

<<从他称到自称>>

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前言

In 1999, I became interested in the impact of tourism development on local Bai gender roles in the Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture (DBAP), Yunnan, China. I had encountered many rural Bai women in downtown Dali who left their husbands and children home in order to earn cash. This questioned the assumed model of social division of labour previously in my mind and in many Chinese publications on the patriarchal Bai society. I was curious about the newly acquired gendered social roles brought in by the rapid social economic development after the Reform and Opening-up Policy in 1978 and was eager to explore this aspect of socio-cultural change. After I learned more from and about local people, I realised that tourism was only one of the many causes that had brought about a change in gender roles. The women's strong identification with the officially designated Bai category and the way they perceived a distinctive Bai culture captured my attention. As will be unfolded later, I did not understand, since minzu labels and legal Baizu identity are all fixed there in the official documents, why people are still so sensitive as to whether they are Bai, Yi or Han, and why they keep articulating their Bai identities seriously on various occasions and in various ways. I gave up my initial interests and decided to find out why people are still so sensitive to the minzu label of official ethnic identity granted by the state half a century ago.

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内容概要

The Bai is one of the 55 ethnic minority groups (shaoshu minzu) officially demarcated in China between the 1950s and 1979. This study analyses the growth of Bai identity since the 1950s and the constructed or imagined difference with other peoples, and how the Bai have embraced the state-granted label, acted on it and experienced it emotionally, practically and politically. This book explores how Bai identities are produced and reproduced in-between the social-historical layerings of Bai/state, Bai/Han and Bai/Yi relationships. Many writers have examined the relationship between the state and ethnic minorities in southwest China. They argued convincingly against the portrayal of ethnic minorities as passive victims in the state enterprise of representation (Tapp 1986, 1995, 2002; Schein 1989, 2000; Harrell 1990, 1995, 1996, 2001; Litzinger 1995; Cheung Siu-woo 1996; Oaks 1998; Jonsson 2000; Bradley 2001 and Mueggler 2002). Others warn that emphasising resistance may fall prey to false dichotomising the state and the society (e.g. Sara Davis 1999, Mackerras 2004). My work extends such literature in the ethnography of self-representation and self-definition of Bai Identity. In line with these writers, I shall illustrate how the making of Bai ethnicity expresses the Bai identities, manipulates and reifies the Bai ethnic label designated by the NECP in daily life. Regarding representations of the Bai in Dali, Beth Nortar's (1999) dissertation provides an excellent starting point, yet her focus on historical Chinese representations undermines the subjectivity of the people under study. Nortar's later articles (2000, 2008) convincingly teased out the constructive nature of Bai identity by various parties (see also Mackerras 1988 and D. Wu 1989, 1994, 1991). My study builds on their studies through bringing together a broader range of subject matters where identity and ethnic labels interact by drawing on my extensive fieldwork in Dali between 1999 and 2005. I have "maintained a balanced yet critical attitude" (Examiner's comments) towards sources. I have also shown "sensitivity towards the actions and views of the various relevant parties, and abstaining from extremist dichotomies one finds in some of the literature about China, especially in that about its ethnic minorities." (Examiner's comments). This book challenges a hegemonic and unilateral view of Chinese minzu by contextualising how the Bai people use the state-granted label to conceptualise Bai identities through historical studies, recent memories, religious practices and an annual social event. Most significant among my findings is the role of the legitimate name Baizu, which fits well into a China context by being politically correct, economically valuable, and historically embedded in local social life. The label Baizu has become a symbolic diacritic, which sets the basis for the sustainable reproduction of Bai identities based on features which are not necessarily ethnically distinctive but become so due to the legitimate label. And the Bai have utilised it as a manageable social and political entity for the expression of personal or collective identities under a projected monolithic and homogenous Bai Identity. This book concludes that Bai identity is a new form of group affiliation, new in the sense that the Bai have entered the new world of a clear-cut Baizu category, but it is not completely unfamiliar to them.

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作者简介

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章节摘录

Few would have expected or comprehended why many Western anthropologists would find it so difficult to understand the NECP and to recognise the validity of the NECP for decades on end, however, reasonable their criticisms may appear from a Western perspective.) As Wang Mingke (2007b) correctly points out: neither the term minzu developed over history in China nor the anthropological term ethnic group is helpful in understanding the peoples under study. However, the NECP not only seems to have frozen up minzu or ethnic groups that had been in fluidity, but also ended up engendering and heightening peoples self-awareness (see Harrell 1995a) . To members of any group, the NECP offers more than official recognition and equal rights, post-NECP categories have become handy tools to combat socio-political changes. Most importantly, the NECP provided a basis for subsequent efforts to fill the empty minzu categories with whatever people assume ethnic within a traditionally and politically acceptable framework. The NECP has not only been important to the state and the people involved, it is also significant, in a theoretical sense, to anthropologists. The implementations of the project and its theoretical implications have provided ideal case studies for intellectual, political and social critiques in a post-colonial and post-modern era. Early English-language publications on the NECP have been as influential on English scholarship on Chinese minzu as the NECP has been on the Chinese population. Its role in shaping discussions of Chinese minzu has caught much attention. The arbitrary nature of the NECP, the role of the state and the political ideology have been critically engaged, but some of its conceptual implications have been scarcely mentioned in the English literature. The following section will introduce how Western researchers responded to the NECP before discussing the theoretical concerns of this book.

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