After an initial phase of ideological re-education, the professional re-insertion of Chinese ethnologists into socialist society required

<sup>12</sup> Having been unable to bring his notes, C.K. Yang recounted from memory the results of his research in two books: *A Chinese Village in Early Communist Transition*, Berkeley, 1959, and *The Chinese Family in the Communist Revolution*, Cambridge, Mass., 1959.

a redefinition of their role and of the code for their discipline. Unlike sociology, considered contrary to “scientific” Marxism, ethnology had its place in the Stalinian model. First because it had inspired Marx and Engels in developing their theories on the evolution of societies, and secondly because in the socialist state, it had more than one reason for being academic. Its principal function was to aid the State in controlling and integrating ethnic minorities.

In China although the general policy adopted with regard to minorities was defined by the Communist Party and the State, the application of this policy and finding solutions to the problems it raised were left to local authorities, who called upon teams of researchers made up of local cadres and ethnologists.

From 1951 to 1955 a new task for ethnologists was to define the notion of nationality and to identify those which could justify their being officially recognized. In 1956 a new and more ambitious project was placed under the direction of the Central Institute for Minorities and the Committee for Nationalities of the People’s National Assembly: a general survey on the society and the history of each minority recognized. The role of ethnologists and cadres responsible for minority affairs was not simply to educate and prepare new cadres drawn from minorities to participate in the administration of their native region. They needed to find means for reducing the isolation of minorities in order to lead them to socialism. However, the transition of traditional Chinese society toward socialism was already raising a number of problems, and many minority societies were still too diverse and different, making it impossible to apply to them all the same revolutionary policy immediately and without precautions. In order to define a policy adapted to them, it was necessary to know these societies precisely. And this is where ethnologists were able to make themselves useful. Nevertheless, such an applied anthropology could only generate and sustain a policy if all these societies could be measured with the same yardstick. It was thus absolutely essential to develop a prior classification of the types of economic and social formations. When the place of each minority society within the general table of the evolution of human societies was known, then it was possible to see what separated that society from the socialist state towards which it was to be led. The most reputable ethnologists thus set about this work. Using the

works of Marx and Engels and the Soviet model of Marxist ethnology, they drew up a general table of the evolution of societies and peoples that was to serve as framework for field studies.

Begun in 1956, field research went on year after year up until the launching of the "Great Cultural Revolution" in 1966. For ethnologists this represented the indefinite suspension of the twelve-year research plan, designed by Fei Hsia-t'ong under the auspices of the Committee for Nationalities of the National Assembly. The success of this research program was unprecedented in the history of Chinese ethnology. In 1963 there already were 268 research reports. But they were uniformly reserved for internal use. The program had occasionally been interrupted, in 1958 for example, at the moment of the Great Leap Forward. Fei Hsiao-t'ong himself, who had taken part in launching the program and who had spent six months in Yunnan from August 1956 to February 1957 in order to be personally a part of the research teams, quickly fell from Mao Tse-tung's good graces after publication in the *People's Daily* of his article, "The Early Spring of the Intellectuals", at the height of the period of One Hundred Flowers. In the article he advocated rehabilitation of intellectuals in social and political life, exhorting them to express their ideas openly, even if this meant criticizing official policies. He paid a heavy price for this affront, and nothing was spared him: accusations from those close to him, confessions, "struggle meetings" at which he was scapegoat. From then on he was officially listed as a deviationist and disappeared from public life. He did not resurface until 1972 after Nixon's visit to Peking.

Fei Hsiao-t'ong's disgrace had little effect on the program of social and historic research, which continued among minority groups. Yang Kun, who had settled in Yunnan in 1947, found himself for his first field research leading a team that worked among the Wa of Ximeng from October 1956 to May 1957. He spent the second half of 1958 among the Shan of Tehong, the first half of 1959 among the Yi of Chuxiong and the spring of 1960 among the Yi of the Great Cool Mountains in Sichuan. In the spring of 1966, at the age of sixty-five, he was still taking part in research being done on the Hani of Jianghe.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Yang Kun, "My Fifty Years of Ethnological Research", final chapter in a

One of the major results of this great series of studies at a national level was that a collection of first-hand documents was assembled that provided the now irreplaceable picture of traditional societies before the radical changes. Most ethnologists from the “new generation” were also trained at that time. Among these there can be found today representatives from a good number of minorities who began their careers working as interpreter or informant for these teams. And finally, out of this contact with the field, the new Chinese ethnology developed, based on the Marxist foundations it then had available.

Reports from this conform in general to a uniform ethnographic program, probably quite close to the master plan used for the first studies. It is laid out as follows:

1. General situation, including: ethnic name, historical and geographical data, demography, inter-ethnic relations, culture and health.

2. The economy, including: a) the condition of productive forces (production tools and pulling equipment, labor forces, production techniques and work experience); b) production relationships (form of ownership of the means of production, concentration of land ownership and division into rich and poor, methods of operation, exchange relations); c) changes which occurred in the economic conditions since the Liberation.

3. Politics and society, including: political organization and social organization.

4. Life and customs, including: material life, marriage, funerals, holidays.

5. Spiritual culture, including: religious beliefs, taboos, omens and premonitory dreams; science and knowledge; arts and oral traditions, tales and legends, folk songs.

It can be seen that the researchers' attention was turned especially toward economic structures, the weak point of Chinese ethnology prior to the Liberation. Specific sectors, such as slavery in the Cool Mountains, or matrilineal descent among the Nahsi, were examined in more specialized studies.

Alongside this ethnographic effort, anthropological theory was

collection of his writings which appeared with the title *Minzu Yu Minzuxue*, “Ethnic Groups and Ethnology”, Chengdu, 1983.

aimed in two principal directions, each based on historic materialism. On the one hand an effort was made to elucidate the origin and formation of various ethnic groups; on the other was the attempt to characterize the historical stage at which each group found itself and the development it had undergone up to that point. Despite a certain tendency toward stereotyped explanations, it can be said that the impressive amount of material contained in these studies helped advance East Asian ethno-history a very great deal.

What were the theoretical foundations underlying this work of classification? Yang Kun, who had studied Marxist anthropology in the early Fifties with the Soviet expert Tchekobosaroff, and then in 1955-56 taught a course in the history department of the University of Yunnan entitled "Marxist-Leninist Theory on the Question of Nationalities and The Chinese Policy on Nationalities", attempted to explain them in his recent *Introduction to Ethnology* (Peking, 1984).

"Human societies are all divided into five types of economic and social formation. An economic and social formation is defined by its manner of production. And its manner of production is formed by productive forces and the relationships of production. In the manner of production, productive forces are the most dynamic and the most revolutionary factor. Their development is by nature both continuous and by steps. In this sense, productive forces are those which determine the existence of the society and the ultimate cause pushing the society to develop... Unending development of productive forces has led to unending development of society... Marxism divides the development of all human societies into five stages, that is five types of economic and social formation: 1) primitive society; 2) slave society; 3) feudal society; 4) capitalist society; 5) communist society (for which socialist society is the first stage).

"These five types of economic and social formation are a universal law for the development of human societies... All history of the development of human societies is thus the history of the development of these five types of economic and social formation".

What happens to this diagram of unilinear development when it is applied to real societies? Yang Kun, who was an ethnologist before becoming Marxist and who had a certain experience with concrete societies, remarked that he nevertheless had to indicate

clearly that “social development is not the same for each people. Because the natural environment and the historical context are not identical for each people, the rate of speed and the manner of their development are also not identical. There are peoples who, without going through the stage of patrilineal clans, enter directly into a class society... while still others, without going through the slavery stage, enter directly into feudal society... and still other more backward peoples who are pulled ahead by advanced peoples, crossing several stages of historical development to move directly into socialism. In short, each concrete people always has its ethnic particularities and its specific laws of development. It is necessary to analyze them concretely; not everything should be placed together in the same basket. Marxism is not a dogma, and it is not by using ready-made formulas that the problems will be solved”.

These words evoke the idea of a differentiated evolution in societies while purporting to remain faithful to the spirit rather than to the letter of Marxist thinking in anthropology. They explain the place accorded in the same volume to Maurice Godelier<sup>14</sup> to represent, alongside Levi-Strauss, French ethnology. But in the Chinese and Yunnanite context of Yang Kun’s work, they are also and above all a tribute paid to the outstanding efforts of one of his most brilliant students, Du Yuting.<sup>15</sup>

This text by Yang Kun does not fully take into consideration the theoretical positions of Marxist Chinese ethnologists today. Specific types of economic and social formations, whether or not inserted in the general table of evolution, are also recognized by ethnologists and by economists. Primarily among these is serfdom (*nongnu*), which is distinguished from both slavery (*nuli*) and from feudal land-holding (*fengjian dizhu*), three varieties of which are known in China: among Tibetans, among the Tai and among the Ouighour. In the same way, distinctions are also made between slavery among the Yi of the Cool Mountains, slavery among the Wa and the system in ancient China.

<sup>14</sup> On page 161 of *Minzuxue Gailun* he cites his *Horizons, trajets marxistes en anthropologie*, indicating for his non-French-speaking colleagues that an English translation exists.

<sup>15</sup> See the article, “Formes de sociétés précapitalistes parmi les peuples minoritaires du Yunnan, et la loi du développement historique”, by Du Yuting, to be published in French in the review *Temps Modernes*. Du Yuting is today vice-president of the Academy of Social Sciences of Yunnan.

It is still difficult today to determine when these ideas, which project Marxist Chinese anthropology to the center of the modern problematic, were conceived. Most works appearing today were thought out, and often written, for the first time before the Cultural Revolution, an event which almost brought about the definitive disappearance of Chinese ethnology. Yang Kun has noted in this respect:

“In 1966 began the Great Cultural Revolution. Ethnologists were persecuted. As in the case of everyone else, my house was sacked and I was publicly accused in ‘struggle meetings’, locked up in a stable. All my books and reference material, including tens of thousands of file cards, and my manuscripts were for the most part lost. In my opinion this was an irreplaceable loss, and ethnological research suffered a major setback at that time. However, even under these extremely difficult circumstances, I did not stop thinking about problems of ethnology...”

This was the period, as it was later explained to me at Guizhou, when the Red Guards could break into anyone’s house at any hour of the day or night and seize one’s papers to prove their accusations. The only way to save a book from their savage purges was to write on the cover or on the title page “to be criticized”. Thousands of books, including harmless dictionaries of minority languages, were carted off to destruction by the truckload.

No one escaped the persecutions. The famous Central Institute for Minorities in Peking was closed after 1966, and all classes were suspended. In 1969 its cadres and professors were sent to Hubei to a “School of the Seventh of May”.

Among those from the old guard, Quentin P’an died at the height of the persecutions (some think he committed suicide, as was common at the time). Fei Hsiao-t’ong, Lin Yao-youa and Wou Wentsao followed their unit and spent two years, from 1969 to 1972, in the “School of the Seventh of May”, a new type of reform through manual labor. When they reappeared in 1972 to receive foreign visitors, after Mao’s opening to America, their fate was still uncertain. This explains the unease and misunderstanding experienced with their American counterparts at that time.<sup>16</sup> The Institute was

<sup>16</sup> See Gene Cooper, “An Interview with Chinese Anthropologists”, *Current Anthropology*, vol. 14, n. 4, 1973, pp. 480-482, and A.J.F. Köbben, “On Former Chinese Anthropologists”, *ibid.*, vol. 15, n. 3, 1974, p. 315.

officially reopened in 1972, but its new students, even when they belonged to a minority, were primarily “frontier guards, members of the first generation of workers from national minorities... or young intellectuals immersed in rural regions” (*Pékin Information*, March 13, 1972). The campaign against Confucius, then taking shape, did nothing to stimulate those who were slowly returning from the re-education farms. And today it can be recognized that, although the Institute did manage to operate, it kept a very low profile until the elimination of the “Gang of Four”.

#### THE NEW START FOR ETHNOLOGY

This is, in fact, the title of an address given October 20, 1980, by Mr. Ts'ieou P'ou, one of the four associate directors at the Center for Research in Nationalities of the Academy of Social Science in Peking, for the opening of the first national ethnology symposium held in Guiyang October 20-26, 1980.

This congress on Chinese ethnology brought together 223 participants from 18 provinces and included 19 different ethnic groups. The number of papers presented reached the record figure of 173. The stated purpose of the congress was to bring together a maximum number of participants involved in the work of ethnology, whether they belonged to the old guard or were more recent arrivals to the field. Ts'ieou P'ou himself, specialist in the Tungu populations along the banks of the Argun at the border with the U.S.S.R., in the present province of Heilungkiang, had done field work in 1955 and 1957, and he belonged to that young generation of ethnologists coming out of the teams of social workers who, during the first ten years of the People's Republic, roamed the regions where minority groups could be found. Of the three categories: the veterans, the young warriors and representatives of the brother peoples (the minorities) into which the 223 symposium participants could be broken down, Ts'ieou P'ou evidently belonged to the second group. The theme of the address, which he spent one year preparing, was “One Hundred Flowers and One Hundred Schools”, a frank comparison of viewpoints without taking sides. As a matter of fact, how could ethnological discussion be reopened after the ultra-leftism of Lin Piao and then of the Gang

of Four had for so long relegated ethnology into a forbidden zone? According to Ts'ieou P'ou it was necessary to break down the barriers and sweep away obstacles, to "liberate thinking from the old superstitions". But this does not mean that historical materialism should be rejected. In tones reminiscent of directions taken in France by the Center for Marxist Studies and Research, Ts'ieou P'ou affirmed with conviction, "Marxist Leninism and Maoism are a science not a superstition...". And for anyone who might be surprised at this, in light of past digressions, he continued, "Marxist Leninism and the thought of Mao Tse-tung are not an eternally unchangeable religious dogma. Their theoretical principles must also be put to practical tests. This is why we cannot exclude concrete analysis of concrete situations, simply copying indiscriminately their formulas and their expression".

Abandoning Marxist Leninism was certainly out of the question for Chinese ethnologists, but the discussion had been cleverly opened. For in the definition of the meaning, the place and the role of ethnology in politics and national research, the conflicting theses turned around two central poles: Marxist Leninism contains the supreme secret of the historical evolution of societies and therefore the works of Marx and Engels are adequate models for Chinese ethnologists; or else the works of Marx and Engels, however essential they might be as models of dialectical thinking, should be enriched with all the documentation that did not exist in their times, including progress made by various non-Marxist schools. Or, in Chinese terms, "Kill two birds with one stone, actively develop research studies, acquire the quintessence (of foreign ethnology), reject its dross, make something new with the old, something Chinese from something Western".

The under-lying question, which had already been of concern to the veterans before 1949, was naturally the one regarding the birth of a national ethnology, which took into consideration and amalgamated with modern anthropological theory the ethnographic wealth of China, as well as its recent experience with socialism. But choosing to recycle oneself in non-Marxist anthropological theory in such a manner as to incorporate its positive elements is certainly not the simplest way and could only serve to disturb the bureaucratic mentalities of those who had, until then, been nourished on a facile scholasticism.

The acts of the symposium, published in part, allow glimpses of many afterthoughts. But as is often the rule in China, the discussion occurred in October 1980, after the decisions had been made. Within the organization of the Center for Research in Nationalities of the Academy of Social Sciences in Peking, research objectives had already been divided up among six teams: 1. theory on the national question; 2. relations between nationalities; 3. history of the nationalities; but also 4. ethnology; 5. ethnolinguistics; 6. the peoples of the entire world. In 1979 Fei Hsiao-t'ong, also a member of the Center for Research in Nationalities, had opened a Center for Sociological Research made up of two teams, one devoted to the study of the principles and methods of sociology and covering Chinese, Western and Marxist sociology; the second reserved for "practical sociology", especially the study of "a little town in Jiangsu" and for the present situation and development trends of the Chinese family in an urban setting.

The major value of the symposium lay in the systematic presentation of trends from throughout the profession. The immediate result was, as had been foreseen, the creation of a Chinese Association for Ethnological Research with Ts'ieou P'ou elected as first president. Co-vice presidents named were Lin Yao-hua, Ma Yao, Ku Pao, Liang Kient'ao, Hu Ts'ing-kiun, Tch'en Kuo-kiang and Xiang Ling. As for the "veterans", they can almost all be found on the association's board of directors, as can be seen from the list of names listed below.<sup>17</sup>

The primary activity of the Association was publication of a voluminous review, *Ethnological Research*, to replace the former *Studies of Nationalities*, more historical in its approach. The first three issues, which appeared between June 1981 and May 1982, made possible publication of the major addresses of the Guiyang symposium. Issue number 4, appearing at the end of 1983, was a special issue which concentrated on the problems posed for archaeologists and ethno-historians alike by the "hanging coffins" of Sichuan.<sup>18</sup> Number 5 carried a report on the second symposium of

<sup>17</sup> Fang Guoyi, Liu Xian, Jiang Yingliang, Li Anshi, Li Youyi, Wu Wen-tsao, Yang Chengzhi, Yang Kun, Fei Hsiao-t'ong, Huang Hsien-fan.

<sup>18</sup> For the most part dated to the fourth millennium before Christ, using the carbon 14 method, these coffins hung alongside a cliff are considered to be the vestiges of a branch of the ancient Yue peoples who occupied south China at the

the Association, held in Xining in the province of Qinghai September 21-27, 1982, which brought together more than one hundred ethnologists belonging to 19 nationalities. This second meeting made it possible to stress the task of ethnologists within the framework of the Four Modernizations, namely to study the economic and social formations of minority ethnic groups in order to know better their problems in the transition to socialism. Ts'ieou P'ou presented a paper at this meeting on "ethnology and modernization". The description of various social formations among minority groups takes up a large part of numbers 5 and 6 while number 7 commemorated Engels' book, *On the Origin of the Family, of Private Property and of the State*, whose centenary of publication Chinese ethnologists solemnly observed in 1984, confirming, if needed, a certain trend toward an evolutionism today considered outmoded. However, the contribution of original ethnographic materials indicates a common desire to resume research which will sooner or later lead Chinese ethnologists to go beyond the conventional terms of Marxist analysis.

#### 4. CHINESE ETHNOLOGY TODAY

After the trying events of the Seventies, the rapidity with which Chinese ethnology came back to life and the vitality it has manifested since then can be called prodigious. In any case this rebirth is to be credited to the policy of the Four Modernizations. Everywhere efforts were made to re-establish minority institutes and ethnological research centers. Some of these research centers are directly controlled by the Academy of Social Sciences, while others are directed by the Committee for nationalities in the province. In any case, ethnologists have rediscovered these research centers, and work is progressing. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has relaunched the publication program which had been interrupted by the cultural revolution, consisting in five series: 1) a synthesis of all ethnic groups in China (already published with the title, *The*

dawn of Antiquity. The choice of this topic for a first collective volume proved to be a wise one for the review, since it attracted no less than 26 contributions.

*Minority Peoples of China*, Peking, 1981); 2) a series of descriptive syntheses of minority languages (already published: *Handbook of the Bu Yi Language—Gelao, Maonoan, Dong, Shui, Li, Yao, Pumi, Wa*, etc.); 3) a series called *A Summary of the History of the Zhuang, the She, the Li, the Yao, the Ewenke, the Hani, the Quiang*, etc.); 4) a series of “research material on the society and the history” of all minority peoples (already published: studies of the Hani, the Lisu, the Lahu, the Bulang, the Nu, the Wa, the Tai, etc.), in which only a certain number of research reports from the period 1955-66 have been preserved and often pruned; and 5) a series on each autonomous region. Apart from these five priority series, in 1982 the *Nationalities Press* in Peking launched a series of short descriptions of each minority people (already published: *The Heche, The Ewenke, The Tai, The Zhuang*).

A remarkable feature of this program is that it associates specialists from the capital and the provinces concerned in its collective editorial staff; a development activity and a period of critical analysis precede each issue, which explains their relatively infrequent publication. Authors are no longer anonymous and must sign their names to their contributions, either within the volume itself or in a final note in which the publisher explains how the book was produced.

And finally, exchanges between researchers and projects shared with foreign research groups are beginning to be organized.

If the new birth in Chinese ethnology were marked only by this, it would present only the refunctioning of a bureaucratic instrument of production. But the new policy of decentralization and autonomy for the provinces has made it possible for local science academies to find their own dynamism. The more or less advanced development in ethnology from one province to another now depends not only on directives from the State but also on local demands. The role of the minorities in provincial government structures has an influence on the position and on the audience of ethnologists who now come for the most part from the minority ethnic groups themselves.

Liberalization in the provinces has loosened pens. Whether licensed researchers or not, local ethnologists are publishing everywhere. Scientific and popular reviews are springing up everywhere. The Academy of Social Sciences in the province supports

some of these financially, while others manage to create a market among the public. Folklore literature is especially appreciated by local audiences, and publications in this sphere are numerous. The use of vernacular scripts, whether traditional or modern, doubles the popularity of these publications.

While official liberalism has, in the few years since 1978, made Chinese ethnology one of the most prolific in the world, apparently insoluble situations have suddenly been settled, without fanfare and without ado. When Fei Hsiao-t'ong managed to re-establish a burgeoning sociology, the study of ethnology, until that time restricted to the realm of non-Han populations, suddenly saw openings to a new area (prudently limited by its promoter to the "family") among the majority Chinese population. For a while, in the early Eighties, it was believed that the entire Chinese sector would be limited to these two disciplines, each concerned with a carefully limited domain. However, experience has proven that this was not so and that new frontiers were to be opened for scholars' reflections. First there was the return of the history of culture and cultural history on the occasion of the Forum for Researchers in the History of Chinese Culture, organized by the Fudan University of Shanghai December 16-19, 1982. Following this meeting, the first volume of the new review, *Studies of Chinese Culture*, was published by the Fudan University in 1984. This new trend, it seemed, followed the new development for historians who rediscovered the freedom to examine the question of periods in history and the characterization of ancient Chinese societies.

Some Chinese ethnologists, aware of the present tendency of their Western colleagues toward "anthropology", whether it be cultural anthropology or social anthropology, have tried—without success—to move away from ethnology and to expand their domain along the lines of the style in the West. In May 1981 at the University of Amoy, they held the first symposium of Chinese anthropologists and formed an anthropology society which includes ethnologists as well as physical anthropologists and archaeologists. Their review, *Anthropological Studies*, published its first issue in January 1984. It is edited by Tch'en Kuo-kiang and Lieou Hsiao-yu and carries a joint preface by the famous paleontologist Pei Wen-tchong and Ts'ieou P'ou.

The only problem, which still weighs heavily upon ethnology

(and all Chinese social sciences), is the difficulty of finding successors among youthful students of today, who are totally ignorant since they were deprived of almost all formal education for a decade. There, too, the official policy of liberalism, opened up to cooperation with foreign organizations for training students and recycling professors, will one day perhaps make it possible to erase the memory of "the greatest disaster ever perpetrated by human hands".

Jacques Lemoine  
(C.N.R.S.)

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARKUSH, R. DAVID, 1981. *Fei Xiaotong and Sociology in Revolutionary China*, Cambridge and London.
- CHEN-YONGLING AND WANG XIAOYI, 1981. "L'Ethnologie chinoise dans la première période du XXe siècle", *Etudes ethnologiques*, 1, 1981.
- FEI HSIAO TUNG, 1981. *Towards a People's Anthropology*, Beijing, New World Press.
- , 1983. *Chinese Village Close-up*, Beijing, New World Press.
- FEI XIAOTONG, 1984. *Explorations sociologiques* (Shehuixue de tansuo), Tianqin.
- FREEDMAN, MAURICE, 1962. "Sociology in and of China", *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. XIII, 1962, pp. 106-116.
- , 1963. "A Chinese Phase in Social Anthropology", *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. XIV, No. 1, March 1963, pp. 1-19.
- HU QIWANG, 1981. "Ts'ai Yuan P'ei et l'ethnologie", *Etudes ethnologiques*, 1, 1981.
- WINNINGTON, A. *Slaves in the Cool Mountains*, London, 1959.
- WONG SIU-LUN, 1979. *Sociology and Socialism in Contemporary China*, London.
- YANG KUN, 1983. *On Nationalities and on Ethnology* (Minzu yu Minzuxue), Peking.
- , 1984. *Introduction to Ethnology* (Minzuxue Gailun), Chengdu.

Since this article was not intended to discuss ethnic minorities in China, they have only been dealt with coincidentally. A complete inventory of these populations in French can be found in:

- LEMOINE, J., 1978. "Les ethnies non han de la Chine", *Ethnologie Régionale 2*, Encyclopédie de la Pléiade, Paris, 1978, pp. 731-922.

For a more recent analysis of Chinese policy toward minorities, see the following articles:

- HSIEH JIANN, 1985. "The 1982 Constitution and the Policy Towards Nationalities", *Chinese Law and Government*, 1985.
- , 1985. "China's Policy Toward the Minority Nationalities in an Anthropological Perspective", *Anthropos*, 1985.

*Ethnologists in China*

The acts of the "inter-China" congress held in Hong Kong, March 7-11, 1983, were published with the title *Proceedings of the Conference on Modernization and the Chinese Culture*, Faculty of Social Science and Institute of Social Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1985. This 342-page volume is written primarily in Chinese with summaries in English. This first conference was followed by a second one in November, 1985, where, for the first time, non-Chinese participants were invited, such as the American anthropologist Pasternak.