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Anthropologies from China. Learning from the Past, Prospects for the Future

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In 1938 Bronislaw Malinowski made a very positive comment on Chinese anthropology and ethnology. In the preface of *Peasant Life in China: A Field Study of Country Life in the Yangtze Valley*, a monograph by his student Fei Xiaotong, he wrote:

> It was therefore a great pleasure when some two years ago I received the visit of a distinguished Chinese sociologist, Professor Wu Wen-Tsao of Yenching University, and learnt from him that independently and spontaneously there had been organized in China a sociological attack on the real problems of culture change and applied anthropology, an attack which embodies all my dreams and desiderata. [1]

Considering the authoritative works from the 1920s and 1930s produced by one of the founding fathers of Chinese anthropology, Wu Wenzao, Malinowski attributed the relevance and originality of Chinese anthropology to the expansion of the disciplinary boundaries "outwards from savagery to civilization". [2]

This early consideration was rescued from oblivion by Maurice Freedman almost 25 years later. In the Third Malinowski Memorial Lecture at the London School of Economics, under the chairmanship of Raymond Firth, on October 30th 1962, Freedman recalled Wu Wenzao's visit to Malinowski as well as Malinowski's preface in Fei Xiaotong's book. From these perspectives, Freedman foresaw the coming of "a Chinese phase in social anthropology". [3]

Both statements, however authoritative, were virtually ignored by the scientific community.

The reasons concern both the embarrassing myopia of world anthropology concerning the production of Chinese scholars as well as the specific events that marked the evolution of anthropology and ethnology in China. The grounding and the meaning of these two interpretations are very different. As we shall see, Malinowski based his judgments on the prolific and original state of the art of Chinese anthropology of the time. Freedman's assertion, on the other hand, was made ten years after the reform of Chinese higher education which absorbed Social and Cultural Anthropology into the discipline of Ethnology. It came in a turbulent period, between the 1957 "anti-rightist campaign" which affected the major scholars and the cultural revolution, which brought ethnological research to a halt.

The new 1952 organization of Chinese scientific disciplines abolished anthropology (人类学) as 'bourgeois pseudo-science' together with other social sciences such as sociology, political sciences, and religious studies. Anthropology was integrated into the discipline of ethnology (民族学) which was conceived as the study of *minzu* (民族), a complex and polysemic term that is mainly used to denote minorities. Under the guidance of the leading masters of the time, scientists were inserted in several government initiatives which aimed to understand Chinese ethnic groups and the construction of national unity. Among these, two major projects were particularly important: *The Nationality Identification Project* and *The Research Project for the Histories of Ethnic Minorities*. To these efforts must be added several important publications dedicated to ethnic issues, such as the volumes of the *Translation Series of Ethnic Issues* and *The Collected Papers on China's Ethnic Issues*. [4]

From its very beginnings, the discipline focused on the application of anthropological knowledge to analyzing the country's social and political problems. Both in the Republican period and after the Maoist revolution, the goal of the nation-building process was a major driving force of every research. For these purposes, scholars articulated different influences, drawing on functionalist theories, and on the conjugation of Morgan's model of social evolution with that of Engels and of Stalin. Soviet historical teleology was used to identify minorities on the basis of their modes of production: primitive, slave, feudal, capitalist, and socialist. In the New China, the initial model was based on the four commonalities, as defined by Joseph Stalin: common language, common territory, common economic life, common psychological conformation. The anthropological interpretation of the Darwinian and Spencerian concepts of evolution served as an efficient tool to comprehend and organize cultural differences. It became a positive ideological instrument to support the evolution of minority peoples along a unilinear scale which put the Han (the largest ethnic group in China) at the top because of their more advanced social and cultural forms of life.

Unlike Malinowski's judgment, Freedman's opinion of the new Chinese phase in social anthropology did not refer to the peculiarities of Chinese anthropology, that is, the specific theoretical and practical positions taken in the aftermath of the fall of the Qing dynasty or the founding of the People's Republic of China. Freedman's statement focused almost exclusively on an Anglo-Saxon anthropology of China, produced by authors such as William Skinner or Arthur Wolf. These scholars worked on the eastern part of the country, where

American and British influences were strong. They mainly studied the Taiwan and the Hong Kong islands, which were seen as surrogates of China and laboratories for the anthropological study of its society and culture. [5] Using the model of the modern European nation-states and the coincidence between ethnicity and nation, they produced an image of a culturally homogeneous China. They did not take internal ethnic differences into consideration, nor the significant work on minorities produced by eminent Chinese scholars in previous years. Friedman's position is thus not of great use in grasping the relevance and the specificity of Chinese anthropology. To this end, it is much more productive to rely on Malinowski comments and on the scientific production of the discipline's founding fathers in the twenties and thirties.

Unity amidst diversity

The formation of a scientific school is the complex outcome of the mixture of several factors, theoretical, cultural, economic, political and ideological. It overcomes the conflict between internal and external influences and the idea of native or indigenous anthropologies, closed within their romantic authenticity and purity. Rather, the complexity of any theoretical tradition comprehends the interaction of many different elements and contributions and the *glocal* re-elaboration of transversal or cross-disciplinary discourses.

Chinese anthropology and ethnology followed some of the major paradigmatic shifts throughout history that marked the development of the discipline in Western countries. Anticipated by the pioneering works of Marcel Granet (1884-1940), the European impact overcame the initial Japanese influence. In 1902 the translation of a work of the Japanese scholar Ariga Nagao was published in China, founded on the evolutionary theories of L. H. Morgan's *Ancient Society* and Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*. The following year the first book on anthropology was introduced into China, under the authorship of the German scholar Michael Haberlandr. The first Chinese intellectual to use the word "anthropology" ×人类学×was Xuewu Sun, in an essay published in 1916 by the journal of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which dealt with the state of the art of European and American anthropology. In 1918, the book by Chen Ying Huang entitled *Anthropology* was published and in 1925 both Emile Durkheim's *Les Règles de la méthode sociologique* and Edward Alexander Westermark's *The History of Human Marriage* were translated. [6]

Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940), the founding father of Chinese anthropology, completed his education in Europe. He studied at the University of Leipzig (Germany) between 1906-09, majoring in philosophy and anthropology. He repeatedly visited Germany and France (1911-1915) to study evolutionist and diffusionist theories. As Minister of Education in the provisional nationalist government (1912), he engaged in the work of consolidating the universities of the Republic of China and the Central Academy for Research. He fostered the development of so-called "new sciences", among which he included anthropology and ethnology and which he valued for their ability to meet the needs of the nation-state building process. In an article of 1926, Cai Yuanpei introduced the term *ethnology* (民族学) in a way that became fundamental for the birth of the discipline and for the identification of

ethnology with the study of minorities. [7] After serving as dean of Beijing University (1917-1922), he instituted, in 1928, the Academia Sinica（中央研究院) and in 1934 set up an anthropology department, encouraging the identification of ethnology with the study of minorities. In the Academia Sinica, he guided what historians call the School of the South, together with other colleagues who shared the master's strong links with the Western scientific traditions. Fu Sinian (1896-1950) was the first director of the Institute of History and Philology of the Academy Sinica (he had been one of the leaders of the Movement of May Fourth in 1919). He studied experimental psychology at University College London (1920-23). Li Ji (1896-1979) occupied the first Chinese chair of anthropology at the Department of Human Sciences, Nankai University, after earning his doctorate at Harvard (1923). Ling Chunsheng (1902-1981) studied in France. [8]

Historians consider the School of the South and the School of the North as the leading Chinese anthropological institutions, characterized by their distinct theoretical and methodological interests. The School of the South embraced diffusionism and focused on the history of ethnic groups, cultural transmission, internal migrations and the Chinese national integration. The Academia Sinica, as a government office of the Nationalist regime, concentrated on the nation-building process. It probed into the past and pre-modern China, in search of the origins of what it called the "Chinese race". The Northern School, on the other hand, was based in Yanjing University and was a private academy founded in 1919 by the joint efforts of American, Canadian, and British missionary societies. It focused on the present of the nation, on the analysis of the processes of industrialization and on the study of rural communities, including border areas and ethnic minorities. The Yanjing School also maintained, from its very beginnings, enduring associations with Western social and cultural anthropology. Its founder and director, Wu Wenzao (1901-1985), after graduating from Tsinghua University in Beijing in 1923, went to the United Sates to study sociology with Franz Boas at Columbia University, where he gained his PhD. After returning home, he was appointed professor at Yanjing University. When the Central Minzu University was established in Beijing in 1953, he became professor of ethnology and participated in the Ethnic Identification Project. [9]

Wu was a great supporter of efficient policies for academic internationalization. He took to Yanjing University some of the most distinguished anthropologists and sociologists of the time: Robert Parkin in 1932, Alfred Radcliffe-Brown in 1935, and Leslie White between 1937 and 1939. The importance of the presence of Radcliffe-Brown – in 1934 a guest of honor at the first annual session of the Chinese Ethnographic Society held at the Central University of Nanjing – was celebrated with various publications: the Department of Sociology of Yanjing University dedicated an entire volume of the journal *Sociological World* to Radcliffe-Brown; Wu Wenzao published a work entitled *The thought of Alfred Radcliffe-Brown and his contributions to the discipline*; and Lin Yaohua wrote a paper in which he welcomed the English anthropologist. [10]

Wu Wenzao also encouraged international student mobility, enabling them to have contact

with the most prominent intellectuals. He advocated Li Anzhai's education in the United States, at the Department of Anthropology at Berkeley with Alfred Kroeber and Robert Lowie and at the Department of Anthropology at Yale University, where, under the supervision of Sapir, he obtained his PhD in 1947. Similar trajectories were followed by Lin Yaohua and Fei Xiaotong. The first took the doctorate degree at Harvard in 1940 under the direction of Raymond Firth. [11] His thesis, published in English in 1948, had an introduction by his professor. The second studied with Malinowski and obtained his PhD at the London School of Economics in 1938 with a work published the following year. [12]

Among Wu's students, Fei Xiaotong is certainly the most famous, surpassing his master in popularity. He was the first graduate from the department of anthropology of Tsinghua University, where he studied with the Russian ethnologist Sergei M. Shirokogoroff (1887-1939). Between 1936 and 1938, he worked with Malinowski and Firth at the London School of Economics and composed his doctoral dissertation. It is for this work that Malinowski wrote the enthusiastic preface mentioned earlier, considering it as a pioneering study of the so-called anthropology "at home" and the application of anthropological methods to the study of complex societies. He presented the book as a functionalist analysis of Chinese rural society, and stressed its importance for the expansion of the boundaries of the discipline, both from a theoretical and from an applicative point of view. In the preface of Fei's *Peasant Life in China* he stated that the book should be counted "as a landmark in the development of anthropological fieldwork and theory". [13]

During his career, Fei articulated different theoretical positions. Initially he combined Malinowski's ethnography with Radcliffe-Brown's structural-functionalism and Park's human ecology. In the fifties, he adopted the Marxist-Leninist paradigm and worked, along with Li Yaohua, on the ethnic identification projects. He continued to articulate his thinking through the eighties and until his death, including the study of Max Weber and Richard Tawney. He emerged as a figure in the area at the end of the Cultural Revolution and as the main reference point for the development of anthropology in universities and Chinese research institutes. [14]

Both the Southern and the Northern School focused on the analysis of the reality of China as a modern nation. They developed their theories within the historical context marked by the transition from the Qing Manchu dynasty to the nationalist republic and to the New China. In different ways, the ethnologists of the Academia Sinica and the social anthropologists of Yanjing University did not limit themselves to reproducing the positions of foreign masters. Their creative dialogues with Western traditions, developed a specific style for Chinese anthropology which combined ethnography, historical research and applied approaches.

The researches of the Academia Sinica were strongly limited by their links with the nationalist government and its opposition to the idea of plurality. They mainly sustained the dominant ideology of a nation based on a Han majority and attempted to show how other cultures were mixed and fused over the course of history. However, their efforts to depict China as a community gave them the opportunity to examine specific ethnic groups and

study their origins and interactions as well as the historical influences between them. Their work anticipated the recognition of the complexity of cultural configurations and intercultural relations.

The School of the North, working independently from the nationalist government, developed an original model which enabled the national question to be considered from the point of view of a complex model. Writing in reaction to the first republican nationalist policies, Wu Wenzao perceived the reality of China under the principle of "unity amidst diversity". To this end, he interpreted the concept of *Tianxia*（天下）, literally "under the sky", to comprehend and integrate the entire geographical and cultural space. This ancient principle, coined in the period of the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BC), could be considered an inclusive tool to indicate "the political oneness of plural nations" (Ming, 2012:343) and used to go beyond the original European model of coincidence between nation and state and to prefigure the concept of a multinational state. In his first article, written when he was a student at Columbia University, he criticized European theories on the nation-state. In this essay called 'The Nation and the State', published in 1926 in the *Chinese Overseas Chinese Student Union Journal*, Wu opposed nationalist conceptions. Predating many contemporary debates on the crisis of the romantic coincidence between nation and state, Wu proposed the idea of China as an example of a state consisting of a variety of nations. [15]

Wu's ideas were later taken up and developed by Fei Xiaotong. Fei formed the concept of unity amidst diversity in his "anthropology at home" and used it in ethnic identification work. [16] His combination of the concept of pluralist integration with that of *Tianxia*（天下）to denote intercultural fusions influenced important foreign scholars such as Skinner. [17] Fei, in his works on what he called the Tibet-Yi corridor, refused to consider as "isolated" the areas that start in the north, on the border of Gansu, Qinghai and Sichuan, and end in the south-east of Tibet and north-west of Yunnan. Rather, he considered these areas as places of ancient, constant and intensive contact between cultures, populated by peoples who were closely connected and interrelated by history. [18] His work still influences the intense contemporary debate on these complex and critical founding issues. [19]

While Anglo-Saxon anthropologies worried over putting their objects of analysis in closed and functional units with well-defined and discrete boundaries, the Chinese scholars were already developing complex and, in many ways, pioneering positions that merited being taken into consideration by the recent anthropological theorists. Unfortunately, their seminal ideas could be recovered only after the historical events of the sixties and seventies that limited the development of anthropology and ethnology. Only after China's reform and opening policies of 1978 was anthropology allowed to expand the dialogue with world anthropology. [20] The elaboration of a Chinese perspective was based on an original articulation of its exchanges with the international scientific community. The main features of Chinese anthropology, synthesized by Yang Shengmin under four main items (application, history, minority studies and elaboration of the Marxist ethnological tradition), provide a valuable contribution to the development of the discipline and to the

understanding of contemporary world. [21]

Anthropologies from China

Anthropology as a discipline originated in Europe in the 19th century with the expansion of European economic and political interests. It established itself as a specifically modern perspective on what is not modern. As the eye allows the perception of the world but cannot see itself, anthropology did not study its own viewpoint. Rather, it took the shape of a natural and hence unique form of rationality with the aim of understanding other people's cultures. It thus originated by negating the possibility of considering modernity as a tradition and as an object of analysis. This new form of Eurocentric thinking guaranteed a division of labor with sociology according to the motto "sociology studies the west, anthropology all the rest". It created an anthropological object classified by the evolutionist in "primitive" terms. This form of allochrony cancelled out spatial and cultural differences inside a unilinear concept of time. [22] The functionalist school later identified anthropology with the analysis of discrete, self-contained and homogeneous cultures. Its monographic production met the interests of the pragmatism of colonial administrations, based on policies of *indirect rule* and on the co-optation of the indigenous leaderships. [23]

When, after the Second World War, the center of the world moved from Europe to the United States, the general headquarters of knowledge also migrated there. The profound political and social changes substantially modified both the discipline and the configurations of cultures and intercultural relations. Processes such as decolonization, nationalism of new independent states and the Cold War had profound impacts on the anthropology, opening new spaces and new research strategies. The paradigmatic changes in the scientific status of knowledge brought about a modification of the epistemological basis of the discipline. The definition of anthropology was emancipated from the examination of a specific type of society. Anthropology in the last part of the last century refuses to define its subject of study by marking in negative forms all that is not modern (irrationality, illogicality, simplicity, magic, sacredness, conservatism, tradition etc.). Not only does it oppose the limitations of the discipline to the examination of a particular type of society, it turned modernity itself into an object of science, probing into its forms of rationality and its technology as well as into the strategies of concealment of its intrinsic cultural determinants. [24] Above all, it took the form of a transversal point of view that crosses all cultures and societies, including those that shape anthropological thought. The analysis of complex societies opened spaces for studying the complexity of every society and culture. [25]

Today the centers of the world are shifting and multiplying. The colonial dichotomies between centers and peripheries and between First and Third Worlds have been deleted by history. This also applies to scientific production. The anthropologies of disciplinary traditions once described as "minor" are in fact producing unique opportunities to expound scientific dialogue. Contemporary anthropology mingles the different frames of references coming from every part of the world: [26] hybrid paradigm, [27] complexity, [28] multiple modernities, [29] *scapes, [30]* articulations, [31] connections [32]. Complex paradigms

challenge the domination of rigid and discrete colonial categories and the exotic relation between difference and distance as well as the immediate coincidence of place, culture, and identity. They fragment the dichotomies of modernist thought (modernity-tradition, complexity-simplicity, center-periphery, globalism-localism) in a multiplicity of complex articulations. Different theoretical tools are used to see culture not as natural attributes of closed, organically unified, independent and discrete units, but rather cultures are thought of as artificial creations, dynamic and open, produced by different strategies pursued by different social groups. [33]

An increasing number of scholars investigate the historical, economical, political and linguistic spaces of exchanges in which the cultures define and form themselves. They outline the connections and disconnections of the constitutive elements of constructions of identity, ethnic affiliations, or nation-building processes. Their works focus on historical and political dynamics rather than on spatial or territorial ones. Many scientists have reflected on the production and reproduction of cultural forms in the intersection between symbolic systems and power structures. They interpret the centrifugal and centripetal forces that characterize contemporary societies as elements of complex arenas in which different worldviews, interests, and powers connect, oppose, and collude.

From these points of view, the work of the Chinese anthropological tradition provides interesting contributions to the discipline and to the understanding of the contemporary world. Chinese anthropologists are ethnographic witnesses of global dynamics from the perspective of an emerging global power with an increasingly dominant political, economic, and cultural influence. They can follow the processes of globalization by positioning themselves in a center with a long history of mergers and fusions. They can study how China not only articulates tradition and modernity in original terms, but also combines its modernity with other traditions. [34]

Chinese researchers are producing important inquiries in the study of the intersections between the global and the local. From their horizons, they can effectively comprehend the local reworking of globalization and the ways in which the various messages are translated, mixed, and processed by local agents. They oppose the mechanical replacement of the traditional with the modern and consider the local reworking of modernity, subtracting the global from an abstract universality. Various points of view contradict attempts to assert a pacified ideology of globalization as something inevitable and already accomplished, which resolves conflicts and contradictions. Rather, ethnographies present the complexity of the micro-processes of everyday life, emancipated from a single logic of homologation. They place the global inside its real articulations, necessarily local and particular. They explore how globalizing ideas and action are appropriated and re-inserted into local practices, scattering modernity in its different forms and manifestations, constantly proliferating. They elaborate the idea of negotiating realities produced by the co-belonging of modernity and tradition, the global and the local.

The disciplinary tradition of China provides specific skills to investigate the processes of

globalization not as a recent phenomenon, but as something that has crossed the history of humanity. Developing the conceptual tools offered by the founding fathers, recent works study intercultural interactions, exchanges and mergers that have always characterized every culture and society since the first humans ventured out of Africa some 60,000 years ago. Chinese scholars allow the complex contemporary world to be read from the point of view of its intricate flows, connections, mixtures, and traffic. Ethnographies of intercultural relations in the corridors and areas of intersections study crossings and cross-cultural determinations. They have overcome the idea of "isolated wholes" and they show how the mountains, the steppes, the coastal plains and the islands, have been crossed by trade routes where different cultural processes overlapped and were confused. [35]

Many researchers are part of a dialogue which aims to rethink founding disciplinary concepts such as *society*, *culture*, and *nation*. A growing number of authors are increasingly defining China in plural terms and trying to comprehend the important differences that permeate its society and culture. Approaching China from an historical angle, they see a complex mixture of cultures and civilizations. They investigate the relation between center and periphery as well as between nation and ethnic minorities. They examine the way in which the country has integrated Confucianism and Taoism from the pre-axial age with Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. They can reflect on the way China has carried out an unprecedented orchestration of an efficient form of medical pluralism based on the complex relations between traditional Chinese medicine, Western medicine and also ethnic medicines. They have accomplished this task considering formal and normative points of view as well as producing ethnographic works on the perspective of the social actors and their practices. [36]

From this standpoint, China's anthropology can interpret the centrifugal and centripetal forces that characterize contemporary realities. It can consider society as an arena where different world views, interests, and powers connect, oppose, and collude. It identifies how China is differently constructed in a variety of fields and circumstances, both internally and throughout the world. It can analyze the transnational flows of cultures, people, capital, and goods, the diffusion of media and of cellular networks, internet access, new consumption patterns, and the impact of tourism. Relevant contributions come from the study of Chinese investments abroad and from the research on the development processes both internal and external, on the marketing of products, the dissemination of traditional medicine, or of religious practices. [37]

Interesting research has been focused on migration, a field of study that relates to more than 150 million so-called *floating people*. It examines individuals and groups who have left the residence where they are officially registered, especially in the countryside, to migrate into the cities in search of job opportunities. Contemporary scholars go beyond analysis of internal migrations produced in the nineties and the simple dichotomies between city and countryside. They suggest that identities and other ties in contemporary China have not been simply uprooted from their localized cultural foundations. Different investigations have

contributed to the understanding of how peoples, and not only goods, institutions or organizations, have come to be translocal, belonging to more than one locality simultaneously. Such works show how migrants can combine multiple identifications in a dynamic way, constructed in kaleidoscopic terms by melting spatial, cultural, economic, and political differentiations. They analyze how contemporary subjectivities shape themselves contingently and precariously through networks that involve a variety of positioning, solidarities, interdependences, negotiations, dialogues, and cooperation. They show how these subjects articulate multisite memberships and reproduce themselves by means of rather than despite their transformations and differences. The research aids the comprehension of how migrants' *absence-presence [38]* molds forms of dynamic and contingent identifications (family, economic, organizational, religious, professional). Various works have studied the multiplicity of placements, crossing of boundaries, affiliations defined on the base of the flexibility of geographical and social positions, not reducible to the double engagement rationale (rural-urban, home-abroad). [39]

Different approaches investigate the confusion of boundaries of previously separate urban and rural realms and changes in village communities, as well as the complex blending of the urban and rural and industrial and post-industrial scenarios that characterize extended urban regions. They examine the new urban spaces as places of transnational connections as well as urbanized minorities in multiethnic cities. Some works have considered the increasing polarization between rich and poor, the spatialization of socioeconomic differences, the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, the condition of less powerful groups and new forms of urban poverty. [40]

Translocal and multisite points of view on China are increasing in appeal to both students of China and academicsand also those dealing with the complexities of the contemporary world. As the margins to which Chinese scholars have been historically relegated are increasingly gaining central ground, anthropologies from China can elaborate efficacious models to interpret the contemporary reality. Chinese anthropology is undergoing a very interesting moment of reflection and authoritative participation in world anthropological debate, which may subtract the discipline from the parochialism of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The greater attention that the international scientific community is gradually dedicating to Chinese anthropology, albeit not yet with the intensity that it deserves, urges us to rethink Malinowski's and Freedman's pioneering predictions with greater attention.

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[1] Malinowski, 1939, p. 7

[2] Malinowski, 1939, p. 7

[3] Freedman, 1979.

[4] These projects were conceived to serve the interests of the nation-building agenda along with the understanding and governance of the non-Han peoples. The *Nationality Identification Project* and the *Research Project for the Histories of Ethnic Minorities* registered more than 400 separate groups and started an identification of the minorities that compose the China of today: 41 minorities in the first census of 1953 and 53 in that of 1964. The 1982 and 1990 censuses recognized 55 minorities. The peoples that were not institutionalized were either considered sub-ethnicities belonging to the Han majority or were combined with other minorities. The official minorities include a population of more than 100 million people (about 9% of the total), speaking a wide variety of languages: Sino-Tibetan (Mandarin, Tibetan, Kam-Tai, Miao-Yao); Turkic-Altaic (Kazakh, Uyghur, Mongolian, Manchu-Tungus, Korean); Austro-Asiatic (Hmong, Vietnamese); and Indo-European (Tajik, Russian). Of these minorities, the projects identified the Han majority as composing 90% of the total population. Although the major processes of expansion and unification of China were determined by non-Chinese dynasties coming from the so-called peripheries, like the Yuan Mongols and the Qin Manchu, China's national construction process was founded on the Hanification or sinicization of the society. The policies promoting the migrations of the Han were inaugurated in the early twentieth century by Sun Yat-sen, leader of the republican movement that overthrew the last Qing Empire in 1911. Sun Yat-sen, a Cantonese who was raised in Hawaii, seems to have introduced the concept *Han Minzu*, derived from the Japanese word *Minzoku* that designate the concept of "nation", as a tool to mobilize the Chinese people against the imperial government of the Qing Manchu people of the northeast. The obscure nationalism of Chiang Kai-shek, founded on the descent of all the Chinese people from a common ancestor, considered ethnic minorities to be lineages of the Han. Subsequently, Maoist policies supported and used the idea of Han unity as a sort of universal class, placed at the vanguard of the popular revolution in paradigmatic terms for the development of all minorities (Hsieh Jiann, 1986; Yang Shengmin, 1994; Yang Shengmin, 2003).

[5] The development of anthropology in Taiwan followed its colonial history: Dutch and Japanese influences were replaced by British. Major contemporary institutions such as the National Taiwan

University and the Taiwan Tsinghua University were created in the fifties. The British did not establish a department of anthropology in the University of Hong Kong, created in 1911; the institutional history of the discipline in Hong Kong since 1980 has been founded on the intellectual exchange between the departments of anthropology of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and China's Zhongshan University (Hu Hongbao, Wang Jianmin, Zhang Haiyang, 2006).

[6] Hu Hongbao, Wang Jianmin, Zhang Haiyang, 2006; Liu Mingxin, 2014.

[7] Cai Yuanpei, 1926.

[8] Hu Hongbao, Wang Jianmin, Zhang Haiyang, 2006; Liu Mingxin, 2014.

[9] Hu Hongbao, Wang Jianmin, Zhang Haiyang, 2006; Liu Mingxin, 2014; Yang Shengmin, 2014; Wang Mingming, 2014.

[10] Hu Hongbao, Wang Jianmin, Zhang Haiyang, 2006; Wang Mingming, 2014; Yang Shengmin, 2017; Liu Mingxin, 2014.

[11] Lin Yaohua, 1948.

[12] Fei Xiaotong, 1939.

[13] Malinowski, 1939, p. 7

[14] Hu Hongbao, Wang Jianmin, Zhang Haiyang, 2006; Liu Mingxin, 2014; Wang Mingming, 2014.

[15] Wu 1926; Wang Mingming, 2014; Malighetti, Wang Mingming, 2014.

[16] Fei Xiaotong, 2004, pp. 121-151.

[17] Skinner, 1964.

[18] Fei Xiaotong, 1989.

[19] Fei Xiaotong, 2017.

[20] From that moment there had been a constant increase of the number of institutions and scholars throughout China. In 1981, the anthropology department at Zhongshan University in Guangzhou was re-opened. In the same year, anthropologists, mainly from the South, established the Chinese Anthropological Society in Xiamen University where they organized "the First National Academic Symposium of Anthropology" and created a new department of anthropology in 1984. In the course of the following years, new departments were established in many other universities, for example in Shanghai, Nanjing, Sichuan, Wuhan, Shandong, Yunnan, and Beijing. In 1992, Beijing University established a Center for Anthropology and Folklore. Since 1995, with the support of the Ministry of Education as well as of the Ford Foundation and the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the Institute has organized several workshops

on social and cultural anthropology. In this period, major national social science research institutions such as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) have organized different anthropology programs. At the same time, fieldwork in China became progressively easier to arrange, both for Chinese and for foreign anthropologists. The protagonists of the recent elaborations of Chinese anthropology and ethnology were intellectuals who studied anthropology under the guidance of the founders of the discipline. Most of them, like their masters, completed their education abroad. The growth of the discipline was greatly benefitted by their return home to occupy academic positions, and by the increase of Chinese graduates traveling to the West to take anthropology degrees. Publications also underwent constant quantitative and qualitative improvements, reflecting the changes in theoretical influences. In the eighties, the books translated and published were mainly on American evolutionism, historical particularism, and neo-evolutionist classics. In the mid nineties, structural anthropology, interpretive anthropology, historical anthropology, and post-modernist anthropology gained increasing importance in the editorial policies. The hosting of the 16th World Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in 2008 ratified China's positioning in the dialogue with world anthropology and the importance of China in the scientific community. It also accompanied the rise of China as a global power and the progressive movement of knowledge and science toward this new center (Hu Hongbao, Wang Jianmin, Zhang Haiyang, 2006; Liu Mingxin, 2014; Wang Mingming, 2014).

[21] Yang Shengmin, 2017.

[22] Fabian, 1983.

[23] Malighetti, 2000.

[24] Feyerabend, 1975; Ardener, 1985; Dumont, 1983; Manganaro, 1990; Latour, 1990.

[25] Malighetti, 2008.

[26] Escobar, Ribeiro, 2006.

[27] Canclini, 1990.

[28] Hannerz, 1992.

[29] Comaroff, Comaroff, 1993.

[30] Appadurai, 1996.

[31] Clifford, 1997.

[32] Amselle, 2001.

[33] Malighetti, 2007.

[34] Malighetti, Wang Mingming, 2014; Malighetti, 2014; Malighetti, Yang Shengmin, 2017.

[35] Li Xingxing, 2008; Wang Mingming, 2008; Ding Hong, 2014; Wang Yanzhong, 2014

[36] Ma Qicheng, Ding Hong, 1998; Naribilige, 2000; Ding Hong, Min Junqing, 2012; Wang Chao, 2013; Liu Xinxin, 2004; Wang Mingming, 2014; Lai, Farquhar, 2015.

[37] Yan Yunxiang, 1996; Yang Mayfair Mei-hui, 1997; Peng Xuefang, 1998; Yan Yunxiang, 2000; Jing Jun, 2000; Pun Ngai, 2003; Zhang Li, 2004; Zheng Tiantian, 2003; Zhou Yongming, 2005; Zhou Xiaohong, 2005; Yu Dan Smyer, 2005; Ren Hai, 2007.

[38] Sayad 1991, p. 14.

[39] Zhou Daming 1997; Yang Mayfair Mei-hui 1999; Yan Hairong 2003; Zhang Li 2001b; Pun Ngai 2005; Peng Xuefang 2012. Xiang Biao, 2002; Yan Hairong, 2003; Zhang Li, 2004; Zheng Tiantian, 2004; Pun Ngai, 2005; Peng Xuefang 2012.

[40] Zhang Li 2001, Liu Xin 2002, Zheng Tiantian 2003, Yan Yunxiang 2003, Zhang Li 2004, Yan Hairong 2004, Ren Hai 2007; Fei Xiaotong, 1981; Yan Yunxiang, 1994; Wang Chunguang, 1995; Ma L. J. C., Biao Xiang, 1998; Chan, Kam Wing, Li Zhang, 1999; Liu Xin, 2000; Li Zhang, 2001; Li Zhang, 2001; Zhang Li, 2002; Peng Xuefang, 2002; Liu Xin, 2002; Zheng Tiantian, 2003; Yan Yunxiang, 2003; Li Zhang, 2004; Yan Hairong, 2004; Zhou Yongming, 2005; Pan Tianshu, 2005; Siu Helen F. 2005; Zhou Daming.