

UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN TENSION

China's National Ideology and Ethnic Theory Reflected in The Social Policies of Yunnan

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Doctor of Philosophy

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Aston University

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Thesis Abstract

Ethnic policy in China is currently undergoing a shift towards assimilation, with a growing emphasis being placed on shared commonalities among the 56 minzu groups forming the 'Chinese nation'. This project examines policies from Yunnan province which intersect with the lives of ethnic minorities. It analyses how these policies reflect Xi Jinping's ideology and call for ethnic unity under the banner of the 'community of the Chinese nation'.

A dataset of 102 policy documents published between 2014-2022 were extracted from the governmental websites of six prefectures in Yunnan using a keyword search. These documents were then coded and developed into themes. The themes were explored using an adapted three tier model of ethnic identity construction, which correlates to techniques of governmentality. A trend of soft assimilation which includes efforts at engineering a 'Chinese' consciousness through the construction of ethnic unity demonstration zones, and ideological indoctrination and which encourages the fusion of cultures was identified. This soft assimilation preserves local characteristics as economic resources for development and encourages identification with a broader 'Chinese national' identity, history and culture.

While Yunnan still embraces its unique position as the home of diverse ethnic cultures, the combination of practical developmental policies and ideological campaigning are shaping the conceptualisation of ethnic relations and identities as China moves forward in its 'New Era'.

Keywords: Yunnan, Ethnic Minorities, Policy, Inter-ethnic Unity

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction of Research Topic

The main aim of this research project is to examine public policies in Yunnan Province published after 2014 that impact the lives of ethnic minorities and to explore how the ideology and discourses of the 'Chinese national community' or the *zhonghua minzu* community' (中华民族共同体) and ethnic relations in the 'New Era' are appearing at the local level. As a growing emphasis is placed on 'unity and diversity,' we consider the practical and ideological efforts undertaken to engineer a shift in identity salience.

China considers itself a 'unified multi-ethnic nation', officially recognising 56 *minzu* or ethnic groups (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2005). The largest ethnic group is the Han, who compose 91% of the population. In other words, of China's 1.386 billion citizens, 113.8 million people are divided among 55 ethnic minority groups. The majority of *minzu* groups are native to the resource-rich border areas, covering a total of 64% of China's land mass. Yunnan Province, located in the Southwest, is a region of great diversity with 25 indigenous ethnic minority groups living in close proximity.

While accounting for only a small percentage of the national population, ethnic issues are a significant component of China's national stability and unity concerns. How the Chinese Communist Party manages the relationship between itself and its minority population has remained a significant issue in state affairs throughout its history. Since the foundation of the People's Republic of China, the state has oscillated between periods of ethnic accommodation and ethnic assimilation. Since the 1990s, China has focused on economic and social development, and ethnic minority areas have seen greater development in recent years than their eastern counterparts. In efforts to protect stability and peaceful coexistence, the government has constructed a system of ethnic rights which are written into the constitution. China employs an ethnic identification system and programme of rights and benefits for the 55 ethnic minority groups, which are increasingly being ideologically integrated with the Han majority by employing the term the 'Chinese nation'/*zhonghua minzu*, which has been reinvigorated by Xi Jinping in his efforts to bolster nationalism under the CCP.

At the Nineteenth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 2017, Xi Jinping declared that China had entered a 'New Era'. The history of the CCP and PRC is divided between first the founding period with Mao's leadership, then the reform and opening-up period under the influence of Deng Xiaoping, and now the 'New Era' starting with Xi Jinping in

2012. In this 'New Era,' China hopes to finally take its place as a major global superpower. The first of the three goals set for this 'New Era' includes achieving a moderately prosperous society by 2020, which they have already achieved after proclaiming success in the abolition of poverty. The next goal is to be a fully modernised socialist country by 2035, and the final goal is for China to become a globalised superpower by 2049. Economics, political sovereignty and national stability are key issues in the 'New Era', and all intersect with ethnic work. Having reached the 2020 goal on time, the next goal in sight is to realise itself as a modern socialist nation by 2035.

In recent years China has encountered ethnic tensions in its territory and international backlash due to its treatment of minority groups, leading to renewed interest in ethnic policies being developed at home and critiqued abroad. Much of the international attention placed on the rights and policies of ethnic minorities has focused on Tibetans and Uyghurs. Efforts ranging from promoting Mandarin language education, the Sinicisation of religion, and the labour and schooling transfers of ethnic minorities to inland provinces have all pointed to Beijing adopting an assimilation approach (Leibold, 2021). And while there is a need for researcher attention on the extreme situations of Tibet and Xinjiang, they do not reflect the situation of minorities in other regions of China. They are the exception rather than the rule. They are a reminder that the CCP's main interest is in maintaining control, and it will use strong-handed methods and repression when it deems it necessary. In contrast, Yunnan Province has a reputation for ethnic peace and harmony and embodies a relatively ideal model of ethnic relations for the CCP.

1.2 Background and Context

Historically, the lines of Chinese/*hanren* (referring to descendants of the Han Dynasty) and other groups were understood as a division between civilisation and barbarianism¹. This division was based on culture. Barbarians were further distinguished as raw (*sheng*) and cooked (*shu*). This distinction referred to the potential of assimilation into Chinese culture, with cooked barbarians being the more civilised of the two (Harrell, 1995). A barbarian could become Chinese through a process referred to as *hanhua* to become Han (Dikötter, 2015). This was achieved largely through education, knowledge of classical texts, and living in accordance with Confucian principles.

¹ For a longer discussion on the importance of this dichotomy in the Chinese imperial system see Fiskesjö, 1999.

Between the fall of the Qing empire and the foundation of the Chinese Communist Party, there was much-heated debate surrounding the issue of ethnicity and who belonged to the nation of China. See Chapter 2 for additional background on the issue.

The term *minzu* is a relatively new term in Chinese. *Min*, meaning people, and *zu*, meaning group, have both been used since ancient times to refer to communities of people, but historically the two words were never used in conjunction (Huang, 1995). It was not until the early Republican Era that the term appeared. *Minzu* is a calque of the Japanese word *minzoku*. In Chinese, the original usage was in the phrase *minzu zhuyi*, borrowed from *minzokushugi*, meaning nationalism (Dikötter, 2015). Liang Qichao, a reformist during the late Qing and early republic era, is credited for bringing the term into usage. It became widely used by the anti-Manchu revolutionaries as part of their rhetoric on Chinese identity, looking to reawaken national feelings. Later, in socialist discourse, *minzu* was used to translate the Russian word *narod* (people, nation) (Mullaney, 2011). As China began to think of itself as a multi-ethnic nation needing to classify people groups, the meaning of the term shifted again to include ethnicity. *Minzu*, therefore, can be understood as people, nationality, or ethnicity depending on context (Mullaney, 2011). Furthermore, the term *shaoshu minzu* denotes ethnic minority groups. In this thesis, the terms ethnicity and *minzu* are used interchangeably, but the conceptual difference will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

James Scott has provocatively argued in his book *The Art of Not Being Governed* that the ethnic groups located in 'shatter zones' or areas of ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity in upland, remote areas outside the reach of state power should not be thought of as primitive peoples but as people who have purposely evaded the state and are 'barbarians by design' (Scott, 2009). Although these shatter zones can be found across the globe, Scott's area of interest is Southeast Asia, a region referred to as Zomia. A significant portion of Southwest China is included in this region, including all of Yunnan. Those who were not assimilated into the Han fled further southwest into the hills and difficult terrain where the Han could not easily follow. The Chinese ethnologist Fei Xiaotong's description of the evolution of the Chinese nation noted that the line between the state and people at the peripheries was permeable, and individuals would flee the state in times of difficulty and war, seeking security in the absence of state power when it was to their advantage (Fei, 1988). The argument Scott makes is that these people are not people whom time forgot as the modern civilised world progressed around them, but people who fled the constraints of power and chose to live in ways which would make them resistant to assimilation and thereby the power of the state.

The 55 ethnic minority groups were cemented through the Ethnic Classification Project or *minzu shibie* (民族识别), which refers to a number of identification projects ordered by the

Chinese Communist Government as a way of understanding and structuring the ethnonational component of the population so as to bring them into the state. Ethnicity is not static, and so the ethnic work of the state is never finished (Lin, 1987). Yet it should be noted that since 1971 when the Jinuo were recognised as their own separate ethnic group, the state has made no moves to amend the classification system. This system of ethnic identification requires all Chinese citizens to register under an officially designated ethnicity. As ethnic identity is listed on each individual's identification card, household registration (*hukou* 户口) and other official documents, including job and school applications, not only is it woven into the fabric of Chinese society, it is also a key to obtaining benefits and the ethnic policy system. Ethnic classification is a two-edged sword, it benefits the minority population in terms of state support towards development and strengthens their ethnic identity, but it is also propagating a state-approved version of identity and classification that the government is constantly working to maintain.

This overview of the history of ethnic relations within China, especially under the CCP, provides a background understanding of how the *minzu* groups of China have been conceptually constructed and introduced to and accepted by the population within the last 100 years. While constructivism holds that ethnicity is a social construct and an organic social phenomenon (Barth, 1969), China's efforts at categorising the once organic forms of ethnicity into contained *minzu* groups highlight the degree of social engineering present in ethnic affairs and the ability of the state to mould the population into new subjectivities. The discourse of ethnic relations is produced by the state and sets a background informing how this research considers the positioning of China in the 'New Era', demonstrating the shifting interpretations of the conceptualisation and framework of *shaoshu minzu* in relation to the new *zhonghua minzu* consciousness.

1.2.2 Discussion of Key Terms

Acculturation is both a group and an individual process of adapting to another culture and modifying habits and values to fit into society. Acculturation is bi-directional, wherein both the mainstream society and the acculturating group will change and adapt to one another as a result of group interaction. This process leads to integration or assimilation. When a group integrates with the majority, they are able to retain their original identity and maintain it in tandem with their new identity in the mainstream. There are several models of assimilation, such as straight-line (Alba and Nee, 1990; Gordon, 1964) and segmented (Portes and Zhou, 1993), which were primarily used to examine the experience of immigrants in western society and as a process which happened organically.

For this project, we are approaching assimilation from the viewpoint of policy and government intervention. Forced assimilation is often used to discuss indigenous groups forcefully being integrated into the mainstream culture, sometimes resorting to the use of violent or repressive means. As previously noted, while China is seeking to incorporate its ethnic minorities, the situations vary across the country, and it is not a homogeneous experience of acculturation. There is a difference in how this is being treated in different locations and with different populations. I chose to differentiate this as hard and soft assimilation. I anticipate that Yunnan will follow a soft assimilation approach.

Herbert Gans developed the term symbolic ethnicity in 1979 as a stage of acculturation to explain a phenomenon he observed in Italian and Jewish immigrants after assimilating into American society. The gradual erosion of the groups 'ethnic' status occurs over several generations as the group assimilates into mainstream culture until being 'ethnic' becomes a choice rather than a default identity. Ethnic identity becomes marked by a focus on both material and non-material symbols such as food and festivals, as well as the erosion of ethnic homogeneous neighbourhoods and occupations (Gans, 1979). And as such ethnic identity becomes 'passive' (Gans, 2009) and less salient than national identity. The condition of European immigrants in America and ethnic minorities in China are of course very different, yet symbolic ethnicity is still useful in predicting a realistic outcome of China's ethnic theory and current policy trends.

While a group may eventually reach complete assimilation, wherein the original identity is lost, and the assimilating group melds into and becomes one with the mainstream, assimilation is a long process and not necessarily a linear one. China's current emphasis on forging a sense of '*zhonghua minzu* community' is an effort to create an identity for all Chinese society to claim and embrace. Fei Xiaotong's theory of 'plurality and unity' states that *zhonghua minzu* has evolved through a history of interaction, leading to the current state of 'in you there is me, in me there is you' or a bit of ethnic give and take (Fei, 1988). He also states that the Han are the nucleus of the *zhonghua minzu* and that ethnic minorities add colour and texture. The CCP claim that *zhonghua minzu* is an integrative identity. If Han is the nucleus of *zhonghua minzu* and its culture, lifestyle and values largely adhere to Han norms, then *zhonghua minzu* begins to feel less like an identity that embraces all people. Minorities will see very little of themselves reflected in it.

As many minorities across China move into cities and are increasingly incorporated into Han society, concerns over assimilation are becoming more poignant. One of Xi Jinping's favoured symbols for the 'Chinese nation' (*zhonghua minzu*) is that the people are like seeds of a pomegranate tightly bound together. This image does not reflect the diversity of the 56 groups

living together as an integrated whole. Instead, it is an image of plurality without a difference. Uradyn Bulag has stated that 'China wants nothing less than to change China's institutional form from a state of many nationalities to a nation consisting essentially of one people' (Bulag, U., 2021, p. 49). The goal is to encourage ethnic incorporations to the extent that the cultural content of *minzu* is diluted, and yet the boundaries remain through ethnic categorisation in order to maintain the façade of ethnic rights.

1.2.3 Framework of Ethnic System

China has extensive preferential policies for ethnic minorities, ranging from the right to governmental representation to additional points awarded for university entrance exams. Objectively, preferential policies aim to create real equality for Chinese citizens by levelling the playing field for ethnic minorities. Yet a tension remains beneath the surface between the potential benefits and the patronising narrative of backward ethnic minorities in need of governmental assistance, which can follow them regardless of their individual achievements (Verhoeven and Zhang, 2016; Barabantseva, 2008).

After the 2008 Tibetan protest and the 2009 Ürümqi riots, academic research and discussion, both in and outside of China, began to speak more critically in evaluating the state of China's ethnic policies. In China, a debate arose over the question of depoliticising ethnic identities by removing the policy of ethnic autonomy. Instead, *minzu* would be encouraged to embrace a purely cultural and ethnic identity. Hu Angang and Hu Lianhe took the lead in the debate, calling for stronger assimilationist policies (Hu and Hu, 2012). There was significant pushback from those who opposed and felt that ethnic autonomy should, in fact, be strengthened. However, by 2014, the debate subsided when Xi Jinping declared that there was to be no further debate on ethnic autonomy as China's current ethnic policy system was the correct method for China to deal with ethnic relations. Closing the debate did not prove that Xi was without sympathy for the assimilationist position; only removing the right to ethnic autonomy was too radical and would cause outrage. As we can see from the current trend, Xi's interest is in promoting nationalism, which sits quite comfortably with pushing ethnic assimilation. For this reason, 'second-generation ethnic policy' has re-emerged with western critiques of China and the growing assimilation trends.

The 'second-generation' did not succeed as a cohesive set of policy directions, and the label may have been dropped (see Chapter 2.5 for more information). However, individually, many of their targets are being subsumed under China's 'New Era' goals and the 'forging the collective *zhonghua minzu* consciousness' (铸牢中华民族共同体意识). It is not so much the

policies that were the problem but rather the attitude and reasons surrounding the discussion of toning down minority rights. The approach of the second-generation enthusiasts was too abrasive, stating their position too bluntly and with little regard for the practicalities involved or anticipating potential reactions from affected communities. It was too obvious what the negative outcome could be without ample reasons to support it. Whereas the justifications for promoting '*zhonghua minzu* consciousness' are backed by a 'positive' goal, as the 'New Era' is framed as China realising its lofty destiny and pursuing its policy from a position of care for the great nation rather than one of fear or reaction. Still, the bottom line for minorities remains the same... assimilation.

1.3 Research Aims and Methodology

The central goal of this project, to understand the current situation of ethnic policy in China as it moves into Xi's proclaimed 'New Era', as observed in how the national-level goals and rhetoric introduced by Xi Jinping have been broken down into the following three questions for an exploratory sociological investigation:

- 1) How are the local governments in Yunnan responding to new formulations of ethnic unity and the national *zhonghua* community within their policies?
- 2) How does it interact with ethnically targeted policies?
- 3) Can this trend be sufficiently identified as an assimilationist agenda?

The fragmented nature of the Chinese governing system leads to variations in policy implementation. See Chapter 3.3 and 3.4.2 for more information on how policies interact and are interpreted at different levels of government and across departments. It should not be assumed that the policy strategies in one region are similarly adopted across the nation. Through the analysis of the policy documents collected, I expect to see Yunnan following the central policy line by embracing the national level *zhonghua* community, while tailoring the provincial and county level efforts simultaneously towards promoting its ethnic minority communities. The assumption that Yunnan would adapt stringent hardline policies towards its ethnic population or enforce tight control over ethnic identity expressions as seen in Xinjiang, or Tibet in efforts to subjugate minorities to assimilate, does not align with the province's efforts to maintain an equilibrium between ethnic peace and following the party's policies. Yunnan relies heavily on its ethnic minority diversity for both its identity and income. Furthermore, Yunnan is China's best PR both internally and internationally as a positive multi-ethnic showcase. For this reason, I anticipate that any assimilations strategies towards ethnic

minorities will need to take a soft and tempered approach. Furthermore, I expect to find that instead of being discouraged, ethnic minority culture will continue to have value and receive promotion within Yunnan.

At the onset of the research process, I cast a wide net for collecting documents to explore how ethnic minorities were showing up in policy. Going into the research I kept a very open mind about my expectations as I didn't know what type of documents I would uncover. But I kept my eyes open for pertinent topics in Chinese news such as language and religious rights, and education.

As previously mentioned, initiatives such as the Sinicisation of religion, and the changes to language policies in schools, have been sufficient for many to affirm their belief that China is entering a period of greater ethnic assimilation. This research explores this claim and its relationship to the national rhetoric seen under Xi, which seemingly promotes a strong, unified ethnic/national consciousness in Yunnan province. Furthermore, answering the research questions, we consider the potential implications such a shift in policy, and interpretations and framework of *shaoshu minzu* in relation to the new *zhonghua minzu* consciousness may have on ethnic identities.

I also utilise the concept of symbolic ethnicity in this thesis. I believe this is a useful theory of assimilation which can be adapted for this situation in China. The projected goals of the CCP in its efforts of managing ethnic identities going forward in the 'New Era' combines the building of a strong national identity under the banner of *zhonghua minzu* and promotes ethnic culture in a tokenistic manner which could potentially leave minority populations of the future with a hollowed-out state engineered or state sanctioned symbolic ethnic identity.

This research takes an interpretivist/constructionist position that understands ethnicity and minzu relations as the product of human interaction, which takes on the meaning attributed to it by the overarching social context (Creswell, 2013). The formation of minzu identities in China has had a clear impact on national doctrine and the conceptualisation of ethnic relations and policies. The aim of this interpretivist project is to explore how public policy in Yunnan Province approaches ethnic minorities as China enters its 'New Era' and to further understand the meaning behind the policies. An interpretive approach to policy should concern itself with identifying what is being said, as well as whose message it represents and how it is being communicated (Yanow, 2007). This thesis will explore how ethnic minorities appear within the documents and how it intersects with the theoretical and ideological concerns of the 'New Era'.

This study employs an interpretive and inductive approach to examine 102 documents collected from counties across six prefectures in Yunnan to explore if and how the goals and ideology of China's 'New Era' intersect with elements of ethnic identity. This research uses a

three-tier model of ethnic identity construction adopted from Barth, which takes the state constraints on identity into consideration (Barth, 1994). This is paired with Foucault's notion of power and governmentality. The research primarily focuses on the macro and median levels which intersect with ethnic identity discourse in China and the foundational policies guiding Chinese ethnic affairs, allowing for analysis at three levels, i.e., ethnic experience and understanding, local implementation of policy which creates and reproduces normative behaviour and subjectivities, and the discourses of identity and state agendas. Policy documents are understood to reflect the narrative of the state, the most powerful actor in creating the social reality within which individuals operate. While the social reality is not fixed and cannot be said to have universal relationships and meanings. This research approaches ethnic identity as a continual process of negotiation between structure and individual agency.

Chinese ethnic theory experts and politicians insist that China's system of ethnic governance holds many lessons for other nations. And indeed, much information can be gleaned from its practices. This project's insights into the management of ethnic identities also can be applied beyond China to the fields of nationalism and ethnic studies. By utilising the conceptual framework of governmentality to analyse the Chinese case of ethnic minorities this research demonstrates how policy and practice target the ethnic population to manage their identity through neoliberal, neo-socialist and national subjectivities (see Chapter 4.6 for greater discussion). These three subjectivities also reflect contributions on the theme of minority management under the rational of economics, assimilation, and securitisation. Chapter 5 of this thesis illustrates how the global tendencies of neoliberalism to commodify ethnicity, particularly within tourism, is adapted in the neo-socialist context through policies of inter-ethnic relations and ethnic unity. This thesis contributes to the debate on neo-socialist states and demonstrates similarities in their approaches to managing ethnic identities through the neoliberal market economy while still in an authoritarian context in order to suppress and control subsections of the population. Furthermore, the project highlights securitization through soft assimilation where educational and cultural programmes are used to shape identities of those that threaten the cultural cohesion to ensure the stability of the nation and its identity.

The data set was collated through a process of screening and selection, modelled after the PRISMA systematic review protocol. The data set of policy documents was analysed in NVivo software using thematic analysis, and the findings were triangulated and supplemented with secondary data in the form of news articles and ethnographic-styled vignettes based on conversations with my contact in Yunnan. This project was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and due to the restrictions on travel and loss of access to the field, the project had to be adapted to meet the constraints.

The Chinese system of ethnic policies, as laid out in the previous section, refers to a collection of rights and benefits which are afforded to ethnic minorities, as well as regional regulations and laws which are primarily directed at ethnic minorities, falling in line with the constitutional rights. This research takes a slightly different approach to what is considered 'ethnic policies' for the purpose of this project. For the most part, the documents included in the data set are not exclusively formulated for ethnic minorities. Rather, the data set is composed of a broader range of public policies that, while explicitly site ethnic minorities as a group of interest within the text, are not purely focused on ethnic minority issues. This shows how ethnic minorities are being approached from a different perspective: it offers a glimpse through the side door. Within these documents, ethnic minorities are often placed with other disadvantaged groups, such as the disabled, women, children, and the elderly. A common idea uttered in conjunction with Yunnan ethnic work is that everything which relates to the lives of ethnic minorities is considered part of ethnic work.

One element of the emphasis on unity and *zhonghua* identity is the complaint that it is, in effect, a Han identity. It simultaneously embraces a cultural heritage based on China's imperial past and its modern quest for nationalism. While national policies state that everyone is equal under a modern system of citizenship, there are many claims of inequality and Han chauvinism which the CCP assuages by pointing to its ethnic rights policies. These policies were established to realise equality and promote integration into the national system. A shift in policy directions from ethnic minority oriented to a united Chinese community will influence both ethnic minorities and inter-ethnic relations. When minority rights are being adjusted or neglected for the greater good in the name of *zhonghua minzu* unity (Zhou, 2020a), one is sceptical of claims that the state cares for minority rights.

This most recent trend towards assimilationist policies began in the early 2000s, partially out of reaction to the violence in Tibet and Xinjiang. And while China's 'New Era' and focus on ethnic unity started in 2012, the 2014 Central Ethnic Work Conference marks the point where Xi Jinping's position on ethnic policy and his insistence that ethnic harmony cannot be purely based on economic development, but needs a cultural, historical and spiritual centre (Leibold, 2014). Given the range of variety and differences throughout China, even within the Han, Xi believes economic well-being is not enough to bring all Chinese together in a common identity and loyalty.

As we consider the public policies in Yunnan, both the ideology of the state and the context of power and government at the county level impact the local condition. Many scholars have pointed to the importance ethnicity continues to play in China's policies and national narrative (Fan, 2016; Leibold, 2013). Issues surrounding ethnicity are integral to the very nature of the

Chinese nation (Shih, 2002). During his visit to Yunnan in 2015, Xi Jinping called for the province to be a 'model of ethnic unity' for the whole of China.

General Secretary Xi Jinping asked Yunnan to 'strive to become a demonstration area for national unity and progress for our country' during his inspection tour of Yunnan. Demonstrate what? It is a call to Yunnan to continue to serve as historical proof of the correct path to solve ethnic issues with Chinese characteristics and to make an exploration of the times.

Why Yunnan? Because Yunnan is the epitome of our unified multi-ethnic country, the history of ethnic work in Yunnan is a concentrated expression of the history of ethnic work in New China, and the achievements of ethnic work in Yunnan are the cumulation of the successful practise of the Chinese Communist Party's ethnic work guidelines, policies, systems, theories and roads (Xu, 2017).

The regional identity of Yunnan is already one which embraces its diversity and inter-ethnic connections. And so, the party may view it as already primed for greater inter-ethnic fusion but painting it over with a Han-centred *zhonghua* identity could potentially dilute its unique ethnic distinctiveness and variety.

1.4 Location Information

The documents in the data set were selected from Yunnan Province. Chapter 4, Section 5 gives a report on how the documents were selected. County documents were taken from six prefectures. See Table 1. for an overview of document distribution by location, and Figure 1. for the location of the six prefectures on a map of Yunnan.

Table 1 Policy Document Place of Issue

Policy Document Place of Issue							
	Chuxiong	Dali	Diqing	Honghe	Lincang	Xishuangbanna	Yunnan
Prefecture Level			Diqing 6	Honghe 7		Xishuangbanna 3	
County Level	Dayao 23 Wuding 3	Heqing 1	Deqin 2 Weixi 2		Gengma 1	Mengla 3	
City Level	Chuxiong 3		Shangri-la 1			Jinghong 23	
Province							Yunnan 24
Total	29	1	11	7	1	29	24

Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture: This prefecture has a population of 2.6 million, of which ethnic minority account for 36.9% population. The largest ethnic minority group is the Yi, but the Lisu, Miao, Dai, Hui, and Bai also have significant numbers. Chuxiong is located in Central Yunnan; in 2021, the province still made 52.25 billion RMB or 6.86 billion GBP from tourism in the midst of COVID-19 (CXZ.gov., 2022).

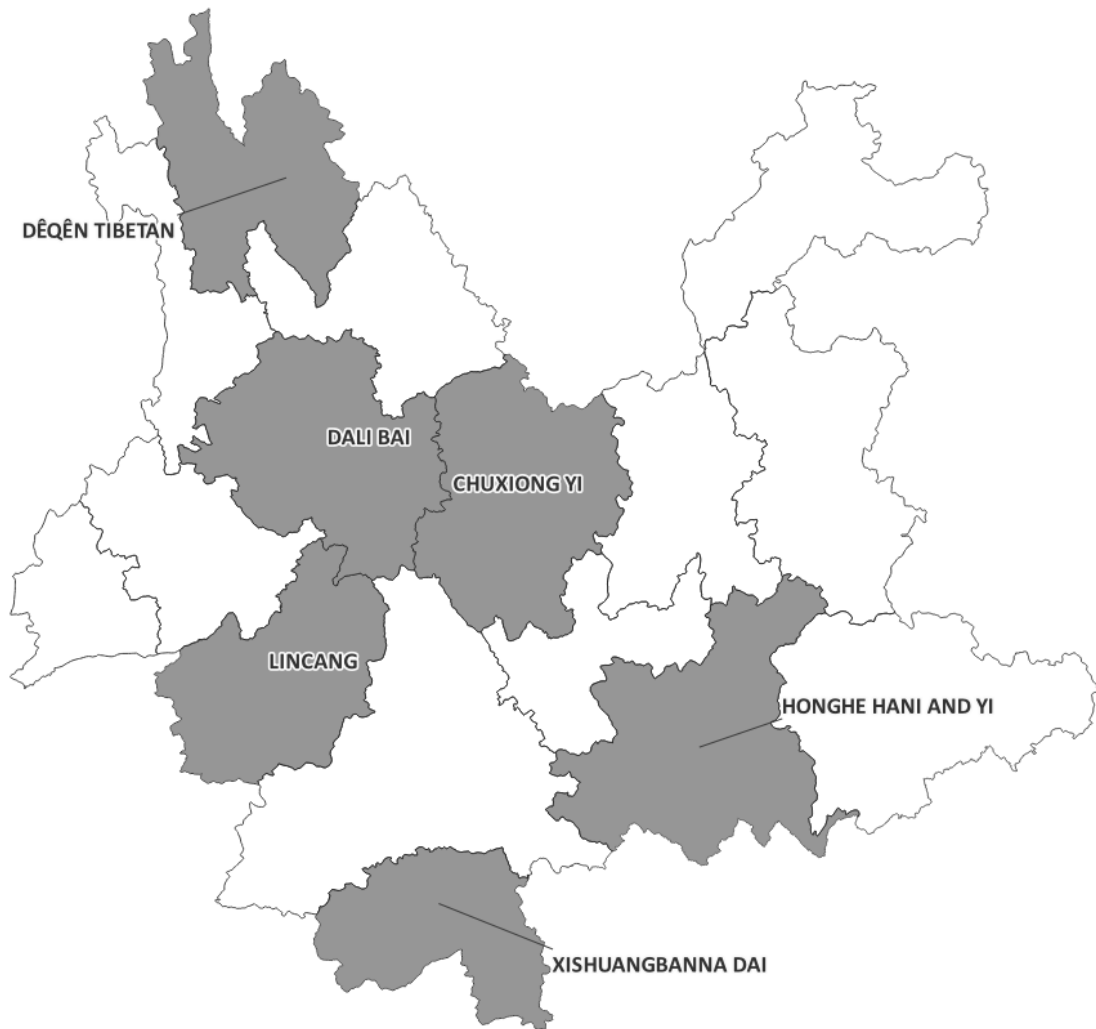
Lincang: Has a population of 2.2 million, of which 41.4 % are ethnic minorities. The largest groups are the Wa, Yi, Dai, Lahu, Bulang, Lisu, Hui, Miao, De'ang, Bai and Jinpo. Over 60% of China's Wa population lives in this prefecture. Lincang is located in the southwestern corner of Yunnan; it borders Myanmar (Lincang.gov., 2019).

Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture: 77.9% of the 130.6 million people in the Prefecture are ethnic minorities. The largest ethnic groups are Dai (32.9%), Hani (20.8%), Lahu (6.1%), Yi (5.8%), Bulang (5.25%), Jinuo (2.5%) and the Yao (2.3%). The prefecture shares an international border with Myanmar and Laos (XSBN.gov., 2022).

Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture: Has a population of 3.65 million people, of which 52.7% are ethnic minorities and the Bai account for 34.3%. Dali Prefecture is located on the north-western side of Yunnan (Dali.gov., 2022).

Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture: Has a population of 4.78 million, of which 61.3% are ethnic minorities, primarily the Yi (24.48%) and Hani (18.23%) and smaller populations of Miao, Dai and Zhuang. It is located in South Central Yunnan (HH.gov., 2020).

Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture: Has a population of 387,500. Ethnic minorities account for 89.26%, including Tibetans (36.18%), Lisu (30.3%), and Naxi (12.61%). It is located in north-west Yunnan and borders Tibet and Sichuan to the north (Diqing.gov., 2023).



1.5 Thesis Structure Overview

The following section gives a brief description of each chapter that makes up the body of the thesis. See Table 2. for a synopsis of the data chapter themes.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the research topic, supplies definitions for the key terms and concepts and lays out the basic context behind the study.

Chapter 2 is a background chapter that discusses the Western and Chinese conceptualisation and theories of ethnicity, identity and nationality. This sets up the conceptual differences between the two and helps to clarify issues of discussion that often fall into confusion due to the approaches talking at cross purposes.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of government function in the Tiao/Kuai system and interpenetrating issues to be discussed in the data chapters and which have a bearing upon the analysis, i.e., integration, the second-generation ethnic policy debate, poverty alleviation, growing area of ethnic politics and *zhonghua minzu* studies.

Chapter 4 covers the methodology. It discusses the research development process and gives an overview of the epistemological and theoretical framework. In particular, it takes a reflexive look at the project as a whole, the impact of COVID-19, and researcher positionality. Finally, it provides information on the data selection methods, ethics and limitations.

Table 2 Prevalence of Themes and Terms by Data Chapter

Prevalence of Themes and Terms							
Chapter 5		Chapter 6		Chapter 7		Chapter 8	
Tourism	63	Inter-ethnic unity demonstration zones	34	Rule of law	35	Mandarin ¹	19
						Minority language	18
Minority culture	17	Zhonghua minzu culture	35	Propaganda work	86	Religion	25
'One village one product'	9	The 'five identifications'	8	The 'three jiaos'	9	Security	24
Indicating the Number of Documents in Which Key Themes and Terms Appeared							

Chapter 5 is the first of four data chapters. The primary theme of the chapter, ethnic culture as an economic resource, is broken down into three sub-themes: tourism and culture, industrialisation of ethnic characteristics, and the 'protection' of ethnic characteristics by governmental means.

Chapter 6 outlines the 'initiative of ethnic unity and common progress' and explores how it combines economic development efforts, such as those discussed in the previous chapter with the creation of 'ethnic unity demonstration zones' and social integration. Yunnan province has placed considerable effort in designating and creating 'demonstration zones and units' which encourage inter-ethnic interactions and integration as well as an emphasis on the five identifications, i.e., the hierarchical order in which one should identify with the motherland, the CCP, *zhonghua minzu*, *zhonghua* culture, and socialism with Chinese characteristics. The initiative pairs practical social and economic development and promotes the 'New Era' ideological core.

Chapter 7 discusses how the ‘rule of law’ campaign intersects with ethnic work in legal education and ethnic policy education. The chapter also explores how propaganda, work, ideology, and legal education are used in tandem to popularise the ‘three jiaos’ (ethnic integration, interaction and blending).

Chapter 8 examines the topics of language, religion and autonomy, which are typically integrated into questions of ethnic research and policy. While these are areas of ethnic rights which are guaranteed in the constitution and have specific laws formulated for them, the documents in the data set show little additional support. Instead, the documents show the tension between what is given in the constitution and how the issues appear and are treated in general public policy documents due to a hierarchy of values between fostering *zhonghua* identity and bolstering ethnic culture and identity. Furthermore, border regions and security concerns of interest to both the state and the ethnic groups are discussed, which are attached to both ethnic groups. Moreover, the borders are discussed.

Chapter 9 provides an overview of the thesis and summarises the material covered. It synthesises the results from the four data chapters to address the initial research question and finally briefly discusses the limitations of the project and provides suggestions for future research to build off this project.

Chapter 2 Background and Chinese Ethnic Theory

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 provided a brief overview of the history of ethnicity in China and the use of the term *minzu*. In this chapter, a definition of the prevailing western conceptualisation of ethnicity is given. This is followed by a brief discussion of ethnic salience and symbolic ethnicity. Section 2.3 provides more details on the formation of the *minzu* concept. This is important to clarify as there is a conceptual gap between western definitions of ethnic groups and the Chinese concept of *minzu* groups which can lead to muddled discussions. Furthermore, it provides a background highlighting the CCP's history of constructing and shaping *minzu* identities. Section 2.4 provides an outline of *zhonghua minzu*, its rise to prominence and the relationship it has with national and ethnic identities. Finally, section 2.5 provides an outline of the debate over second-generation ethnic policies which took place in the early 2010s. This debate marked a time of open dialogue in China on the issue of assimilation. Moreover, while the debate ended in 2014, this thesis will touch upon the impact and relationship it has on current policy.

2.2 Ethnic Identity

There is no universally accepted definition or conceptualisation of ethnicity. However, at the most fundamental level, all definitions agree that ethnicity has something to do with the classification of people and group relationships (Eriksen, 1997). Other aspects that include a definition of ethnicity are shared descent/kinship (real or perceived), feelings of solidarity, language, culture, history, religion and territory (Song 2003; Petersen 1997). The idea of belonging also points to ethnicity as a social identity based on kinship and culture (Wimmer, 2008). There are two main conceptual approaches to ethnicity, primordialism and constructionism.

The term ethnicity became prominent in the 1970s (Fenton, 2010). Its first conceptualisation was aligned with primordialism, which holds that ethnic groups are objective entities capable of collective action and that ethnic attachment is innate, inborn and fixed (Geertz, 1963). Although traditional primordialism has primarily been discounted academically, newer conceptualisations of primordialism have emerged in research. Peter Weinreich argues that primordialism should not be abandoned because of 'essentialist connotations'. Instead, there should be a conceptual shift to focus on understanding the tendency of people to use the

emotive language of affection and affiliation when discussing ethnicity and nationality (Weinreich *et al.*, 2003). Eller and Coughlan (1993) argue that instead of refocusing the term, primordialism should be thrown aside completely, and another less suggestive term be used for ethnic bonds and emotional attachment.

Research by Li Xiao Xia on inter-ethnic families in Xinjiang shows that primordialist type language is commonly used by individuals when talking about their ethnic identity (Li, 2008). China tends to speak about itself in primordial terms. This has partly arisen from their long history and a coherent continuation of culture and language. Therefore, I will define primordialism, not in the tradition of Geertz, but as strong emotional attachments, socially created and often expressed in an emotive language of blood, bones and guts.

Constructionism views ethnicity as a subjective social phenomenon. In 1969 Fredrick Barth introduced the idea of ethnic boundaries, which shifted focus from the 'content' of ethnicity to the formation of ethnic group boundaries (Barth, 1969). Ethnic identity is formed from interrelationships and interactions with others, which in turn cause the boundaries of an ethnic group to continuously change. This focus changed the conceptualisation of ethnic groups from objective collective entities to subjective constructions (Carter and Fenton, 2009). Nevertheless, it should be noted that outside forces, both social and political, can limit how an individual constructs their ethnicity (Nagel, 1994).

For this research, I will approach ethnicity roughly along the lines Wsevolod Isajiw suggested as a phenomenon interrelated with the concepts of ethnic groups, which are collective entities, and ethnic identity, which is an individual experience. Thus, ethnicity encompasses objective and subjective layers (Isajiw, 1992). I hold the view that a conceptualisation of ethnicity needs to take into account both social systems and individual agency, as ethnic identity is formed through both structure and agency (Nagel, 1994). I also believe that ethnic identity is contextually activated.

2.2.2 Ethnic Salience, Markers and Symbolic Ethnicity

Ethnic identity salience is often strengthened by the number of connections an individual has to that identity. In Richard Jenkins' work on social identity, he defines identity as 'a multi-dimensional classification or mapping of the human world and our places in it, as individuals and as members of collectivities' (Jenkins, 2014, p. 6). This definition shows that identity is dynamic and a result of the interplay of the self and the larger society of which we are a part. We must also consider how structure influences the interpersonal level and impacts the attitudes of those with whom we interact.

According to social identity theory, the categorisation of the in-group vs out-group, or 'us' and 'them', is constructed by comparing group characteristics and features that form symbolic boundaries. Thus, social identities are often prescriptive in nature as symbolic group boundaries regulate behaviour patterns and values for group members (Lamont and Molnár, 2002). Individuals internalise the values and behaviours that exemplify the group and see themselves in that standard. This process allows a group to maintain its boundaries with out-group members.

An individual can call upon these symbols and behaviours to assert their identity. The elements of ethnic identity which an individual performs/or subverts are important features in the ongoing process of identity negotiation. In this sense, identities are also performative. Goffman (1959) emphasised how individuals use role expectations to adjust their behaviour and equip themselves with cues which guide them in interactions with others, regardless of whether or not they fully internalise them. Often what an individual chooses to highlight or to de-emphasise reflects how they wish others to perceive them in an effort to manage the attitudes and preconceptions others may have of them as a member of X group.

Within the context of the minority groups of Yunnan, there are a few markers which can be expected to play a significant role in an individual's ethnic identification. The anthropologist Susan Blum, carrying out research in Kunming, noted that the obvious markers which signalled ethnic minority identity in the provincial capital were namely clothing and language (Blum, 2001, p. 29). While ethnic clothing as everyday attire may still be seen in the countryside, it is an increasingly rare sight. Within cities it is more commonly reserved only for special occasions and holidays. The representation of minorities in China typically highlights and values groups with ornate, beautiful or distinctive dress. The popularity of clothing for domestic and foreign tourists has spurred the mass production of ethnic costumes (Harrell, 2009; Schein, 2000, p. 61). This can imbue the act of wearing ethnic clothing with an element of theatrics and performance. Depictions of minorities in mainstream media and educational materials continually reproduce images of favoured ethnic costumes as an essential part of ethnic identity; both in the imagination of the Han Chinese and the consciousness of ethnic group members (Schein, 2000). Ethnic clothing remains an important way for an individual to signal and engage with ethnic identity on their terms.

One of the most emotionally charged markers of identity is language. More than 25 ethnic groups live in Yunnan, meaning it truly has a great range of linguistic diversity. Beyond Mandarin and local variants, there are 26 minority languages spoken in Yunnan (Tsung *et al.*, 2011). However, minority languages are rarely spoken outside of their regions, and even the Han Chinese living side by side with minority groups rarely bother to learn them. In her study,

Blum (2000) also noted that many of her research participants who were registered as ethnic minorities were actually mixed, and the vast majority were unable to speak the minority language, showing a strong preference for the local mandarin dialect instead. Language use can reflect power structures within the local context. It can be used to show solidarity with a group or also to separate another individual to the outside of a group. In the past, minorities were encouraged to adopt Han surnames to assimilate into Han society (Ma, 2006; Ebrey, 1996; Fei Xiaotong, 1988). Even though it is common for minorities to have or adopt a Han-stylised name, certain characters and surnames can be giveaways to the individual's ethnic background (Harrell, 2001).

While national holidays and Han cultural celebrations, such as the mid-Autumn festival, are public holidays across the nation, ethnic minority groups also have holidays and celebrations of their own, which are locally observed. Individuals can request leave from work in order to go back to their hometown and partake in the celebrations and receive regular holiday pay for it (Zang, 2015). For many minorities, even Chinese New Year, the biggest holiday across the nation, has much less significance to them in comparison to their own holidays.

Symbolic ethnicity was first used to explain the generational process of assimilation for European immigrants into white Anglo-Saxon America (Gans, 1979). Symbolic ethnicity is a typical 'stage' in the process of acculturation, which 'signals the beginning of the end' of ethnicity (Gans, 2017). Gans (2017, p.1411) states that symbolic ethnicity may be picked up or left off by generations in the ongoing process of assimilation. It is the state of 'feeling ethnic', which can be 'an occasional impulse which does not interfere with everyday life. Finding ways of expressing ethnic identity feelings and learning to maintain some form of ethnic identity can be a leisure time activity, thus adding variety to the routines of everyday life. It is based on an individual search for emotional connection and fulfilment. Gans contends that as assimilation progresses through the generations and is spurred on by high intermarriage rates and language loss results in the erosion of ethnic boundaries, ethnic dominated residences, customs and interest groups (Gans, 1979). Another key aspect of Gans' formulation of symbolic ethnicity is that it focuses on white ethnic groups assimilating into white America, meaning that they can pass and become completely embedded into the mainstream. Socio-economic demographics is also likely to play a role in the acceptance of token or symbolic ethnicity. For many minorities entering the mainstream culture and market economy holds the key to better education and job opportunities and so assimilating becomes a necessary step in improving their prospects. Passing in the mainstream to achieve economic stability is the primary motive behind acculturation and assimilation. Symbolic ethnicity becomes more prominent as groups reach a level of economic integration. Once economic stability is achieved then ethnic group members may look back with nostalgia and bittersweet longing to

reconnect and re-embrace their traditional culture once more. Though the individuals may be comfortably embedded in the lifestyle of the mainstream majority culture, they pick and choose the elements of their ethnic minority heritage that resonates with them. Characteristics are either played up or down as the individual seeks to highlight similarities or make themselves stand out from the crowd. These individuals choose to express their identity in ways that are convenient for their urbanised lifestyle (Gans, 1979, p. 8-9). Symbolic ethnicity is passive, meaning that it is engaged with primarily for leisure and not prone to political activation. Decades after initially proposing his theory Gans later stated that it was in fact the 'the beginning of the end for ethnicity' (Gans, 2017). But the final death knell could still be postponed for many, many years, and perhaps ethnicity would move towards a post-symbolic stage where it is primarily experienced through catalogues of knowledge, research and museums. As China's ethnic minorities become more economically incorporated into the market economy and cultural and traditional lifestyle are regulated to 'protected forms of heritage', symbolic ethnicity may become a greater phenomenon and an approved form of ethnic expression in China in future years.

2.3 Background on *Minzu*

Chapter 1 gave a brief overview of the concept of *minzu* as constructed categories designed by the CCP. The following section will provide additional context for the history of ethnic relations in modern China. The boundaries of China have shifted greatly throughout its long history. The Yuan (1271- 1368) and Qing (1644-1912) dynasties held the largest expanses of territory. The final years of the Qing Dynasty saw the rise of anti-Manchu, ethno-national rhetoric. In the Republican Era (1911-1949), Sun Yat-Sen's call for Chinese nationalism created a Han-centric vision of the future. In his *Three Principles of the People*, Sun Yat-Sen officially recognised five people groups in China: Han, Manchu, Tibetan, Muslim, and Mongol. He quickly dismissed all groups but the Han, noting that even when the Mongols and Manchus dynasties ruled China, they had been assimilated into the Han. By virtue of their large population, the Han would continue to absorb smaller groups to form a *zhonghua minzu* or Chinese nationality (Sun, 1928). See Leibold (2004) for a greater discussion of the history surrounding *minzu* in Sun Yat-Sen's 'political programme'. After the death of Sun Yat-Sen, Chiang Kai Shek denied the existence of different ethnic groups altogether, stating that there was only one Chinese people and that differences were only those of geography and religion (Chiang in Mullaney, 2011, p.27-28). By equating the Chinese nation with only one group, the Han, the Republican government was alienating itself from its minority populations. Lin Yao Hua, a leading sociologist and anthropologist in China, states that the prejudicial policies of

the Guomindang stripped minorities of their equal rights, causing many minorities to either change or hide their ethnicity (Lin, 1987).

The Communists took a more inclusive stance toward ethnic groups. The Chinese Soviet Republic, founded by Mao Zedong in November 1931, included the right to self-determination of ethnic groups in its constitution. Three options were proffered to non-Han peoples: they could choose to cede from China and establish their own independent states, remain part of China but enjoy rights of autonomy and self-rule, or finally remain in China and assimilate into the larger Han population (Mullaney, 2011). These policies were offered to ethnic groups for several years, and slogans of self-determination were used to garner support from minorities during the Chinese Civil War. During the Long March, the communist cadre fled to the countryside and mountainous regions, hiding from the Guomindang. They came into close contact with many ethnic groups as they traversed Miao and Yi territory. By 1940 the rule of self-determination was adjusted from the right to cede to the rights of autonomy (Gladney, 1996, p. 88). It may have been that initial promises of self-determination were partly ideological. However, they were also a largely strategic move to gain more support in the civil war with the Guomindang (Gladney, 1996).

When the Chinese Communist Party founded the People's Republic of China in 1949, China was presented as a multi-national polity. Autonomy, not self-determination, was the answer to the 'minority question.' However, it was unclear just how many ethnic minorities resided within China's territory. Over four hundred different ethnic groups were recorded in the first census through self-ascription, and over two hundred of those were in Yunnan (Mullaney, 2011). The term for ethnicity, *minzu*, was not initially understood by ethnic groups themselves (Mullaney, 2011, p. 34). The *minzu shibie* (ethnic categorisation) project achieved the goal of 'systematically' categorising the confusing list of groups listed in the census and recommending how the ethnic groups should be divided (Mullaney, 2011). Thomas Mullaney gives a very detailed account in his book, *Coming to Terms with The Nation*, of how this number was refined in the process of ethnic categorisation and how the construction of *minzu* groups was achieved. As Louisa Schein states, the goal became 'creating solidarity out of protected forms of diversity' (Schein, 2000, p. 73).

The *minzu shibie* research teams were given strict instructions to follow Stalin's definition of nationality when making their recommendations (Mullaney, 2011, and Lin, 1987). In *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Stalin outlined four criteria for a community to be considered a nationality: common territory, language, economic state, and common psychology or culture. One tenant of Stalin's model was that nationality could only exist in a capitalist economy. This created a problem for the Chinese research teams as the *minzu*

(*narod*) of China were pre-capitalist societies; therefore, they could not fulfil the criteria of forming a nationality. Lin Yao Hua, the vice director of the Ethnic Classification research team, developed a way around this problem by introducing a concept that Thomas Mullaney refers to as 'ethnic potential' (Mullaney, 2011, p.12). Ethnic potential recognises that nationalities are not stagnant through time, nor do they simply arise fully formed. Lin Yao Hua referred to another writing of Stalin's *Marxism and the Problem of Linguistics*, where he conceded that the components of nationality begin to form in pre-capitalist communities (Mullaney, 2011,). The focus shifted from identifying nationalities to identifying ethnic groups with the potential to form nationalities.

It has been less than one hundred years and China's success in structuring the social reality of ethnic identities has been practically completed. The structure has been internalised and conceptually accepted. It is a governmental created entity which has been superimposed on the fluidity of ethnic reality before. As the next section discusses *zhonghua minzu* identity, remember that China has already experienced success at moulding conceptualisations of identity and creating new subjectivities to ease the governing of the population.

2.4 Conceptualising Zhonghua Minzu

The first germs of the concept of *zhonghua minzu* appeared around the historical period of the opium wars and China's adaption of the international discourse of 'nations' (Wu, 2015, p. 161). During this time, China was still coming to grips with the concept of a nation and its path forward. Zhou Ping, the leading scholar in the relatively new field of ethnic politics, defines *zhonghua minzu* as a complete community made up of the 56 *minzu* groups of China, making it both a national unified community composed of every citizen and a multi-ethnic aggregate. (Zhou, 2021_a). In creating the modern Chinese state, the population essence changed from dynastic subjects to citizens. They were reimagined as the Chinese people, and *zhonghua minzu* coalesced under a name and symbol to form a nationality (Zhou, 2020_a). While previous formulations of *zhonghua minzu* existed, the Communist party, embracing a multi-ethnic and equal identity, initially rejected the idea due to its Han-centric assimilationist nature. The term started to reappear slowly in Chinese discourse, and by 2012 it was being proposed as a solution to fractured ethnic relations. In 2017 Xi Jinping had *zhonghua minzu* written into the constitution as the nationality of China.

Reflecting on the past, currently, the party wishes to develop a narrative of *zhonghua minzu* which is reliant on the CCP. State-approved narratives given by modern scholars like Zhou Ping state that *zhonghua minzu* only came into existence as a real entity with the founding of

the PRC. While *zhonghua minzu* was formed around the idea of a historical lineage of a Han-centred culture and civilisation, Zhou Ping argues that it is both a modern nationality, in the sense that it is the political and cultural identity of all members of the PRC and, therefore separate from other discourses of *minzu* (*shaoshu minzu*/ethnic minority groups), and an ancient cultural heritage which has dictated ongoing ethnic relations (Zhou, 2021_b). He argues that *zhonghua minzu* is a community composed of members of a *modern* nation-state. It includes the following elements: self-ascription, boundary consciousness, recognition of a common destiny, unity, and a common consciousness and united community (Zhou, 2020_b).

While *zhonghua minzu* has appeared in much of Xi's rhetoric since 2012 as part of 'The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation', The slogan 'forging a united community of Chinese national consciousness' really took off in October 2017 when during the 19th National Party Congress, it was written into the constitution. Since then, Xi has continuously invoked the importance of *zhonghua minzu* identity for the unity and of well-being of all citizens.

2.4.2 Finding Balance in Plurality and Unity

Since Fei Xiaotong put forth the theory of plurality and unity in 1988, this connection between the past historical construction of the people living in the plains of mainland China and the modern entity of *zhonghua minzu* were joined together (Fei, 1988). According to Fei (1998) the interaction of different groups in Chinese history was a continual process of melding and division with a power of attraction radiating from the cultural core, which influenced the whole so that in the end, the different groups had all been transformed and each had been influenced by the others. This theory is often referenced in the saying 'in you there is me, in me there is you /你中有我我中有你'. Plurality and unity are understood to be two distinct characteristics of *zhonghua minzu*, so both must be recognised and satisfied through different methods. When tension exists between the two directions, a compromise must be found to maintain stability. Long-term extremes in policy direction will create inter-ethnic strife (Zhou, 2020_b). Zhou states that policies oriented toward plurality are good for ethnic minorities. However, they only serve a section of the population and are not for everyone, while civic-oriented policies serve everyone and build their relationship with the state. The only issue is that neither of these alone can build the *zhonghua minzu* identity since the combination of the two makes *zhonghua minzu* special (Zhou, 2020_b).

Zhou (2020_b) states that a key element in strengthening this foundation and maintaining a balance is educating ethnic groups on ethnic unity and strengthening their understanding of the internal relations between themselves and the national family, enhancing their recognition

and ability to imagine themselves as members of the *zhonghua minzu*, and sharing in the consciousness of a common destiny. Ethnic policy is a complete system, and individual policies cannot be cherry-picked to serve isolated purposes; they need to be fully implemented. The ethnic policy is key to protecting the rights and interests, allowing minorities to internalise a sense of destiny and pride in the nation (Zhou, 2020_a). While ethnic policies cannot be abandoned, formulating new policies based on *zhonghua minzu* consciousness is believed to be fundamental to national governance (Zhou, 2021_b).

As *zhonghua minzu* includes all peoples in China, ethnic relations are naturally a facet of its internal structure. There is a tension in the very nature of inter-ethnic relations in China. This tension lies in balancing the concept of plurality (*duoyuan yiti* 多元一体) with unity (*quanmin yiti* 全民一体). According to Zhou (2021_b), the balance has been tilted in favour of plurality for some time, which has led to an emphasis on the 55 minorities as individual groups. It has strengthened their ethnic identity to the detriment of their national identity. China's position on ethnic affairs has changed over the years, but during the 1980s and 90s period of reform and the opening up of ethnic policies for minority rights started to take precedence. So much so that Zhou (2021_b) became concerned that the focus on the multi-ethnic nature of *zhonghua minzu* overshadowed its composition and structure. The tendency of policies to protect the minorities' rights strengthened the ethnic consciousness of these groups to the degree that they no longer saw themselves as Chinese nationals (Zhou, 2021_b). According to Zhou, this has led to the hollowing out of *zhonghua minzu* identity to the point where very few people relate to it. Zhou (2021_b) states that the nature and structure of *zhonghua minzu* had not been practically realised in either policy or theory in the past 40 years, and the term had become empty and devoid of meaning. The way to fix this issue was to reset the balance, i.e., place emphasis on unity and the united community of *zhonghua minzu* consciousness.

Current education and language policies are slanting more and more towards unity. National symbols in schools, unified textbooks, and the use of Mandarin over minority languages are used to prompt national consciousness in youths (Zhou, 2020_a). However, the push for Mandarin education is not just for students and children, adults are also encouraged to learn and use Mandarin. Zhou claims that language policy is one area where we can see the importance of balancing the aspects of plurality and unity. Within the ethnic policy system, there are laws that give minority groups the right to learn, use and develop their own languages. However, the pendulum is currently swinging away from such rights. The logic of a national language policy is to target the individual's identity as a citizen and create a connection with the state and national body of other mandarin speakers. Zhou (2021_b). states that 'if in implementing the Mandarin policy, *zhonghua minzu*'s attribute of unity was ignored and the

Chinese peoples' national identity was avoided, then they would not have the moral ground to implement the national language policy'.

In his work, Fei Xiaotong describes how people of antiquity on the central Chinese plains grew and interacted with surrounding people groups, and through the course of history, many of these groups integrated into the mainstream. This mainstream core culture coalesced around a group that became the Han. Fei Xiaotong's theory serves as the framework and origins of *zhonghua minzu* and outlines the nature of its interethnic relations. The Han are the body of *zhonghua minzu*, and minorities add pieces of cultural content (Zhou, 2020_b). While Zhou (2020_b) admits this, the idea is that as Chinese society develops, interethnic integration or the 'three jiaos', will continue, and through this process, more homogenisation and cultural melding will occur (see the following section for more information). When the great project of rejuvenating the Chinese nation is complete, *zhonghua minzu* culture will not be a 'platter formed by the mechanical addition of various national cultures but an organic cultural whole formed by the integration of various national cultures, which will be the common national culture of all citizens' (Zhou, 2020_b). Part of *zhonghua minzu*'s function is standardising behaviour (Zhou, 2020_b). Zhou restates Lenin's proclamation that ethnic differences will dissolve, and people will be one.

2.5 Second-Generation Ethnic Policy

In 2004 the sociologist Ma Rong called for the depoliticisation of *minzu* identities in an article titled '*A New Perspective in Guiding Ethnic Relations in the 21st Century: 'Depoliticising' Ethnicity in China*' (Ma, 2004). As a highly respected scholar in Chinese ethnic studies, it is unsurprising that Ma's new perspective made waves in Chinese academia. Several years later, in 2011, two professors from Tsinghua University, Hu Lianhe and Hu Angang, took Ma's idea further in '*Second-generation Ethnic Policy: Promoting Ethnic Integration and Prosperity*' and expanded upon a new direction for ethnic relations (Hu and Hu, 2011). This proposal, referred to as the 'second-generation ethnic policy', sparked a national debate over the role and future path of China's ethnic policy. Under this new scheme, preferential policies would be slowly eliminated in favour of a need-based aid system aimed towards those in poverty regardless of minority status. Concurrently Chinese national identity (*zhonghua minzu*) would be emphasised and promoted. It was also suggested that *minzu* identification be removed from national identity cards (Ma, 2014; 2017). The threat of local ethnic nationalism would be addressed by abolishing ethnic autonomy. It should be noted that while Ma Rong and the two Hus all proposed changes to the current system of ethnic governance to strengthen national

identity and combat instability, Ma Rong opposed much of Hu Lianhe and Hu Angang's more extreme assimilationist propositions.

It is widely acknowledged that ethnic policy in China has gone through cycles of openness and repression. Since the founding of the PRC, the ethnic policy system has remained the same, and the guiding principles have not changed. When articles by Ma Rong and Hu Lianhe, and Hu Angang started a debate about a 'second-generation' ethnic policy, they indicated that this would mean more than a change in trends but a change in legislation and foundational concepts of the relationship of the nation. The growing authoritarianism and trend towards assimilationist policies have not escaped notice. The national replacement of instruction of many school subjects to Mandarin upset many people leading to protests in Inner Mongolia. The covering of Arabic turrets in mosques as well as crosses and statues of Jesus in approved churches, are mild but far-spread indications of the Sinicisation of religion, which has recently been backed by policy and law. This has been the most significant debate in Chinese ethnic studies in recent years, spilling over from the world of policymakers and academics into a national-level discussion. Ma's argument draws a line between what he understands as cultural identity and political identity. How the government positions groups on a cultural/political spectrum will affect the policies that are put into place. Ma emphasises that when taking the political view, the state will pursue policies which strengthen the ethnic group's political power and protect its territorial rights. Whereas the cultural approach regards intergroup tensions as interpersonal conflicts rather than an issue of ethnic conflict, giving ethnic elites much less political clout. In other words, this conceptualisation puts *minzu* on a sliding scale between cultural and political expressions of identity. Ma Rong is advocating that policy slowly moves towards the cultural end of the scale by revoking policies specifically targeted towards *minzu* groups.

One element of Ma's argument concerns tension in China's ethnic relations due to its historical-cultural background, and he argues that the policies no longer fit the country's current situation and future development. Ma notes that the traditional barbarian/civilisation divide was the leading prism for ethnic relations. Historically China aligned ethnicity with a cultural perspective. This changed with the shift to politicised identities cemented during the *minzu shibie* (ethnic classification) project in the 1950s when Stalin's definition of a nation was used as the guideline to identify and define the nature of China's people. A framework of ethnic classification, preferential rights and regional autonomy was instituted by the government, leading to the politicisation of ethnic identity. Furthermore, Ma places much of the blame for the Soviet Union's collapse on its ethnic problems arising from politicised identities supported by the same framework. He seeks to bypass a similar issue in China by adopting a more cultural perspective.

Ma suggests two ways of pursuing a cultural approach. The first is to iron out the problem of semantics. The issue surrounding the term *minzu* has already been touched on. Ma's argument points to the fact that *minzu* is a politicised term. While it is broadly seen and understood to be closer in meaning to 'ethnic groups' than 'nationality', it was coined and heavily influenced by political ideology and hence cannot be neutral. Ma Rong instead advocates for the use of the term '*zuqun*' as the Chinese equivalent of 'ethnic groups' in order to keep cultural identities and political identities conceptually distinct. He distinguishes *zuqun*/ethnic and *minzu*/nationality groupings as two kinds of ethnic relations on a sliding scale based on either a cultural or political core.

Ma is also concerned that the use of '*minzu*' in both the common terms '*shaoshu minzu*' (referring to minority groups) and '*zhonghua minzu*' (referring to 'Chinese nationality'), erroneously places the two on the same level of importance. He feels this is dangerous, and the two terms must be clearly differentiated in a hierarchy. The use of *zuqun* seems to be gaining some ground in Chinese academia, but it is not yet consistently used. Furthermore, the term '*minzu*' is often just transliterated in English and understood roughly to reference ethnic minority groups as it is seen to be an untranslatable term (Bulag, 2021; Barabantseva, 2008). The second path of depoliticisation for Ma is de-emphasising the institutionalised system of *minzu* groups. He believes that having more policies in place which directly favour specific groups strengthens them as political 'entities' (Ma, 2004).

For this reason, he supports equal treatment of Han and minority people. This would mean gradually repealing preferential rights, which were designed to give minorities a leg up in an effort to achieve equality. These rights are a deeply rooted aspect of China's ethnic affairs and would not be overturned easily. Using America as a portfolio of possible iterations of cultural and ethnic group identity, Ma attributes the USA's success to the unified mainstream culture and the equality of all people before the law without any groups gaining preferential treatment, the preservation of limited ethnic characteristics which can be subsumed into an ethnic subculture and optional ethnic identification.

To Ma's mind fixing the issue of *minzu/zuqun* is the more pressing of the two approaches. When endeavouring to find practical solutions and policy directions for contentious issues surrounding national theory, a clear and agreed-upon terminology is imperative. If adopted widely, *zuqun* would signal a different theoretical approach to ethnic relations. Ma hopes the switch in terminology would subconsciously prime people's minds for a shift in their identities. The fluidity of language also means that this is a more feasible and easily attainable goal than readjusting the system which institutionalises identities. Ma makes clear that he does not stand for politically enforced assimilation; this would require targeting specific groups and

formulating special policies, i.e., moving towards a politicised ethnicity and not a cultural ethnicity. He also encourages greater integration of the minority and Han populations through the movement of all citizens throughout the country for living, work, and education. Under this cultural approach, migration will bring majority group members into autonomous areas even as many minority members leave, and this population flow will naturally weaken the links that an ethnic group holds to a specific territory.

Finally, Ma recognises the need for a strong united national identity. Regional or ethnic identities cannot be allowed too much room and must be kept in line so that they always remain secondary identities. The policy must reflect this position, as any missteps leading to competition between the two would spell trouble for China's national unity.

Ma's argument did not come to centre stage until it was picked up and expanded upon by Hu Lianhe and Hu Angang. Hu Lianhe had already made a name for himself as one of the first Chinese scholars to focus on terrorism. Together with Hu Angang, whose primary area of focus was on the economy, the two Hus published over 15 articles together on political and social stability, regional income gaps, and crime governance before proposing the second-generation ethnic policy. Underlining their policy direction is the suggestion that China moves away from the Soviet-based idea of minorities as nationalities with political significance to cultural groups more closely in-line with ethnic groups in the American tradition. They proposed that it was time that China adopted a new policy direction that would bring the Han and ethnic minorities together under a homogenous administrative system. They promoted a policy of inter-ethnic integration in a bid to accelerate ethnic assimilation into a single *zhonghua minzu* identity (Hu and Hu, 2011). They sought integration in four areas: economy, culture, governance and society. This was to be achieved in the following ways: diluting ethnic consciousness, reforming administrative systems, dismantling ethnic autonomous regions, promoting ethnic and economic integration, supporting a common language, controlling religion, guiding cultural celebrations, promoting *zhonghua minzu* identity, opening-up ethnic categories, encouraging freedom of movement, integrating cities, intermarriage and education.

In Chinese political discourse, slogans are rife; they are often ungainly and obtuse to English-speaking ears. The following are just a few of those that appeared during the debate, and it is happenstance that these are formulated around the number three. The goal of the second-generation policy could be summarised in the slogan of 'three emphasises' and 'three de-emphasises'. The 'three emphasises' refer to pushing the recognition and identification with the country, *zhonghua minzu* identity, and civil citizenship. The 'three de-emphasises' were: to weaken the recognition of the 56 ethnic groups, ethnic identity consciousness, and the preferential rights attached to minority groups. The assimilationist slogans did not stop there,

though. The two Hu's also co-opted a past slogan which served to highlight their shift in policy. In 1990, Jiang Zemin put forward the slogan of the three inseparables (三个离不开), i.e., the Han are inseparable from minorities, minorities are inseparable from the Han, and all minorities and the Han are inseparable from each other. This slogan highlights Fei Xiaotong's theory of the 'plurality and unity' of the Chinese nation. Each group is united together, and while interdependent, they are each distinct in their own right. Hu Lianhe and Hu Angang suggested that this slogan be pushed further and raised the idea of the 'three indistinguishables' (三个分不清), the Han should be indistinguishable from minorities, minorities should be indistinguishable from the Han, and all minorities and the Han are indistinguishable from each other (Hu, and Hu, 2011). The shift to say that ethnic relations are such that all groups are united and cannot be separated from each other and suggest assimilation to the point where groups lose all their distinct characteristics were extreme.

Many scholars objected to such a foolish outlook. While these slogans as policy directions had no lasting impact, there is another 'three' themed slogan which has been successfully incorporated into current policy discourse. The 'three jiaos'² or inter-ethnic contact, exchange and blending (交往 *jiaowang*, 交流 *jiaoliu* and 交融 *jiaorong*) has since been embraced by the state (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2018). While the other slogans stated objectives, the 'three jiaos' expounds action. This slogan was created to support an aggressive assimilationist policy, yet it is currently being stylised as a much tamer and palatable idea of integration. We should not overlook this background as slogans are often 'a condensation of ideology policy or propaganda' (Parton, 2022).

Discussing the debate, in his 2012 article '*Reflections on The Current Problems in Minzu Studies*'³, Weiqun (2012) notes that the motivations behind different forms of integration are not necessarily the same. He states that the national development issue closely concerns *minzu* blending (交融) and fusion (融合), but as these are sensitive and controversial topics, fusion is tiptoed around in favour of the language of blending instead (Zhu, 2012). Blending is soft assimilation. We can see this in the popular slogan of the 'three jiaos' to promote a kind of soft integration which is more agreeable to the public. Zhu builds on the distinction Zhou Enlai made on assimilation (同化) in 1957.

There is a difference between reactionary assimilation, which is violent and aggressively fuses groups into one, and progressive assimilation, where groups naturally grow together as a

² In English, it is sometimes translated as exchanges and integration or something similar. I use 'three jiaos' as it separates the term conceptually for me in English to signal the particular Chinese phrase/slogan as a specific part of discourse.

³ 对当前民族领域问题的几点思考

result of prosperity. According to Zhu (2012) this is because there are two modes of understanding assimilation. The first mode correlates to the final stage of the world under a Stalinist socialist society, where eventually, all people will be united as one, and all ethnic group distinctions will disappear. The second mode understands assimilation as a natural phenomenon that happens when groups live in close proximity to each other, and through organic processes, they are subsumed and merged. Just as it would be inappropriate to force society towards the final stage of socialism, it is also inappropriate to hinder the organic growth of people by creating unnatural divisions (Zhu, 2012). Weiqun (2012) also states that assimilation is not just something that only concerns ethnic minorities; it also applies to any groups which seek to deviate from the core and divide China, such as Falun Gong or Taiwan independence movements, both of which are Han groups. Zhu is yet another scholar who, while cautious of administrative means of enforcing assimilation, does not entirely rule them out.

Regional autonomy became the main area of contention between supporters and critics of the second-generation policy. The disintegration of the USSR still haunts China. Many scholars fear that if *minzu* identities are held too strongly and allowed to continue in a politicised system of territorial and regional autonomy, this may lead China down a dangerous path towards separatism. As the bulk of the PRC's ethnic policies were drawn from the Soviets, they argue that ethnic group identities are highly politicised. China must learn from the mistakes of the Soviets and pivot its policies before it is too late. While those who oppose the second-generation policy defend the regional autonomy system by differentiating it from the Soviet model, in that very early on before the founding of the PRC, Mao Zedong rescinded the right to self-determination. They claim that Mao had the foresight to know that ethnic unity would be integral to national stability.

Many scholars like Ma looked abroad to the United States and India to draw inspiration from modern multiculturalism. At the same time, they looked inward at China's own history with rose-tinted glasses. Ma (2004) argues that according to the Confucianist viewpoint, all ethnic groups are equal as they are conceptualised and referred to as brothers. Yet he also states that the Han are accepted as the centripetal force and core influence in society, and so they naturally take the lead role of 'teaching without discrimination' as they are the more advanced group. Ma (2004) qualifies that this does not mean that the Han culture is superior to the other ethnic groups, only that the Han are more technologically and economically advanced. Later in 2018, Wen Mingchao critiqued the second-generation debate, pointing out that scholars overly focused on foreign case studies without considering actual examples from China's own history. He used examples from the Qing dynasty and the republican Era to argue that depoliticisation and assimilationist policies have already been tried and found wanting (Wen,

2018). To Wen Mingchao, the issue inherent to the debate was the lack of understanding of why assimilationist policies would not work, i.e., they would upset ethnic minority groups by stripping them of their understood rights and be antithetical to creating unity and stability. Wen Mingchao is clear that depoliticisation also aims to create a more politically homogenous and integrated country so that it can be understood as a kind of assimilation policy. Any changes would need to be part of a slow process. He does not voice any concern over the idea of homogenisation or depoliticisation in principle; his critique is more a warning over the potential backlash such an aggressive policy would incite as minorities watch their legally given rights stripped back (Wen, 2018).

The heated public debate on second-generation policy was eventually put to bed when Xi Jinping declared in a speech at the Central Ethnic Work Forum in 2014 that the ethnic policies of China were correct and fitting for its situation and that efforts to reimagine the system were not taking the correct view of China's national theory (Hao, 2018). In particular, Xi emphasised that the system of regional ethnic autonomy would not be dismantled, and this topic was a non-starter. At the same time, there was recognition that ethnic affairs must actively react to the current challenges facing China. Over the intervening years, this attitude has remained, and recent policy aims show that, in many ways, many of these second-generation objectives are still alive and well. China watchers abroad have also noted that the assimilationist agenda seems to be gaining ground (Roche and Leibold, 2020). These China scholars have taken the growing authoritarian direction of the state towards ethnic minorities as a sign that, unofficially, the second-generation policies have won favour. Just as when the debate first began, now in the 'New Era', the state continues to be concerned with issues of stability and national sovereignty (AHFAO, 2021). The extreme actions of the state against minorities in Xinjiang and incidents in Tibet and Inner Mongolia, have caused concern for the future of ethnic policy in China. Hu Lianhe's background in terrorism and social stability now serves him with the United Front Work Department in Xinjiang. He even appeared in international news as a member of the delegation to the United Nations, where he defended camps in Xinjiang as training facilities.

2.6 Conclusion: Current Direction in the 'New Era'

The weakening of ethnic identity and promotion of integration and unity align with the discourse and urge to forge *zhonghua minzu* identity. Currently, in Chinese ethnic studies, *zhonghua minzu* community consciousness is being projected as one of the most important areas of research. The growing field of ethnic politics also has a large impact on discourse, developing alongside *zhonghua minzu* theory (Xing, 2022), particularly in its work to define

political concepts concerning Chinese ethnic relations, such as the effort to promote civic citizenship regarding the state and *minzu* identity. A 2021 study on the patterns of ethnic policy research, which has been published on the Chinese database CNKI, found that the second most influential author in the past 20 years was Zhou Ping, whom we have mentioned is the head of the research centre for forging *zhonghua minzu* community consciousness at Yunnan University. Known as the founder of Chinese ethnic politics, Zhou Ping has six papers among the 15 most highly cited ethnic policy papers (Huang, 2021). As noted in the section on Zhou Ping's work, the tension implicit in the concept of *zhonghua minzu* straddles the issue of ethnic relations without ever successfully addressing it. According to Zhou (2021_b), *zhonghua minzu* is a modern nationality formed around the idea of a historical lineage of a Han-centred culture and civilisation. It is the political and cultural identity of all members of the PRC, therefore separate from other discourses of *minzu* relations (Zhou, 2021_b).

Ethnic minority areas have long been tied to national concerns over poverty and a need to leave 'backwards' characteristics behind in favour of modern mainstream ones. The 2020 goal of alleviating poverty was a significant event for all of China, but especially Yunnan, as 88 counties in the province were declared to be lifted out of poverty. Having officially met this goal and 'thrown off poverty', continued efforts to combat poverty re-emergence and ethnic minority rural revitalisation policies are of continued importance (Huang, 2021). The 13th Yunnan People's Congress is expecting to move its attention to the second goal of the 'New Era,' i.e., achieving a modern socialist country by focusing its attention on forging a community consciousness of *zhonghua minzu*, pairing this with the ethnic unity demonstration zones and minority social and economic development. As part of the 14th five-year plan for Yunnan and its long-term goals towards 2035, the promotion of Mandarin is part of the plan to strengthen its national identity. Yunnan will more tightly unite itself around the CCP's and Xi's leadership. As Yunnan is the most ethnically diverse region in China, with 25 minority groups, successfully realising these goals and pushing forward in creating a community consciousness is seen as a special calling. In 2015 during Xi Jinping's visit to Yunnan, he emphasised Yunnan's efforts in ethnic unity work as a model for all of China. Yunnan has always been proud of its ethnic work and peaceful relations, so they are eager to succeed and take Xi's thoughts and remarks on ethnic work to heart. By 2035 the whole of Yunnan will serve as a national demonstration area. The 'three jiaos' (inter-ethnic contact, exchange and blending) in particular are to be emphasised along with ethnic unity propaganda and strengthening the recognition of the five identifications for citizens of all ethnicities (Motherland, *Zhonghua minzu*, *Zhonghua* culture, the party and socialism with Chinese characteristics) (Yunnan Ethnic Affairs Bureau, 2019_a; 2020). The initiative on ethnic unity and progress seeks to strengthen identification with the

zhonghua minzu in a holistic way by covering policy, ideology, culture, material, social and legal targets (Yunnan Ethnic Affairs Bureau, 2020).

Chapter 3 Ethnic Policy in Context

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the key concepts behind the construction of *minzu*/ethnic identity were discussed. The formation of *zhonghua minzu* discourse was described and located within the historical concern that Chinese scholars and politicians have placed on refining and constructing a modern China that reflects its past and places itself on equal footing with modern nation-states. In this chapter, the focus moves on to contemporary issues which appear in the data set to provide contextual background and significant topics and issues which impact ethnic minority policies. First, section 3.2 introduces the basic governing system and provides an overview of how state and party agencies relate to one another. The relationship between the State Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau and the United Front Work Department, which deals with ethnic and religious issues, is introduced followed by a brief description of cadre assessment. The remaining portion of the chapter provides an overview of policy topics and issues which inform the data chapters. These topics of integration and ethnic intermarriage, ethnic unity demonstration zones, poverty alleviation and rural labour transfers, and language in poverty alleviation efforts either reappear in the data or are related to interpenetrating topics, which will help to highlight the vast web of interconnecting regional and national goals and policies. Most of these areas are also included in Yunnan's 13th and 14th five-year plan, issued in 2016 and 2021 and form a map of the province's overall policy direction and goals.

3.2 Ethnic Identification System and Preferential Policies

The regulations concerning ethnic identification (*Provisions on the Determination of Ethnic Composition by Chinese Citizens*) were amended in 2016 in order to combat difficulties embedded in the system, including individuals illegally changing ethnic identity in order to claim preferential rights (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2015_{a,b}). The policy applies to all Chinese citizens and is overseen by the ethnic affairs and public security bureaus. As stated previously, an individual's ethnic composition must be registered in accordance with the ethnic identity of either the mother or father. This does not need to be a biological parent, an adoptive or step-parent would also be accepted, as long as they have primary care. In this sense, ethnicity in the Chinese context continues an emphasis on cultural identity. The system is tied to the household registration (*hukou*) system and the parents' own ethnic identity will be

verified through their *hukou* records. Ethnic identity cannot be changed for children under the age of seventeen, unless the parents' marital status changes. The ethnic registration system is described as an integral element in the government's ethnic work and *hukou* system. It produces information the government needs in order to carry out regional autonomy laws and preferential policies (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2015_{a,b}).

The basis for the majority of laws, regulations, and policies regulating the lives of ethnic minorities stems from *Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law*, implemented by the Standing Committee at the Sixth National People's Congress in 1984 (since amended in 2001). Seventy one per cent of China's ethnic minority population resides in autonomous areas. These areas vary in size from townships to autonomous regions on the same level as provinces and take up 64% of China's national territory (Gov.cn., 2005). Autonomy is granted in areas where the ethnic minority population reaches 20% or more of the total population (Lai, 2009). The autonomy of these areas mainly consists of representation in the area's self-governing bodies and higher levels of government (ethnic minorities hold 13.91% of the seats in the National People's Congress). It also gives the people's governments in the autonomous areas the right to amend and adjust laws to suit the local ethnic situation as well as implement their own regulations to suit needs of the local ethnic groups (Gov.cn., 2005). The *Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law* also lays out the basic outline of ethnic preferential policies, however, the manner these are implemented is determined locally.

In the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, articles 36 and 37 give autonomous areas rights to set up a curriculum, school system and languages in schools as they deem fit, with special attention being given to the development of ethnic minority education and the establishment of schools in poor and sparsely populated areas, eliminating illiteracy, upholding compulsory 9 years of education and specialised training. In underdeveloped and impoverished locations, subsidised primary and secondary boarding schools should be established and financed by the local government. In minority areas schools should use minority language for instruction whenever possible with Han Chinese being taught in primary schools as well (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2010). Article 71 requires the state to invest in education in autonomous areas and to establish institutes of higher education for ethnic minorities. This is also the article that introduces one of the most important preferential policies, 'Institutions of higher education and secondary technical schools shall appropriately set lower standards and requirements for the admission of students from ethnic minorities, with special considerations for students from ethnic minorities with small populations' (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2010). The implementation of educational benefits is far from uniform across the nation or across the board for all ethnic minority groups (Sautman, 1998_a; Wang, 2016). Ethnic groups, such as the Hui, Koreans, and Bai, have a higher educational attainment level than even the Han and

therefore are exempt from this policy. The amount of extra points given to each ethnic group varies by location and ethnic minorities, with their own written language, also have the option of *min kao min* (民考民) minority student testing through minority language) or *min kao han* (民考汉) minority student testing through Han Chinese language). *min kao min* students may get additional points and the opportunity to enroll into special programs for ethnic minority students at university, which is not available to Han students or minority *min kao han* students.

According to the law, the state should place importance on training ethnic minorities in a variety of roles from technicians to government cadre as a key element in improving the development progress of minority areas. State owned agencies and enterprises are also supposed to practise preferential hiring practises for local ethnic minorities (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2010).

Ideally, tailoring education to specific ethnic groups will also lead to the development of ethnic group consciousness as cultural practises, history, language and stories of folk heroes are passed along to the students (Jian, 2017). As students become more knowledgeable of their cultural inheritance, the values and ideals of the group, and the stories of their people, students form a normative model which embodies the ideal characteristic of an ethnic group member. Yet, this is often not the case, as limited resources mean that mainstream (Han) language and culture are given preference as the only legitimate mode of education. Fluency in Mandarin and the ability to integrate into Han society are seen as necessary tools to obtain future job opportunities and advancement.

Additionally, while the rest of the nation was under the one child policy, article 44 of the *Regional Autonomy Law* gave ethnic minorities with hukous in autonomous areas leniency in family planning. Since then, both the one and two child policies have been repealed, but at the time this leniency was a significant preferential policy allowing ethnic minorities to have larger families than their Han peers.

3.3 The Chinese Governing System

The Chinese Party-State system is primarily composed of vertical or branch lines of authority intersecting with a horizontal axis of 'territorial units' (Lieberthal and Okenberg, 1988, p. 141). The vertical branch (*tiao*) line is the hierarchical top-down connection that begins with the central ministries and links to the local level (Unger, 1987). There are five tiers of: central, provincial, prefecture, county and township. The horizontal or area (*kuai*) system of relationships links local units from different agencies together to take responsibility for decisions from up top. Vertical lines are usually limited within one ministry, while horizontal

lines cross agencies at the same level in a region. Since the vertical branch lines are located within one ministry, they have limited ability to coordinate with other ministries outside their domain (Unger, 1987). The horizontal area lines are further complicated because units of the same rank do not have the power to give orders to one another (Leiberthal and Okenberg, 1988, p. 142-143). There is no set protocol for when the branch line of command or the area line of command holds authority, and it may change depending on how policies and power have been meted out (Lieberthal and Okenberg, 1988, p. 141; Schroeder, 1992). Due in part to their limited resources, township-level governments have a relatively small scope of policies which they have the power to pursue. Furthermore, a process of 'soft centralisation' in local governments has been taking place where authority has moved away from the horizontal area chain of command to the vertical branch management (Mertha, 2005).

The power of an agency's power depends on the political power held by the leader, the resources the agency has access to, and its ability to control other agencies (Zhao, 2017). When it comes to implementing policies at the local level, especially on the horizontal area chain of command, it can be very difficult as there is a need for collaboration between different agencies. While these units may be on the same rank, that does not mean they are equal in power, and the agencies with greater political clout and resources behind them are the ones that can successfully lead inter-agency collaborations (Zhao, 2017).

3.4 SEAC and UFWD Tensions on Ethnic Ideology

In consideration of ethnic work and policy, the *tiao/kuai* system of authority and management becomes a bit more convoluted. The State Ethnic Affairs Commission (SEAC), under the State Council's authority and the United Front Work Department (UFWD), under the CCP, have been in charge of ethnic work (Zhao, 2017). In the articles, 'The Cadre System in China's Ethnic Minority Regions: Particularities and Impact on Local Governance' (Zhao, 2017) *and* 'Ethnic Governance Under Xi Jinping: The Centrality of the United Front Work Departments and Its Implications' (Zhao and Leibold, 2019), Zhao Taotao and James Leibold provided a concise and clear depiction of the shifting relationship between the SEAC and UFWD, implying a change in ethnic policy governance. The party and the state agencies are supposed to work in tandem, but in reality, the division between the two can cause tension over who wields the most power (Zhao and Leibold, 2019). CCP agencies generally carry greater political weight and power than administrative state agencies, as the party makes the policy decisions (Zhao, 2017). SEAC, as a state administrative agency, has law enforcement powers while UFWD does not. SEAC has also been in charge of overseeing the regional autonomy laws and the special rights set out in them (Zhao and Leibold, 2019). SEAC's focus has been the protection

of minority rights and the promotion of good ethnic relations, while the UFWD is more concerned with stability and strengthening the party.

China's ethnic policy has shifted significantly throughout the history of the PRC, a fact that is often said to lead to minority distrust of the government. The latest shift from an integrationist to assimilationist policies began in the late 1980s early 1990s. The assimilationist approach has continued to increase, particularly after China faced ethnic tensions which turned violent in Tibet and Xinjiang during the early 2000s. This shift has impacted the relationship between the SEAC and UFWD as many of SEAC's responsibilities and departments (such as the State Administration for Religious Affairs) have been given to the UFWD. The CCP has given UFWD leaders greater political power, creating a stronger agency with more clout. The UFWD also has offices at the village level, whereas the SEAC only has offices down to the county level. So any ethnic issues and policy implementation get taken care of and mediated by the UFWD before the SEAC can get involved. This means that SEAC really only has the power to implement policies in urban areas (Zhao and Leibold, 2019). Zhao states that as part of the CCP, the UFWD has a strong vertical branch structure which aids it in implementing central-level policies. However, at the same time, it is poorly equipped to handle the same administrative tasks that the SEAC is capable of, i.e., intervening in illegal religious activities (Zhao, 2017).

The *Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law* states that autonomy is granted in areas where the ethnic minority population reaches 20% or more of the total population (Lai, 2009). In Yunnan Province, there are eight autonomous prefectures and 29 autonomous counties. As Zhao Taotao points out, SEAC is unable to cover such a vast range of policies that are required to cover ethnic minorities living both in and outside of ethnic autonomous areas (Zhao, 2017). SEAC must rely heavily on inter-agency collaboration to implement policies across the regions. Yet, the SEAC does not have the political clout to bring in the financial resources needed to head up the collaborations. Instead, other agencies which lack a background in ethnic policies and issues and are headed by Han cadre take up the bulk of work on policy implementation. The result of this, according to Zhao (2017) is that policies often diverge from their original intention or do not adequately take the local minority population into consideration. SEAC can only succeed in its collaboration when dealing with a few agencies of equal or lesser power than themselves. Zhao (2017) believes these gaps between central policy design and local implementation cause many of China's ethnic tensions.

3.4.2 Cadre Assessments and Policy Implementation

Another issue that impacts how a policy is implemented at the local level is the performance targets under the cadre responsibility system. This system consists of one-strike vetoes, as well as hard and soft targets. The evaluation results are met with a system of punishments and rewards (Smith, 2013; Gao, 2015). A cadre's evaluation assessment is carried out by superiors one rank above them (Ong, 2012). Edin (2003) states that a higher-ranking cadre will be put in charge of hard targets. The targets typically revolve around economic growth, stability and party building (Ong, 2012). Veto targets are the most important (ex., birth rates and stability), as failure to meet them results in complete assessment failure (Edin, 2003). Hard targets carry more importance than soft target and are usually quantifiable, making it objectively easier to track a cadre's performance. Hard targets are usually projects related to infrastructure construction and bringing in investment and industry (Ong, 2012). Soft targets are non-quantifiable; hence it is more difficult to judge whether they have been successfully addressed: these are usually items like building party support and cultural development. For village cadres, these can sometimes be divided into point-based and non-point-based assessments (Zhao, 2007 and Smith, 2013). The point-based assessment is based on the objectives set out in the previous year. A study on the point-based assessment in Shanxi, reports that if a cadre has successfully completed their tasks, they may see up to a 1,000 yuan increase to their income, through a rewards system set at one yuan per task (Zhao, 2007). In contrast not living up to a task can also result in fines. Whereas a non-points-based system of assessment takes a more holistic approach, and the rewards used are not based on income but on personal assistance (networking for jobs for their children),, punishments often involve excluding cadres from meetings. (Zhao, 2007).

The evaluation system can impact local policy implementation because policies that lend themselves to hard target assessments are more likely to get cadre support. Cadre focuses on hard targets which are important for furthering their careers. According to Graeme Smith, there are four criteria that influence whether or not the cadre will put efforts into promoting a policy: 1) the policy is featured significantly in the assessment and successfully addressing it may lead to promotion; 2) the policy has potential to bring in greater sources and revenue; 3) the cadre themselves can finically benefit from it; 4) the policy works along with the current structure of the agency (Smith, 2013). These criteria may be helpful when trying to anticipate how a new policy could be received in a local context. Zhao (2007) notes that ethnic policies are often not quantifiable hard targets, and SEAC policies are often seen as unprofitable.

3.5 Integration and Inter-marriage

At the macro level interethnic marriage is a lens through which we can see a ripple effect as top down policies trickle into the lives of many ethnic minority individuals. Inter-marriage is an important aspect to consider as it illustrates how various policy and governmental initiatives, from preferential benefits, to infrastructure, influence integration which in turn is reflected in marriage trends.

The 1990 census was the first time China gathered national statistics on interethnic marriages (Li, 2004). The Chinese sociologist Ma Rong created a theoretical model of interethnic marriage based on the limited data available from that census (Ma, 2001). Later in 2004, Li Xiaoxia, expounding on Ma Rong's work, used the updated 2000 census to flesh out a statistical analysis of national trends. Li (2004) notes that there are six factors which determine whether or not a society will have significant rates of heterogamy: 1) cultural integration; 2) the degree of linguistic difference between groups; 3) the presence of religious conflicts and mutual religious tolerance; 4) groups have ample opportunities to interact; 5) lack of discrimination and prejudice between the groups; 6) third party interference and opposition are not present.

These are all areas where Chinese researchers credit successful governmental policies in influencing growing inter-marriage rates. Currently, the continued economic development is being paired with ideologically driven policies in a campaign to bolster a 'New Era' of Chinese identity under Xi Jinping. For minorities, successful integration into society is achieved by embracing national values, culture⁴ and identity, that is, to identify with the 'great motherland', 'Chinese nation, Chinese culture and socialism with Chinese characteristics' (Liang, 2016). Integration is key to the success of Xi's efforts to create an identity culture, and as such, inter-marriage can serve both as a signpost to the state of current ethnic relations and as a key factor in the progress of developing greater social integration within the society (Jian, 2017; Kalmijn and Tubergen, 2010). The social response to inter-marriages varies by region, but Chinese society generally encourages ethnic inter-marriages. The ethnic inter-marriage rate for new marriages in Yunnan province in 2010 was 11%; only Guizhou and Inner Mongolia had slightly higher rates at 12.5% and 11.5 % (Jian, 2017).

The desire for upward social mobility draws many ethnic minorities to migrate to cities for school, university, and entrepreneurial and non-agrarian work opportunities. This population flow is an important factor in creating opportunities to interact and build relationships. The

⁴ Xi refutes the idea that Chinese culture equals Han culture. He states that Chinese culture embraces all of China's ethnicities.

impact of urbanisation and migration is not just felt in large cities. A case study of a Yi village in western Yunnan near Dali showed how the villagers' pool of potential marriage partners has widened over the last 30 years (Cha, 2017). Previously potential marriage partners were limited by geography, politics and economy. Ninety per cent of marriages were between partners that lived within 10 km of each other; essentially a distance that could be covered in a 3 or 4 hour walk as the area was in the mountains and too remote for paved roads. Since the 1990s, the scope of potential spouses has widened, thanks to the improved economic situation of the villagers. The increased economic prosperity has been credited to the ethnic policies targeting minority areas after the opening-up campaign. Villagers can now pursue other work opportunities outside of a life of subsistence farming. Young people now venture farther from home for school and work, even marrying people from other provinces. The once strictly endogamous village now sees its members marrying Han, Bai and Naxi partners (Cha, 2017).

Another study focusing on the changes in Tibetan Han marriages between 2000-2010 shows that as tourism has increased in many Tibetan autonomous regions, including Diqing, it has brought an influx of Han business and services, leading to greater population flows between Tibetan and Han dominated areas. As urbanisation (currently, Tibetans have a 32% urban ethnic population) grows in these areas, interethnic contact and communication create the conditions for higher rates of interethnic marriage (Liu and Li, 2015). It is believed that education policy initiatives aimed at bilingualism will promote better and more widespread communication between the groups. Currently, the intermarriage pattern is heavily skewed towards Tibetan women marrying out, so it is thought that an increase in education and bilingualism will even out the sex ratios for men (Liu and Li, 2015). Governmental policies for economic development, urbanisation and education will impact these trends.

3.6 The Initiative on Inter-ethnic Unity and Common Progress

Under the 'initiative on promoting inter-ethnic unity and common progress,' Xi Jinping has placed emphasis on cultivating a core 'zhonghua' identity. The initiative couples the goal of ethnic cohesion with economic and social development, which is to be helped through the construction of 'demonstration' zones and units. These 'demonstration units' are being implemented in a wide range of activities and projects across the province. Some of these efforts include poverty alleviation and construction of relocation communities, cultural branding, services for minorities and migrant workers through education and skill training and cultural/community activities. See Chapter 6 for a discussion of policies for governing and constructing of ethnic unity demonstration zones.

For Yunnan, poverty alleviation has been the province's most urgent issue. Frequently, the obstacles a village faces, such as environmental or health related, are so great that it is deemed necessary to relocate the entire village. Regarding relocation, the government places ethnic unity as a key consideration in the community plans. These new communities are then often branded as 'demonstration areas'. Every year new demonstration residential districts are to be created. A successful community must include economic and educational opportunities, infrastructure and services, as well as meeting the cultural and spiritual needs of community members. Service infrastructure within cities is still in need of improvement as the population shifts from rural to urban life and the importance of workplace units has lessened. An increasing number of responsibilities once taken care of by work units, such as medical insurance and pensions, now falls to the city (Hasmath and Macdonald, 2017). In Dali, policies have been put in place to help its residents, including mutual assistance programmes and employment security. An ethnic minority employment policy relaxes the restrictions on age and education background for recruiting civil servants from ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities also have access to low rent housing as well as minimum livelihood allowance and skill training. It is hoped that these services will allow minorities to better integrate into urban society. This is not purely a concern for minority and mixed areas, within large eastern cities, programmes have been developed to assist minority migrants to integrate into urban life by providing language help, assistance with school and employment and legal advice (Sui *et al.*, 2020).

The government sees ethnic characteristics as a resource to be utilised in the fight against poverty by promoting ethnic elements and festivals to develop local tourism and create cultural product brands. Ashima, a famous oral story of the Sani Yi, has long been a target of commodification through films, music and festivals. Recently though, there has been an effort to use it to develop a cultural brand. Promoters claim that the heroine of the story, Ashima, exhibits qualities of sincerity, industriousness, bravery and wisdom which are worthy of transmission and adaption into the modern urban culture and should be developed as a cultural brand (Long, 2016). One way this is being accomplished is through education. The high school affiliated with Yunnan Minzu University has put into place the Ashima class, which is only for girls, and recruits 22 minority girls from Kunming and 8 Han girls from minority regions. In 2016, the school had 60 students in Ashima classes from 8 different minority groups, but over half were Yi. Ashima culture is no longer the inheritance of the Sani Yi people alone; it has become a resource for the entire nation.

Ethnic unity activities are to be carried out by the local government, schools, and businesses to get the public involved. After all, ethnic unity cannot be realised without interaction, and activities help to strengthen a feeling of belonging and togetherness. While many of these events may be one-offs and are organised by a governmental department, they do serve to

coalesce the feeling of ethnic unity (*minzu tuanjie* 民族团结) for those participating. In the city of Shangyun, the Christian Wa residents invited Dai villagers who had recently relocated to the city to participate in the singing and dancing for their Christmas celebration (Yuan, 2014). Mass participation is an integral aspect of ethnic work (Sui *et al.*, 2020). It is no surprise then that since 2014, the government's emphasis on national unity has targeted the local level with 'activities which are popular with the masses' (Sui *et al.*, 2020). Events such as ethnic festivals are included as part of the unity work by making them inclusive so that everyone can participate. This is often done hand in hand with tourism, but also just within local communities, opening up more opportunities to exchange culture. When experiences are shared, it gives ownership to all who participate in it, softening ethnic distinction and embracing a unified identity.

3.7 Poverty Alleviation and Rural Labour Transfer

Since 2012 the CCP has paid considerable attention to the problem of poverty and made addressing it a main priority and developmental goal. In 2013, the state identified 832 counties nationwide as impoverished, and 88 of those were located in Yunnan. The targeted poverty alleviation programme set out to eliminate absolute poverty within China by 2020. The measures taken to address poverty can broadly be divided into four categories: strengthening the characteristic regional industries and creating agricultural co-ops with experts to train and advise so that every household can engage with the local industry; promoting e-commerce especially to link up with the cooperative and agricultural products to brand them for online sales; focusing attention to ecological issues of environmental protection by training forest rangers and promoting speciality forest products like walnuts; and finally by strengthening cultural tourism (Yunnan gov., 2020).

Skill training and rural labour transfer have played important roles in the government's poverty alleviation plan. Yunnan's goal is to reach 100% of poverty stricken households, with each household having one individual who has secured stable employment. The slogan is 'train one person, employ one person and lift a house out of poverty' (Labour and Security, 2021). The number of individuals who have gone through training and are either put to work within the province or placed in employment outside of the region is significant. In 2020, 15 million people (Yunnan's total population is 43 million) went through programmes organised by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (Xinhuanet, 2019).

Under the east-west pairing scheme, which links an economically developed region with one struggling with poverty, Yunnan is linked to both Guangdong and Shanghai. Through this

scheme the developed regions help lend financial and developmental support and establish projects to combat poverty. From Yunnan, 1.9 million people were sent to other provinces such as Zhejiang, as well as major manufacturing hubs in Guangdong, and Shanghai (Li, 2020; Yunnan gov., 2017). The scale of the organisation needed for this is astounding, including over 7,750 buses, 57 trains, and 21 planes prearranged to transport a total of 887,000 people for labour transfers (Li, 2020). This so-called point-to-point service was implemented in the wake of COVID-19, as a way of safely ensuring that the workers could quickly arrive at their work destinations in a three-door connection between the home, car and factory.

Although the surplus rural labour transfer has been an issue for years, it has been picked up by government departments, particularly in the past five years or so, as a piece in the puzzle of poverty alleviation. Since 2019, the government has become more involved. The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Credit has gone from guiding and suggesting work in job fairs to going house to house and encouraging jobs repeatedly until accepted, and then organising everything from training to shipping out to following up with workers after employment. Yunnan established a liaison and partnership with the Zhejiang Ministries of Human Resources and Social Security in 2020. In Lancang prefecture, the majority of individuals in the transfer programme were ethnic minorities. Across the whole province, 43% of those sent outside the province were minorities (Labour and Security, 2021). This is proportionate to the total population representation.

For those who stay in the Yunnan, there are approximately 2,000 training schools which have been set up across the province covering topics from handicrafts, poultry disease control and medicinal agriculture. Part of Yunnan's plan for poverty alleviation is to align one town with the 'One village one product, one township one industry' concept (Yunnan gov., 2017). For locals living near a newly built poverty alleviation workshop or a factory, there is little choice involved. However, more industries are being developed, with some chosen to suit Yunnan's positive qualities, such as tourism (Yunnan gov., 2017, 2018). However, the desire for citizens to be engaged in waged labour or larger scale factory farming over traditional farming and lifestyle methods is clear. Beyond skill training, the government also notes the need for moral education. It argues that Yunnan owes its poverty partly to the fact that the production and lifestyle are lagging behind and that the residents hold outdated ideas (Yunnan gov., 2017). To counteract this, workshops and night classes should be given on topics such as self-love, gratefulness, law, culture and how to prevent laziness and reliance on governmental policies (Yunnan gov., 2018).

In Yunnan, while ideology work is being done, it appears that the training schools are primarily for teaching skills. Yunnan has guidelines stating that one month of classes is needed to obtain

a certificate of qualification in a given skill and only a few days to be spent on moral training, learning skills of self-entrepreneurship and bootstrap thinking. Furthermore, government documents on poverty alleviation efforts also state that 'cross-over ethnic groups' (*zhiguo minzu* 直过民族) (ethnic groups, which are thought to be so behind that they will have to skip the intermediate stages of development and jump right into the stage of modern Chinese society), and small ethnic groups need to have Mandarin in their schools, and new kindergartens should also be built that provide Mandarin language lessons (Yunnan gov., 2018).

3.8 Language Role in Poverty Alleviation

One of the pillars of minority rights often alluded to support the idea of a balanced ethnic policy system of unity and diversity is the rights of minority groups to use and develop their own language, as stated in the Constitution. While Mandarin has long been promoted and treated as the national language, it was the 2000 'Law of The People's Republic of China on The Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language' which made it official (Pan, 2016). With respect to the theory of unity in diversity, Mandarin is the 'embodiment' of unity, the vehicle for all the ethnic groups to communicate and interact while minority languages encapsulate the diversity (Dong, 2020). The tension between unity and diversity discussed in other areas of ethnic relations extends even to language policy. Mandarin is the standard spoken form of Chinese with pronunciation that is based on the Beijing dialect.

Language policy directions have followed the general trends of ethnic policy. After the founding of the PRC, the party put significant effort into supporting minority language and use. In 1956 the Central committee stated that Mandarin should only be required of the Han (Wang and Phillion, 2009). During this time, efforts were made to improve and develop minority languages, and minority language education was encouraged. Linguists were sent down to minority regions to help develop written scripts for several minority groups. While some of these efforts have had a positive impact on the communities and supported literacy, other written systems have been poorly received by the minority population.

In the following period of the cultural revolution and assimilationist ideology, this changed, and minority language was discouraged, and Mandarin was heavily promoted (Zhou, 2010). The 80s marked a shift towards diversity, and rights for minorities were reinforced in the 1984 ethnic autonomy law. Minority language was once more encouraged, and constitutional rights were upheld. As Mandarin has continued to be promoted and emphasised as an important part of national unity and development, a balance between minority language and Mandarin

was struck through bilingual policies in minority areas (Feng and Adamson, 2018). Researchers have noted that language policies have subtly amended their language by replacing 'should' with 'may,' i.e., education should/may be conducted in a minority language.

National Law: The main law which guides language ideology at the national level is the 'Law of The People's Republic of China on The Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language'(Pan, 2016). The purpose of this law is to emphasise Mandarin's role in public activities and to promote economic and cultural exchange and cohesion between ethnic groups and regions. It reiterates minority rights to language, as put forth in the ethnic autonomy law. It also states that officials, news media, education and public services should use Mandarin in conducting their work duties (SCNPC, 2001).

Yunnan Law: This law, passed in 2005, further interpreted by the Yunnan Provincial Government, specifies information and article direction according to the province's situation. For example, Yunnan further dictates the proficiency level of Mandarin required of TV presenters, radio hosts, and other media professionals who use Mandarin as their 'working language.'⁵as well as state officials, public servants, teachers, and university graduates. Ethnic minority teachers whose native language is not mandarin are allowed to have one grade lower. Article 12. States that schools *should*⁶ use Mandarin as their main teaching language, but schools that accept mainly ethnic minority students *may* use Mandarin and ethnic minority languages simultaneously for bilingual teaching. Article 18 signs in minority areas *may* be written in standard Chinese characters and minority script, but they *must* have Chinese characters (Ministry of Education, 2004).

Example of Autonomy Regulations Law from Lancang Lahu Autonomous County: Passed in 2020, the regulations governing Lancang county include four articles which touch on language. Once again, ethnic minority rights to promote their language are reiterated in article 9. While article 18 states that government organs *should* use Mandarin, the Lahu language *may* be used simultaneously in conjunction with Mandarin. Article 20 states that in law and court proceedings Mandarin *shall* be used, but ethnic minority individuals *may* use their language themselves and will be provided translation if they do not know Mandarin. Article 42 states that schools *should* use Mandarin for instruction. However, if the school has many minority students, minority language *can* help in teaching (People's Congress of Lancang Lahu, 2020).

⁵ TV and media personalities must obtain grade 1 (97% correct on the proficiency test) while teachers should be at grade 2 (80-87%), public service grade 2, state organs 3, university grads grade 2.

⁶ Italicised to show reference to the should/may distinction mentioned earlier.

This quick overview shows that the current language policy in regard to unity and diversity may appear to be balanced on the surface, but as Zhang and Cai (2021) point out, bilingual policies are roundabout ways of promoting Mandarin. Language policy is based on the 'political and economic agenda of the central government' (Feng and Adamson, 2018). Mandarin policies have been given further weight by being tied to the policies on poverty alleviation and building a moderately prosperous society (Zhang and Cai, 2021).

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the theoretical perspective and methodology used in this project. First it will lay out the orientation and epistemological underpinnings of the project (4.2) and my positionality as a researcher (4.3). The chapter will also cover the process of developing the research project. It will highlight the development process and limitations due to COVID-19 (4.4), outline the data set (4.5), analysis framework (4.6), ethics (4.7) and limitations (4.8). The chapter endeavours to be reflexive and give a narrative of the research experience and research decisions that shaped the project's final form. The process of learning and adapting to changing context was integral to the cumulative knowledge discovered.

4.2 Epistemological and Theoretical Perspective

Through the course of this project, I have had to face many changes in my research. The underlining epistemological position has remained the same, but I have had to adapt my methods and theoretical perspective as my research topic evolved and I gained new knowledge in the realm of Chinese ethnic theory and policies. This research takes an interpretivist/constructionist position, which holds that reality is created through human interaction in the social world (Creswell, 2013). The research process for this project underwent two different developmental stages, which I will describe in greater detail in section 4.4. The work put into the preliminary research heavily informed and influenced the second stage and final research product, however, the epistemological perspective remained compatible throughout.

An interpretivist/constructionist epistemology takes the position that 'the world is socially or discursively constructed' (Marsh and Furlong, 2002, p. 26). The social world exists in our understanding and interpretation of social phenomenon. Social discourse is formed through institutions and history and is integral to the understanding of meaning. The focus of constructionist research is to explore how 'reality' is socially created and the place and meaning it has on the lives of individuals in society. A constructionist framework does not deny the existence of the objective nature in social structures and institutions, it recognises these as parts of the social world, but understands its creation and continuation as a loop feeding back into itself (Schwandt, 1998). Therefore, social reality is not fixed and cannot be said to have universal relationships and meanings. The underlying issue in this project lies in the

tension between the concepts of ethnicity/*minzu*, and Chinese nationality/*zhonghua minzu*. This dichotomy between Chinese conceptualisations and those standing outside the reasoning of state ideology highlights the existence of multiple 'realities' and ways of understanding and structuring knowledge and identities.

Ethnicity is understood as a subjective social phenomenon, constructed through interaction with the ascription of ethnic labels by self and others. As identities are a product of the social environment where they are formed the data must be understood as situated in a social-cultural milieu intersecting in a geographic time and place, which allows for the specification of diverse aims, discourses and context inherent in ethnic identity construction (Barth, 1994). The conceptualisation of *minzu* identities in China has had a clear impact on the development of national doctrine and policies. An interpretive approach to policy should concern itself with 'figuring out what policy-relevant elements carry or convey meaning, what these meanings are, who is making them, and how they are being communicated, but also on the methods through which the analyst-researcher accesses and generates these meaning-making processes as they conduct their analyses' (Yanow, 2007, p.111).

4.3 Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

When conducting qualitative research, it is important that the researcher is aware of the biases and assumptions which they bring to the research project (Gunaratnam, 2003). These are the values and motivations which inform the worldview and research process (Holmes, 2020). This research is approached from the position that reality is built upon values which are dictated both by the prevailing time and culture as a continual process of negotiation between structure and individual agency. Reality is a matter of perspective with its own internal logic to fit the hierarchy of its values. A basic tenant of qualitative research in the social sciences is that it understands that the social world is built on knowledge, where meaning and value can vary through time, culture and individual experience, and is thus subjective. A researcher's identity makes an inescapable imprint on both the methods, analysis and interpretation of data. Reflexivity is key to credible qualitative research. 'As reflexivity is a researcher's conscious and deliberate effort to be attuned to one's own reactions to respondents and to the way in which the research account is constructed, it helps identify and explicate potential or actual effect or personal, contextual, and circumstantial aspects on the process and findings of the study and maintain their awareness of themselves as part of the world they study' (Berger, 2015, p. 221). The path which brought me to this project, therefore, offers some insight into my attitude as I approached this research.

Throughout the research project, I have had to examine my assumptions and positions, both in relation to past experiences and relationships which have influenced this project. In 2006 I took a year out of university and moved to Kunming to enrol in an intensive Chinese language course at Yunnan Normal University. I spent the next eight years principally living in Kunming, only returning to the US for the academic year to finish my undergraduate degree in Chinese Studies. During that time, I had several close friendships with individuals from different *minzu* backgrounds, which allowed me frequent opportunities to observe and discuss with them ethnic minority life in Yunnan. Working from a constructionist perspective, based on the premise that knowledge is socially created, it is important to me that I conduct research which is inclusive of divergent approaches and conceptualisation of these issues. I understand ethnic identity is our self-categorisation in relation to 'ethnically located others' (Weinreich *et al.*, 2003, p. 116). Like all identities, it is a two-way process of self-categorisation and outside designation, yet the factors at play are dependent on the social structure, wherein the identity is being invoked.

The time I spent in Yunnan was also marked by a period of optimism regarding US and China relations. Outside the sphere of politics my personal interactions had been characterised by enthusiasm on both sides. My experience up to this point had been that people in Yunnan were remarkably open and easy-going when it came to talking about their identity and background. I anticipated being treated with a bit more suspicion as my position shifted to a researcher when I prepared for my original fieldwork planned for 2020. As a foreigner conducting research on ethnic identity which has potential to be a sensitive subject, I prepared to encounter more fridity than I was previously accustomed to. The growing antagonism between the two countries signalled a rapidly changing political climate.

From the start of this project there have been significant redesigns and changes. When I began the research process my interest and focus was on experiences of ethnic identity and negotiation, elements which in this project, are at the receiving end of policies. While I recognized policies as an element in the construction of ethnic identity, I had not considered incorporating an analysis of policy documents themselves. My assumptions about what this project was and my perspective on ethnic governance had to shift as the project developed. Within Chinese research studies there is an element of black and white thinking and a tendency towards a critical dismissal of the government in regard to its treatment and policies toward ethnic minorities. In starting this project, I have revisited some of the conversations of the past. I have reconsidered what I knew about friends, their families and backgrounds. This has embodied to me the continual process of understanding and how knowledge is built through time, experience and reflection. In considering ethnic issues the need to be critical of my own interpretations and naivety towards the narrative that the CCP presents as well as the

distrust, and suspicion of governmental policies in light what is happening in other regions in the country made balancing perspectives an on-going task in uncovering the internal logic of the documents and their interaction with Chinese policy and discourse.

When conducting international research, it is essential that the researcher be aware of the cultural lens they are bringing to the topic and that they are able to see the phenomena from the position of their participants. A researcher also needs to be cognisant of power relations in the research and interview process which requires reflexivity (Ramazonoğlu and Holland, 2005). Uneven power relations can affect both the researcher and the research participants.

4.4 Project Development and Methodology

This research was carried out using qualitative methods. Quantitative methods are much more highly valued in positivist research as they have a strong affinity for developing and testing hypotheses to explain social phenomena and human behaviour, while researchers working under an interpretivist epistemology will find that quantitative data is largely void of the particularities that give deeper insight and understanding of contextual meanings. Tracy (2013) describes the characteristics of qualitative research methods as containing the qualities of self-reflexivity, emersion in social context and thick description.

My interest lies in analysing policies pertaining to ethnic minorities in Yunnan. This is an interpretive project which seeks to understand the meaning of these policies, especially as they reflect the views of the state, the most powerful actor in creating the discourse, and the framework within which individuals operate. Through an interpretive and inductive approach, I explore how ethnic minorities appear in these documents, the significance and intention behind their inclusion and connect this to theoretical and ideological concerns. To do this I use thematic analysis to examine normative policy documents published on governmental websites which explicitly acknowledge ethnic minorities. Material to be reviewed includes government issued guidelines 指南, opinions 意见, recommendations 建议, regulations 规定/条例, measures 办法, and laws. This main data is triangulated with data gathered through secondary documents, e.g., news articles, and ethnographic styled vignettes. The complementary data sources and methods ensures that data analysis is grounded.

4.4.2 Loss of Access to the Field and Facing Practical Issues

Since I began my research in the autumn of 2018, this project underwent significant changes due to COVID-19. It did not take its final form until the spring of 2022. For this reason, this

section is a reflexive narrative of my research experience, as much as it is a reference for my methods and supplying context for my methodological decisions. This research is very much a product of these conditions. Conducting my research at any other time, even if I could go to the field today, would lead to a different methodology and a slightly different project.

My interest in China studies had always been more concerned with the cultural than the political. When I began my PhD journey, my work likewise reflected this interest. The original research was a phenomenological project designed to explore lived experiences of mixed-ethnic identity. The perspective which I used to approach my work during the first three years was to view ethnicity and *minzu* categories as analogous in terms of salience in personal identity. The focus of the research was on how mixed identities were negotiated within the construct of the Chinese *minzu* system. While I had familiarised myself with the basic policies that formed ethnic benefits and identity categorisation, I had not planned to focus on ethnic policies for more than situating the research in context. The pivot towards the present policy focused research was due to both circumstance and a growing realisation that ethnic identity cannot be addressed without paying significant attention to the political landscape.

During the period between 2020-2022, my original project was no longer feasible due to the travel constraints of COVID-19. According to my original plan, pre-COVID, I prepared myself for fieldwork and had arranged to travel to Kunming in January 2020. Shortly before I was due to fly out, news of the situation in Wuhan raised immediate concerns, so in consultation with my supervisors, we decided it was best to cancel the flight a week before I was scheduled to leave. Instead, I remained in England to wait and monitor how the situation progressed. I began to actively look for ways around this problem and work to adapt my research project to meet the limitations.

Given the travel restrictions and lockdowns which overtook 2020, I began to explore the online presence and discussion of mixed ethnicity on Chinese internet and social media platforms. I explored the idea of digital ethnography to collect data on Baidu Tieba ethnic group forums, using social media to highlight issues and act as a springboard supplementing the research. Digital ethnography recognises that the 'digital' is part of something bigger and the primary focus of the research may be off-line (Pink *et al.*, 2016, p. 10). At this time, my topic was still mixed-ethnic identity, however, I found little content to base my research in that direction. Furthermore, I was dealing with issues surrounding censorship and site access. As 2020 progressed, I endeavoured to find participants for on-line interviews via internet platforms and social media. I created Weibo and Zhihu accounts and posted research information. In addition, I also set up a survey online. Due to real name authentication, all my online activity was linked to my identity and passport. My efforts engaging with online platforms were hindered by Chinese internet censoring. When trying to post on forums or send messages I often found

that they were immediately deleted. Likewise, an effort to generate interest and collect data via an online survey was hampered due to being censored and flagged for content. Many questions were not allowed to be published and the final survey carried a red banner with a warning that it contained potentially 'sensitive' material. Even after rewriting and adapting the questions I could not get rid of the warning label.

The main obstacle to my progress in this effort was the difficulty locating participants which fit my criteria while in the UK. For this reason, I shifted the focus of my project to adapt to a smaller sample size. The design of the project was adjusted to utilise life story interviews to explore Chinese policy. Instead of the original plan following typical qualitative interview guidelines of 30-40 participants or until saturation is reached, life history interviews can be done with as little as one participant (Atkinson, 1998). The emphasis is placed on the depth and detail of the data gathered. The key is finding participants with whom you can build a connection and who are willing to set aside time over the course of a few months to interact with you (Cole and Knowles, 2001). Using fewer participants means that a single interview is not sufficient to gather enough data. Instead, a continuous effort and on-going interaction is much more fruitful and it mimics aspects of ethnographic fieldwork. This takes time to develop and is not a one-off interaction with the participants.

To this end, I was able to contact an old friend in China who agreed to function as a participant. Throughout the length of this thesis, I will be using the pseudonym 'Yan Long' for my friend in order to protect his privacy and identity. Likewise, the names of his family members mentioned have also been changed, along with any identifying information. Moreover, the names of villages and locations where Yan long and his family live has been removed, but the general area is indicated. Yan Long, was one of the first friends I made when I moved to Kunming in 2006. We had a close relationship for almost a decade, but we dropped out of contact in 2015. It takes time to develop rapport and trust with participants and given the limitations that this project was under, there was significant benefit to using these prior relationships. To my advantage I already had a degree of familiarity with him and his family's background. After agreeing to participate, we kept in regular contact through WeChat and had conversations roughly once a week. Unfortunately, Yan Long was going through a difficult period and was under stress at home and work. Our formal interviews were cancelled several times due to his daughter being sent to hospital. Given his personal situation I decided to forgo pursuing a formal interview with him. Our informal conversations and interactions were still a source of data. In ethnographic studies informal conversations still have the potential to generate data and meaning as a form of participant observation. Driessen (2013) notes that they can actually produce more insights than formal interviews.

Beyond the technical practicalities of data collection and loss of access to the field, just as significant to the re-evaluation of my research topic was the social and political climate. During this period, I also had more time at my disposal to explore the tangential issues related to my research and mull over broader discussions of ethnic theory, separate from my understanding based on experiences and knowledge. Since 2019 the treatment of Uighurs and the mass detention sites in Xinjiang has been heavily covered in the international news. And with the reinvigorated attention to China's ethnic policies in Xinjiang, and the brief period of protest in Inner Mongolia in 2020 over educational reform and language issues, many China watchers put out articles on China's growing assimilative policies under Xi. As I prepared for my original research, I was interested in noting the connection between intermarriage and mixed children and the possibility for greater integration with Han culture while persevering *minzu* title, which if instrumentalised could be used as a tacit in hollowing out identification with *minzu* as a category. An article written by Lin Chao, *zhonghua minzu* or Chinese ethnicity was advocated as a third option to help resolve the issue of mixed-ethnic children having to choose between their parents' ethnic groups for identification (Lin, 2013). This type of suggestion was present in the second-generation ethnic policy debate, which was re-emerging in western discussions due to concerns over assimilative policies (Roche and Leibold, 2020).

I began reading more on the political issues surrounding Xi and his vision for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. With Xi's trajectory and centralising power under himself for the foreseeable future and the emphasis on the 'Chinese nation', it appeared that this was more than standard rhetoric. Furthermore, the repression of the Hong Kong protests starting in 2019 and the introduction of the Hong Kong national security law brought international attention to the growing authoritarianism within China. Serious concern and unease permeated the atmosphere between China and the international community. As a person who has generally had little interest in politics and whose foundational experiences of China were formed during a period of political and cultural optimism, this caused tension in my own mind. Likewise, the George Floyd and Black Lives Matter protests in America which sparked greater public discussions surrounding systemic racism also brought a heightened poignancy to addressing the political in racial and ethnic issues. These issues began to butt against my previous thoughts about approaching ethnic research in China and made me start to increasingly consider the goal of re-conceptualising of ethnic relations in the 'New Era'; how would this be reflected at the level of regional ethnic policy, especially in non-contentious areas? Could Yunnan's reputation for relatively peaceful ethnic relations provide the ground for the central government to push a softer assimilation through ethnic unity work and the consciousness of the *zhonghua minzu* consciousness?

Eventually, I came to the point where I felt research on ethnic identity experiences were perhaps neither appropriate nor pertinent at this period in time. I felt that the ground was shifting, and I was compelled to investigate if and how national discourse on the 'Chinese nation' and ethnic relations are reproduced in policy documents.

4.4.3 Methods

Quantitative methods and data are appropriate for answering broad general questions. It can provide context and describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, allow for greater depth of detail and insight into the phenomenon being explored. As discussed earlier, the complexity of *minzu*/ethnicity and nationality calls for a method which can handle the diverging viewpoints and dynamic nature, which is an inevitable part of these socially constructed concepts. The focus of this project is not on accessing or evaluating policy outcomes or cost measurement, but on openly exploring ethnic policy viewed from the angle of China's 'New Era' and the national rhetoric surrounding it.

To that end, this research uses qualitative thematic analysis to explore and analyse government policy documents from Yunnan province. My research is centred in Yunnan due to my previous history and familiarity with the region. After redesigning the research topic, I could have expanded the research to other areas of China, but I chose to keep my focus on Yunnan. The literature and foundational work I had done up to that point had been focused on Yunnan, so I chose to keep my scope limited to the province. Yunnan is the most ethnically diverse region of the country, home to 25 of China's 55 ethnic minorities. It also has more autonomous minority counties and prefectures than any other province. In recent years, much of the discussion surrounding ethnic policy has focused on areas of tension and suppression where policies are more aggressive. This can lead to the danger of over-extrapolating these issues of aggressive assimilation to other regions of China. Yunnan has a reputation for relatively peaceful ethnic relations, which the provincial government claims is due to its adherence to the party's theories in carrying out ethnic work and implementing policies. In 2015, during Xi Jinping's visit to Yunnan, he emphasised Yunnan's efforts in ethnic unity work as a model for all of China. Focusing the research on Yunnan gives insights into an approach of soft assimilation, which the central and provincial government view as more ideal.

This project used NVivo software to facilitate a thematic analysis, mapping out the themes and prominent policy trends since 2014. Thematic analysis is suitable for exploring deep and complex meanings and allows for a significant degree of flexibility in the use of theory and analytical frameworks (Bruan and Clark, 2022). The first step in the process was familiarising myself with the documents and identifying the pertinent sections where ethnic minorities were

an explicit object being referenced. Using thematic analysis to generate codes and develop and refine themes allowed me to examine concepts of interest, as categories formed around campaigns and initiatives separately. The themes were then explored using an analytical framework which combines Fredrik Barth's three tier model of ethnic identity construction to form the structure for the levels of analysis wherein Foucault's concept of governmentality and power/knowledge is used as the analytical lens (see Section 4.6 for greater detail). The current approach to ethnic relations with its shifting emphasis on unity coupled with production of *zhonghua* identity 'knowledge' by the state is working to create a new 'truth' for ethnic identities. These policies affect the lives of ethnic minorities and shape experiences connected to their ethnic identity this makes an impact on their conceptualisation.

The research is designed with data and methodological triangulation. The complementary data sources and methods ensures that data analysis can feed into the analytical framework at three different levels. The policy documents are complemented by news articles and vignettes from Yan Long's life and world. Vignettes are primarily used to provide 'entry points or imaginative access into more complicated or dense element of the research' (Kandemir and Budd, 2018). While the complementary data used for triangulation verifies the findings on its own, it does not capture the reality of these policies, but in fact they can act as illustrations and bring the findings to life.

4.5 Data Information

The data set for this project consists of 102 policy documents. The documents were screened and selected by using systematised methods adapted from the protocol for conducting a PRISMA systematic review to collate a comprehensive and unbiased selection of policies. This data set was supplemented with news articles and vignettes from Yan Long's life experiences to place the policies in context.

Beyond the central government China is administratively divided into four levels: provincial, prefecture, county and township. In Yunnan province there are 16 prefectures, 8 of which are autonomous. The prefectures are broken down into 129 county level administrative areas. A total of 23 websites were selected to search. I selected counties which had ethnic populations at the same level or higher than the average of Yunnan province (33%). Within Yunnan, out of 129 county level divisions, 73 have populations at the same rate or higher than the provincial average, and 26 have an ethnic minority population above 70%. The 73 counties which met the average were further narrowed to represent a variety of characteristic which could potentially impact local ethnic policy. Counties with a more diverse ethnic representation were selected, as well as border counties and finally, counties (previously) facing poverty/extreme

poverty (according to the reports for the campaign for getting rid of poverty by 2020). The selection was also based on convenience. Some counties did not have working government websites which could be accessed at the time the research was being carried out. Also, important to note is that the counties within a prefecture often gave interchangeable results for documents across the prefecture.

4.5.2 Search Strategy

In total, a search of six ethnic and religious affairs websites and 17 people's government websites were conducted. In addition, the website PKULAW which is a database of Chinese legal documents was searched for relevant laws and policy documents⁷. On the government websites under information/ government disclosure 信息公开 /政府公开 it is possible to search government documents 政府文件. I used the keyword 'ethnic minority' (少数民族) to search policy documents. On the PKULAW site I used the same keyword to conduct a title search under regional laws and regulations.

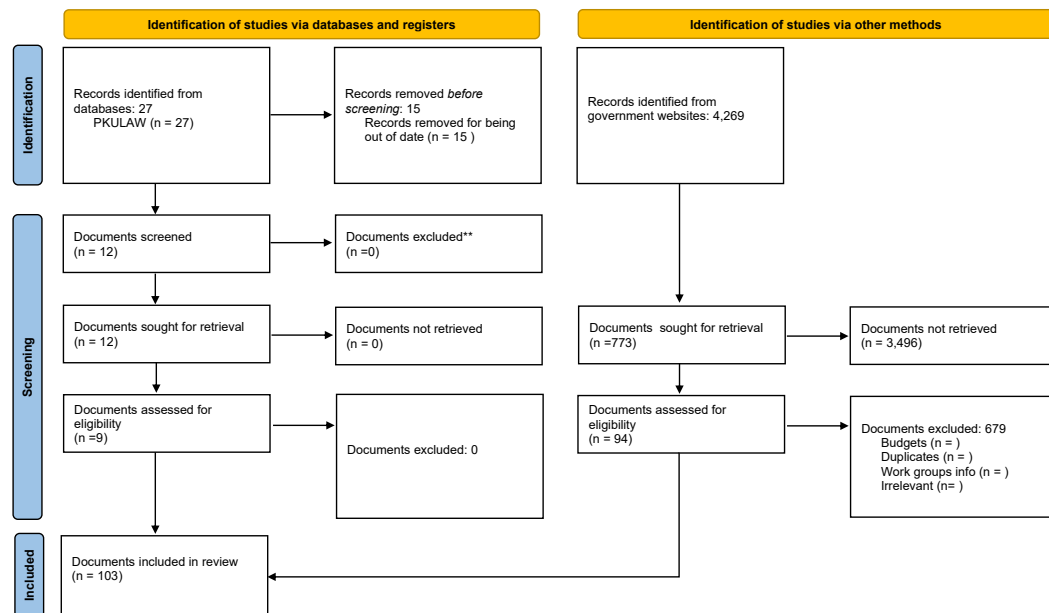
4.5.3 Inclusion Criteria

I selected official normative documents including guidelines 指南, opinions 意见, recommendations 建议, regulations 规定/条例, measures 办法, notice 通知, and laws published between 2014 and July 2022. Budgets and disclosures of accounts were excluded as well as extracts, notices on the rearrangement of work groups and organisational charts, and duplicate documents. As the keyword was broad, I also removed documents where it was used in irrelevant contexts.

⁷ See appendix 1 for list of websites included in search.

4.5.4 Search Results

Figure 2. PRISMA Flow Chart



*Consider, if feasible to do so, reporting the number of records identified from each database or register searched (rather than the total number across all databases/registers).
**If automation tools were used, indicate how many records were excluded by a human and how many were excluded by automation tools.

From: Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ* 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71. For more information, visit: <http://www.prisma-statement.org/>

A total of 4,269 documents were initially identified and screened. Table 1 shows the number of documents from each source at the three main stages of the process. An overview of the review process can be seen Figure 1 PRISMA flowchart. After the selection process was finished, I was left with 102 documents. By and large, Chinese government websites do not run smoothly, and their management is poor. In most cases it was not possible to filter by document type, date, or any other criteria. All documents had to be checked manually; those shown to be pre-2014 or otherwise unsuitable were not selected.

In the first phase of screening, I went through each document and quickly assessed if it was in date, and an official government document and not a news story or a notice. Normally in a systematic review document are selected through the help of a well-crafted search string, which allows for the identification of relevant papers with considerable ease. Due to the difficulties I was facing with the Chinese government websites, advanced and complicated search and filtering options to refine my results were not possible. Instead, I had to take a broad to narrow approach. Having identified a large volume of documents pertaining to ethnic minorities I had to filter down my list manually to better replicate a more nuanced search string.

Table 3. Document Source Sites

Document Source	Documents Reviewed	Documents Retrieved	Documents Selected
Kunming Ethnic and Religious Affairs	19	5	2
Xishuangbanna Ethnic and Religious Affairs	28	12	3
Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs	42	7	5
Deqing Ethnic and Religious Affairs	3	0	0
Lincang Ethnic and Religious Affairs	5	1	0
Yunnan Provincial Ethnic and Religious Affairs	40	11	9
Gengma People's Government	173	3	1
Yun People's Government	66	1	0
Wuding People's Government	38	8	3
Chuxiong People's Government	60	9	3
Dayao People's Government	579	189	23
Guangnan People's Government	71	2	0
Jinghong People's Government	1,000	171	23
Mengla People's Government	38	14	3
Heqing People's Government	67	4	1
Diqing People's Government	1,020	120	11
Kunming People's Government	321	73	4
Simao People's Government	46	34	0
Lancang People's Government	55	3	0
Mojiang People's Government	97	3	0
Yuanyang People's Government	167	33	0
Shiping People's Government	148	29	0
Hekou People's Government	149	30	2
PKULAW Database	27	12	9

Total	4,269	773	102
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4.5.5 Complementary Data

Informal conversations are an exciting way to add depth and nuance to a research project. Swain (2022) strongly encourages researchers outside the field of ethnography to embrace the use of informal conversations in their qualitative research as an additional source of data. Participatory informal conversation refers to the ‘interactive dialogue between the researcher and another person or other people’ (Swain, 2022). Swain (2022) also notes that these conversations may not necessarily appear in the final text but may still bring a deeper understanding and inspire ideas for the researcher.

Keeping this in mind, through the course of my data chapters I have inserted a few vignettes based off my informal conversations with Yan Long. During our conversations on WeChat video calls, his family members would pop in and out and occasionally they would have something to say. They were all aware of my research and that Yan Long had agreed to take part. The following section provides an introductory sketch to Yan Long and his family background.

Yan Long comes from an inter-ethnic household. His father is Dai, and his mother is Han but both he and his sister are registered as Dai. Yan Long had moved from a rural village outside of Pu’er, Yunnan to work in Kunming. He was a trainee hairdresser working at a salon down the road from my flat, as I passed by the salon every day I would often pop in for a chat and we became fast friends. Over the years I visited his hometown on several occasions, including celebrations for the Dai Water Splashing Festival, attended an extended family wedding, and also connected with his family members when they made trips to Kunming.

The Long family home was located southwest of Pu’er on the banks of the Mekong River. The village was relatively remote without transport links or passable roads for cars. Villagers either travelled via motorbike to another nearby village with road access or used cargo boats for supplies. Access to electricity and running water was provided in 2004, but up until the villagers were relocated in 2013 its accessibility was limited. Roughly sixty households were settled in the village; the majority of which were Dai, along with several Lahu families and other Han households.

Yan Long’s family on the father’s side had lived in the village for four generations. Prior to the Communist dismantling of the Tusi system (which recognised local ethnic leaders during the previous Qing rule) the family was descended from Dai chieftains. The family fortunes had

since deteriorated and while well liked, their position in the village was affected by their poor financial situation.

Yan Long's father is the middle child. He married Yan Long's mother at 21. He remained in the village but built a separate house away from the grandparents. He and his wife farmed a small plot of land for rice and had a few rubber trees on the hillside. Yan Long has a younger sister who left school at 13 and moved to Kunming at the age of 16. Since my leaving China, Yan Long has married and has a one-year-old baby. He is a hairdresser and now owns a salon and resides in a community within an hour of his parents' village. His younger sister left school at 14 and married at 15 to one of the Han boys in the village. All three generations of Yan Long's family have undergone a number of moves and adjustments over the past decade of my acquaintance with them: their lives frequently exhibiting many characteristics of the ethnic experience in Yunnan.

4.6 Analytic Framework

The framework used to analyse the data is based off an understanding of governmentality and a three-tier model of ethnic identity construction. The topics of national and ethnic identity discourse in China, Chinese meta-narratives and the foundational policies guiding Chinese ethnic affairs have already been introduced in Chapter 3. These are 'interpenetrating' issues in the analysis of ethnic policy in Yunnan. In this framework, Fredrick Barth provides the structure for my approach to ethnicity, while Foucault provides the lens for analysis.

William Walter suggests Foucault's ideas should be approached in a 'practical, use-oriented' manner as 'critical encounters' and not as 'a self-contained theoretical system' (Walter, 2012 pg. 5,103). Governmentality is useful as an analytical lens which allows us to navigate the broad field of action wherein ethnic identities are being shaped and governed by neoliberal and neo-socialist techniques which appear within the policy documents, designed to form and guide new subjectivities. The type of data collected for this project limited our analysis to techniques of the state. But governmentality allows room for this work to be expanded at a later date by eliciting evidence from ethnic minority experiences, resistance and interactions. So, while the practises of other agencies and bottom-up exercises of power have not been captured here, governmentality provides conceptual room for a more complete picture to be mapped out.

Governmentality is connected with Foucault's approach to power and how he understands the manner in which technologies of domination and technologies of the self are linked to power/knowledge production (Foucault, 1980_b). Power, according to Foucault (1980_b) is found

all around us; it is an integral part of our relationships and social interactions. This understanding of power allows for analysis, both on structure and individual agency. Power constrains the individual through the delineation of what truths are conceivable in a socio-historical context of the individual, which sets out the possibilities of their behaviour and their conceptual framework in understanding reality.

Power is not purely repressive, Foucault stresses that power is also productive. It produces knowledge in order that people may be easier to govern. In the case of China, in order to better govern the population, the Chinese Communist Party carried out a census, an identification project and vast amounts of ethnic research, all of which produced knowledge of the composition of its people groups which in turn was utilized in state policies to bring the minority groups into the embrace of the nation, allowing them to be governed. Power produces knowledge and what is believed as natural within that society becomes the regime or discourse of truth (Foucault, 1980).

Governmentality is the shaping of behaviours through these regimes of truth and the rationales of government. It forms the practises and techniques through which the 'conduct of conduct' is accomplished to form an individuals' subjectivity. These techniques and practices are found and enacted within the whole of society. Power is not possessed solely in the lone pillar of the state, but it is composed of an 'ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, ... calculations and tactics' (Foucault, 2007, pg. 144). As an analytical tool governmentality allows us to consider the population affected by governmental practises, as well as how and for what purpose they are being targeted' (Dean, 2010). In this research the population under consideration is ethnic minorities as the body of subjects who are the target of specific techniques by the state to govern their identities. In this thesis I endeavour to show not only the rationality of the CCP's approach to ethnic minority identities, but also how Yunnan's policies seek to transform the populations' subjectivity to *zhonghua minzu* and manage ethnic relations.

There have been critiques of governmentality and the limits of its application globally due to its origins centred in western liberal societies (Young, 1995; Josheph, 2010). It has been thought to be less fitting to authoritarian and non-western societies as the traditional understanding of governmentality focuses on the role of the market economy, individual freedom and private enterprise in shaping subjectivities. Under neoliberal governmentality there is a concern for the responsible governing of subjects and freedom is tied to self-governance 'a condition of governing well is that freedom, or certain forms of freedom, are really respected' (Foucault, 2007, pg. 353). The diffuse nature of power that Foucault describes seems to be at odds with a strong state centred governance. But in recent years

the utility of governmentality in other contexts has been expanding to both non-western and illiberal states (Bauchmann, 2012; Anthias & Hoffmann 2021; Comaroff, 1998).

In China, governmentality has been increasingly used and adapted to the Chinese context since the reform and opening up period, when the socialist market was established (Sigley 2006; Gleiss, 2016). It is being utilised to analyse a range of issues from the environment (Xu, *et al.*, 2022), the household registration or Hukou system (Zhang, 2018; Wang and Liu, 2008) and urban management (Wan, 2016). China's changing mode of governance, and the importance of the market economy in many aspects of Chinese society, opened up discussions of neoliberal governmentality. Yet strict neoliberalism cannot fully address the Chinese context and its political rationale. Gary Sigley finds it more useful to view Chinese governmentality as a hybrid of neoliberalism and socialism which is a 'form of political rationality that is at once authoritarian in a familiar political and technocratic sense yet, at the same time, seeks to govern certain subjects, but not all, through their own autonomy' (Sigley, 2006, pg. 489). Going further still Palmer and Winiger define a Chinese neo-socialist governmentality as a distinctive branch with the "aim to shape, nurture, constrain and guide the autonomy of Chinese subjects in the post-revolutionary era" and 'points to the elaboration and deployment of a form of governance which aims to enhance both the space of freedom and of its guidance and control.' (Palmer and Winiger, 2019, pg. 1).

Chinese neo-socialist governmentality targets three modes of subjectivity which are often at odds as they are based on different political rationales: market subjectivity based on neoliberalism, socialist subjectivity, and a civilized Chinese subjectivity (Palmer and Winiger, 2019). For this thesis these subjectivities can be understood to interact with ethnic policy documents in the following ways. Market subjectivity comes from neoliberal techniques which values ethnic identity as a marketable resource and individuals are likewise encouraged to take part in the commodification of identity and pursue entrance into the market economy. Socialist subjectivity directs individuals' acceptance of the party's benevolence and wisdom in managing ethnic affairs. It internalises the rules, laws and ethos of the party through which the proper relationships are nurtured. And finally, there is a Chinese subjectivity with the imperative of building a strong national consciousness and *zhonghua* community allowing China to rise on the global stage and meet its 'New Era' goals. By utilising the framework of Chinese neo-socialist governmentality and these three subjectivities to analyse ethnic identity management this thesis makes a broader contribution to studies on state nationalism and ethnicity. It demonstrates how neoliberalism and neo-socialism can work alongside each other in assimilation policy and practises. Instead of bringing democracy to neo-socialist regions to combat nationalism in this context we see how neoliberal market rationale works in tandem

with neo-socialist rationales to progress and develop assimilation policies and promote stronger national identity.

In this thesis I recognise both the applicability of neoliberal rationalities and technologies directed by the market and a neo-socialist governmentality which embraces Maoist practises and technocratic rule as well as the grand vision of the Chinese future. These two forms of governmentality indicate the primary mode of state interaction, but it is not a strict framework as a policy or campaign may have multiple goals.

These concepts from Foucault are utilised to reflect on the process of how identity is being moulded, as such it is a dynamic tool that allows for further development by recognising the role that counter-conduct will ultimately play and impact the effectiveness of state policies. One can anticipate resistance taking several forms, from uncritical acceptance (engaging with the new discourse of identity and internalising it without much resistance or reflection), surface level acceptance (going along with the discourse while internally or privately rejecting it), contesting it (holding protests) and finally instrumentalising it (some may realise there are certain incentives to buying into this discourse for political or economic benefit).

In *Enduring and Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Ethnicity*, Barth (1994) focuses on the impact of the state constraints on ethnic identity construction, while allowing for cultural processes and agency in individual responses. Barth (1994) shows that modern forms of ethnicity are highly complex and his discussion of micro, median and macro levels help to organise the data in terms of analytic categories. Barth's (1994) three-tier model separates the level of experience from level of ethnic group processes and overarching narratives of identity and belonging in 'imagined communities.'

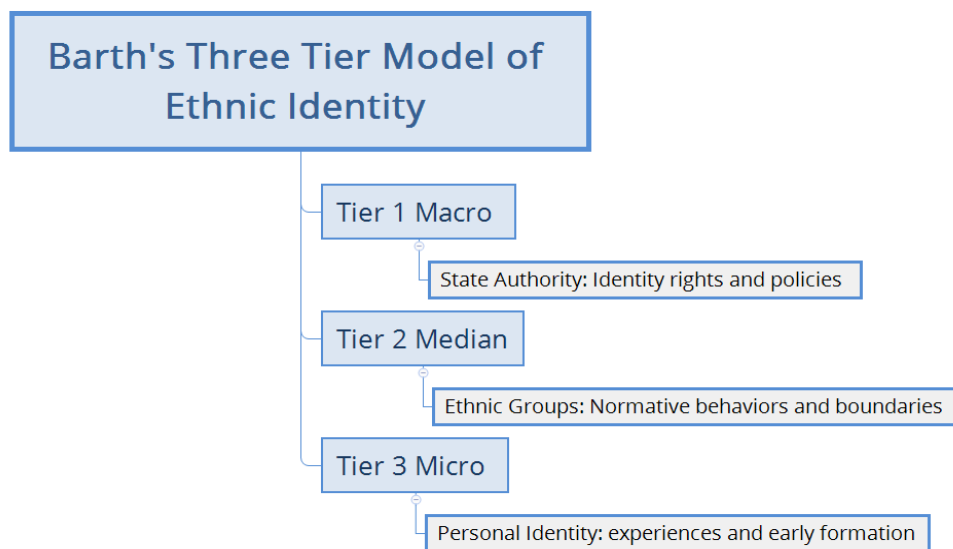
On the micro level, the focus is on the meanings attributed to ethnic experiences. These responses highlight the individual's agency in creating a narrative which has significance to them. The other levels affect what happens on the micro level in terms of behaviour and interpretations of meaning. This is the arena of lived experiences.

The focus of the median level is on behavioural constraints (how a member of X group does or does not behave) through the role of interpersonal relationships in reproducing ethnic identities and norms perpetuated by institutions and polices which have a direct impact on the lives of individuals. The concept of governmentality comes into play here.

Finally, the macro level is that of state discourses and policies, the meta-narratives people tell about themselves as groups and normative governmental regulations covering identity criteria, rights and benefits (Barth, 1994). Barth (1994, p.20) states that the aims of a state are diffuse and 'we must start by analysing the policies of each state by linking these policies to features of the regime, that is the state's policy making core. We are then able to depict the power

represented by the state as a specifiable third player in the process of boundaries construction between groups, rather than confound the regime, and its powers and interests, with more nebulous concepts of state and nation' (Barth, 1994, p. 20). This fits with Foucault's (1980a, p. 122) idea that the state is not some sort of supreme repressive regime in total control and with a single-minded aim, 'the State, for all the omnipotence of its apparatuses, is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations'. This is the level of the overarching discourses of national and ethnic identity which seek to engender feelings of collective belonging as well as the agenda of the state and the production of knowledge/truth by authority.

Figure 2 Barth's (1994) Model of Ethnic Identity Construction



Using Barth's (1994) three-tier model allows us to see how these function at various levels, recognising that they feed into and influence one another. Due to COVID-19 there was limited access to sources for data on the micro level as this is the level of individual experience and understanding of ethnic identity. In order to address this limitation, the analysis kept in mind the findings of other research projects produced before the pandemic which highlight the voices of the people in contrast with official policies and narratives. As Foucault points out, power does not function in a top-down manner, it can be seen interweaving through interactions of social structure and social interactions, continually feeding back on itself. This thesis primarily focuses on the median level due to the emphasis on documentary data which reveals the techniques of governmentality undertaken by local governments. The macro level is reflected in the discussion and inclusion of 'New Era' rhetoric of *zhonghua minzu* consciousness and the foundational policies guiding Chinese ethnic affairs. i.e., ethnic

experience and understanding, local implementation of policy, which creates and reproduces normative behaviour and subjectivities, and the discourses of identity and state agendas.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues to consider under this research project included informed consent, confidentiality, data protection and risk. All participant interaction was undertaken under the favourable approval of the University Ethics Committee. All information materials posted to recruit participants in the early stages of the project clearly stated the purpose and nature of the research project. Consent was obtained for participant engagement. It was made clear that participation was voluntary, and that they may withdraw from the research at any time. Moreover, names and identifying characteristics were removed and instead pseudonyms were used for identification.

As mentioned earlier, given the way the research unfolded, my main ethical concern was to respectfully manage the relationship and interactions with Yan Long. Even though in ethnographic research there is an understanding that the researcher will be building relationships with participants which may last long after the project is over, very few scholars write about their experiences and methodology of using people they have prior connections to as participants. In ethnographic scholarship there have been opposing views of the relationship between the researcher and 'informants' as well as the role of friendships in fieldwork (Driessen, 1998). The positivist view of research as an objective endeavour, where the researcher is to maintain a distant and detached relationship from the participants, has been called into question. The rise of reflexive research instead recognises the relationship between participants and researcher and their co-creation of meaning with a focus on interactions, and equality. Carolyne Ellis (2007) refers to 'relational ethics' or how researchers navigate relationships with their 'subjects' and the responsibilities and implications of their actions and decisions as well as the changes of the relationship through time.

Although, a level of trust and understanding already exists between me, Yan Long and members of his family, that is not to assume it is not without its own complexities. Using friends as participants calls for greater reflexivity (Yuan, 2014). This is why in the end I did not pursue a formal life narrative interview with him. Due to the personal problems he was facing with his family, it was important to me to respect his needs, even when he was willing to participate.

4.8 Project Limitations

As I have discussed, there are significant limitations to conducting research on China from abroad without the option of fieldwork. Ethnic identity is likely to be considered a sensitive topic by Chinese officials, particularly when being examined by a foreign researcher. For new researchers who are not established in the field and lack connections at Chinese universities, which in the past could facilitate the researcher with data collection options, document analysis is a satisfactory research option (Trinkle *et al.*, 2022). But even then, gaining access to the appropriate documents and databases may not be straight forward or possible. For those interested in law and policy PKULAW is a great resource, but without a subscription it has limited functionality. I did not have access to a subscription, and I only became aware of the database after having compiled my own set of documents independently. Those who are more interested in the digital space may get good results with data scraping. Using a data scraping tool may have simplified my data collection process, allowing me to fine tune my search.

PRISMA is primarily used in the health sciences and biomedical fields as a way of providing a transparent report of the systematic review process (Saif-Ur-Rahman, 2022). These studies are often used to determine new health policies. The strict adherence to the PRISMA protocol provides quality control to assess validity and eliminate a biased selection of studies. I followed the screening and selection protocol for a PRISMA systematic review to provide transparency to the selection of my documents and the collation of my data set, after which I adapted the process to suit my research needs. In sections 4.5.2 to 4.5.4, I report on my methods and provide a PRISMA flowchart. Following the protocol diminished the risk of selection bias.

It could be critiqued that informal conversations are a poor substitution for in-depth interviews. The use of informal conversations was not my preferred choice, but as other options degraded, I had to make do with what I could. Swain (2022) argues that informal conversations can be an extremely fruitful endeavour. 'These conversations generally create a greater ease of communication (although this is dependent of course on the characters and personalities of the individuals involved) and have the potential to produce more realistic or naturalistic data with less performativity from both the interviewer and the interviewee' (Swain, 2022). Furthermore, Swain (2022) asserts that the data gathered in this manner should be no less privileged than data gathered through formal interviews as they are formed from the same epistemology and framework, are likewise a 'co-construction' and 'both sources of data are subject to caveats and limitations'.

A common critique of qualitative research is that it lacks validity due to its subjective nature and therefore results in biased findings. Qualitative research does not seek validity in the positivist sense, instead qualitative researchers are concerned with credibility. Credibility is

evaluated based on the data collected and the analysis. The interpretation of the data should reflect the 'participants realities social phenomenon' (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 124). This critique can be addressed through researcher reflexivity and employing a variety of data sources. As we know, policy and practice are not the same. I attempted to address this the best I could under the circumstances through the life story vignettes from Yan Long and news stories to verify and provide state sanctioned interpretations communicated directly to the population. Ideally, I would have been able to triangulate the policy documents with more ground level examples using more participant generated data for more diverse voices and experiences.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided a discussion on the design of this research project and outlined its constructionist perspective and qualitative methodology. It also provided a statement of researcher positionality. In particular, it has described the challenges of conducting research on China in the midst of a global pandemic and addressed the unavoidable limitations of the project.

It outlined the systematic selection and collection of data consisting of 102 policy documents pertaining to ethnic minorities retrieved from 6 prefectures across Yunnan Province from 2014-2022, as well as the use of secondary and supplementary data to support the thematic analysis.

This chapter provided an explanation of the overarching analytical framework which combines Barth's three-tiered model of ethnic identity construction and Foucault's concept of governmentality to explore ethnic policies which intersect with ethnic minorities lives during this historic period where China is building a new conceptualisation of its national identity.

Chapter 5: Culture as a Resource in the Fight Against Poverty

5.1 Introduction

To write Yunnan's chapter in the Chinese Dream we must take the initiative to integrate into the national development strategy, blaze a path of leapfrog development, strive to become a demonstration area of national unity and progress, as well as a pacesetter in the construction of an ecological civilization, and a radiating centre for South and Southeast Asia. These are the new coordinates; a clear new positioning and a new mission for Yunnan given by General Secretary Xi Jinping, focusing on the 'New Era' and the national strategic layout. (Jinghong People's Government, 2016b, section 2)

This chapter will discuss the primary theme of ethnic culture as an economic resource which capitalises on tourism, the industrialisation of ethnic characteristics, and the 'protection' of ethnic characteristics by governmental means. A neoliberal governmentality which is embedded in the marketisation of cultural resources will be highlighted as a thread running throughout. As discussed in Chapter 3, governmentality and neoliberalism in China are bound by the authoritarian nature of the Chinese state; for this reason, techniques which are market-oriented, even when developed by the state, are considered neoliberal in contrast to the propaganda, and social engineering techniques, which fall under a neo-socialist understanding of governmentality. In this chapter, individual participation is encouraged, as well as bootstrap thinking, private capital investments and entrepreneurship, through which new subjectivities are created where individuals directly profit off their own identities.

While this chapter discusses ethnic tourism and cultural authenticity, it is not possible to do justice to those topics here. The focus is not on tourism itself or even its effect on ethnic minorities. Rather, this chapter looks at how ethnic minority culture is framed simultaneously as a depersonalised abstract economic resource to be utilised by both the government and individuals for economic profit and engaged with and framed in an experiential way as part of the hierarchy of *zhonghua* culture. In a way, this also reflects the tension in the ethnic theory of the balance of unity and diversity. When ethnic identities are presented within the diversity view, they are depersonalised as an asset and presented in a simplified manner. In contrast, ethnic identity presented within the unity view is more comprehensively engaged with both in discourses of protection and inheritance but within a framework which 'correctly' positions it under *zhonghua* identity.

As the documents in the data set cover a period between 2014-2022, the emphasis on poverty alleviation tactics and entrepreneurship was not unexpected. Poverty alleviation was a national-level priority during these years. Xi Jinping's goal of eradicating poverty in China by 2020 resulted in policy pushes across the country, significantly impacting Yunnan, which has historically struggled with impoverishment. Furthermore, there was a degree of overlap between locations which were registered as impoverished and areas with concentrated ethnic minority populations. The data set included documents from seven counties (Gengma, Dayao, Wuding Mengla, Diqing, and Weixi) which were identified and labelled by the government as 'poverty' counties before 2020. The broader scope of poverty alleviation efforts took into consideration Yunnan's key industries, such as mining, agriculture, biomedicine and health; tourism; information technology; modern logistics; and advanced equipment manufacturing. While the manufacturing industries are rapidly growing, it has been noted that some local governments place an emphasis on tourism because more of the revenue generated can remain within the community at the disposal of the local government (Litzinger *et al.*, 2014). It is then not surprising that ethnic cultural tourism and elements of intangible cultural heritage such as handicrafts, food, clothing, local traditional knowledge and festivals are being treated as economic resources, which ethnic minorities and local governments are encouraged to draw upon to lift themselves out of poverty. The threads of policy that connect to ethnic tourism are varied, such as the development of vocational education (Jinghong People's Government, 2018_a), planning for the administration and management of cultural relics (Jinghong People's Government, 2018_b), strengthening and improving ethnic work (Jinghong People's Government, 2016_a) national innovation-driven development strategies (Diqing People's Government, 2016), poverty alleviation and special funding, and constructing national unity and progress demonstration zones (Jinghong People's Government, 2019). These efforts reinforce state narratives of ethnic relations and work as a 'civilising project' while simultaneously embracing cultural heritage while commodifying it (Luo, 2018). The following section will explore how ethnic culture continues to be co-opted for Yunnan's strategic economic initiatives and development goals.

5.2 Tourism in Yunnan

We will make an all-out effort to create a business card of 'ethnic minority culture' according to the market demand and the supporting conditions of tourism. We will concretise and commercialise the traditional culture of ethnic minorities, to develop tourism products with market appeal, to meet the material and spiritual needs of tourists seeking novelty, knowledge, difference and happiness (Wuding People's Government, 2019).

Over half (56 in total) of the 102 documents in the data set contain at least one mention of tourism, with a total of 1,814 references across the set. Tourism is one of the major tertiary industries of Yunnan, accounting for one-third of the province's GDP. Over the past few decades, local governments have consistently viewed tourism as an avenue for regional economic development (Morais *et al.*, 2006). National programmes such as the 'open up the west campaign,' 'build a new socialist countryside', the 'belt and road initiative' have lent themselves to the development of rural tourism and brought in significant revenue. But those who profited the most from tourism were often the outside investors (Donaldson, 2007). This has led to greater concern over project management sustainability and improved methods for involving the local populations (Yang and Wall, 2008). This has resulted in increased concern and awareness on issues of sustainability and the environmental impact of tourism on the ecological environment and ethnic landscapes. Managing and developing the tourism industry continues to be at the heart of Yunnan's economic development plans and a key area of the province's poverty alleviation efforts, featuring significantly in the province's 13th 5-year plan.

The popularity of Yunnan's tourism is inextricably connected to both its ethnic and ecological diversity. There is a wealth of literature on the interplay between tourism and ethnic minorities both in China and in Yunnan (Oakes, 1992; Chow, 2005; Yang and Wall, 2009; Swain, 1989), how the government interacts with tourism initiatives, state-sponsored capitalism and cultural and spatial governance (Yang *et al.*, 2008; Litzinger *et al.*, 2014; Oakes, 1993), how ethnic bodies and identities are commercialised and cultural represented (Dorrne *et al.*, 2003; Hyde, 2007; Yang, 2013; Yang, 2011), poverty reduction and case studies on economic impact (Tian *et al.*, 2021; Qu *et al.*, 2022; Donaldson, 2007), cultural preservation and authenticity (Yun and Zhang, 2017; Yang, 2016; Su, 2021) and the intersection of tourism and gender on family dynamics (Morais *et al.*, 2005; Wen *et al.*, 2022; Su *et al.*, 2023). The data set of policy documents likewise reflects the centrality of tourism in the ethnic reality of Yunnan, and many of these themes and concerns are reflected in the documents.

The 'Yunnan Provincial Tourism Poverty Alleviation Work Plan', published in 2017, set the strategy for lifting more than 800,000 people out of poverty. Through the plan, over 1,619 'tourism poverty alleviation, demonstration villages' and 10,000 'tourism poverty alleviation demonstration households' have been established. (Yunnan gov., 2017). Now in Yunnan, 2.76 million people are employed both directly and indirectly in the rural tourism industry, which accounts for 20% of rural household incomes. The work plan's objective is to encourage individuals and households to proactively get involved with the tourism industry to raise their incomes in ways such as investment in specialised accommodation (farmhouses, forest houses, rural inns), catering, and cultural experiences and performances. Skilled craftsmen and 'old masters' are encouraged to get involved with cultural inheritance and to develop

ethnic and cultural handicrafts and products. The work plan is also concerned with funding for infrastructure and issues surrounding the quality of tourist destinations. Alongside its harmonious ethnic relations, ecology and cultural diversity are resources that should be utilised in Yunnan's path of development.

5.2.2 Integrating New Directions in the Tourism Industry

Through the early 2000s, Yunnan experienced significant growth and development due to investments in ethnic tourism, but the industry has begun to stagnate, and new methods for reinvigoration are being explored (Song *et al.*, 2020). As China has approached and entered its 'New Era,' it achieved its first centenarian goal of becoming a moderately prosperous socialist society. This prosperity, in turn, has impacted the tourism sector in China. Growing wealth has opened opportunities for tourism to the general population. Tourism is now for everyone, and with elevated expectations, tourists' tastes are more discerning. The provincial government is pressuring the local tourism sectors to adapt to these new conditions by going beyond the basics of providing simple scenic spots for sightseeing and encourage industry innovation in creating unique travel experiences (Dayao People's Government, 2018).

Yunnan hopes to dominate a niche in health tourism by establishing bases in health care, mind and body retreats, and old age care, including retirement communities. They aim to pair leisure and vacation with treatment, rehabilitation, and health preservation. In 2016 the government published 'Healthy China 2030', a national guideline for improving the state of public health and medicine. Healthy China 2030 indicated that health services are an integral part of China's plans for social and economic development. Across China, health and wellness tourism is growing, and Yunnan has several advantages in health tourism stemming from its ecology and ethnic communities. The pursuit of health and wealth provides a point for the manifestation of biopolitics and a neoliberal rationale of tourism. The enjoyment of local ecology, physical health and attending ethnic culture creates a space where both tourist and locals shape subjectivities of the local ethnic minorities and their indigenous knowledge. The documents coded for tourism in Xishuangbanna prefecture showed that Dai medicine was of interest to government plans for development. Many ethnic groups have their own history of medical traditions, while Yunnan's biodiversity gives it a wealth of medicinal herbs used in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and ethnomedicines. The earliest recorded medical texts from the Dai date back to approximately 900 BCE, and the Yi have medical texts dating from 957 AD. In 2013, ethnomedicines were passed into law as a form of Traditional Chinese medicine and are subject to the same standards of research and testing (Li *et al.*, 2020). In Yunnan, a growing health tourism industry also means embracing Yi, Tibetan, Dai, Zhuang,

Bai and other ethnomedicines. Both provincial and local level governments look to protect ethnomedicine by developing Research and Development labs, agricultural production of raw materials, and research on ancient ethnic medical texts. The production of knowledge or technique of informationalisation is echoed in the language used in regard to ethnomedicine research i.e., 'sorting' and 'excavating'. The knowledge produced or uncovered is not purely used for the prosperity of indigenous wisdom but also becomes highly profitable in the development and marketing of new drugs under neoliberal economic policies (Farquhar and Lai 2014). Through these policies which encourage the research of ethnic medicine practises, traditional knowledge is catalogued, and published with the help of scholars but the state is the arbiter of its value. This local knowledge connects the ethnic groups to the land and natural environments, which are simultaneously being developed into tourist resorts. Development plans for health resorts in Jinghong pair Dai medicine with Theravada Buddhism and meditation to treat both the body and mind and plays up the exotic appeal of minority culture. Ethnic elements such as religion, which are increasingly controlled within the actual community, are greenlighted by the government when serving commercial purposes.

Since 2013, green development has also taken off under the pursuit of an 'ecological civilisation', or a framework of policies and laws for environmental protection (Zheng, 2018; Yeh, 2014). Among his comments during his 2015 visit to Yunnan, Xi Jinping called for the province to pave a road toward Eco-civilisation. Ecological civilisation is Xi Jinping's plan for environmental reform which envisions a society where humans can live in a green and sustainable way within the natural environment. Economic development must mirror ecological development and not outpace it. Ecological civilisation is also depicted as part of Chinese traditional culture (*zhonghua chuantong wenhua* 中华传统文化) imbued with Taoist and Confucian philosophies (Heurtebise, 2017; Mok, 2020; Yue, 2008). It is perhaps worth noting that a key political figure involved in the early introduction of ecological civilisation was Pan Yue, who emphasised the connection between ecological civilisation and China's longstanding cultural civilisation. Yue was promoted to minister of the National Ethnic Affairs Commission in March 2023, and his sympathies lie squarely in the ongoing strengthening of *zhonghua* culture and identity (Glasserman, 2023). By pivoting focus on expanding its health industry and 'green' development, Yunnan is taking the initiative to follow national development strategies while also seeking new paths for this significant industry.

There is an increasing interest in the development of ecological parks in ethnic minorities regions which offer horseback riding, mountain biking, mountaineering, archery and other activities which combine the natural environment and physical activities with elements of ethnic and folk culture. The biopolitics of healthy bodies under the governmental initiative for a 'healthy China 2030' intersects with neoliberal rationales in the diversification of Yunnan's

tourism portfolio based on the landscapes and traditions which are tied to minority cultures alongside the image of a *zhonghua* centred ecological civilisation. Thus, natural parks can be a locus for the shaping of subjectivities where these different rationales come into contact. Similarly, James Stinton and Elisabeth Lunstrum have developed the idea of *biocultural nation making* based on neoliberal interventions at Canadian parks 'as a means of enabling an active, healthy, and economically productive national population' (2022). The creation of these ecological parks also positions the locations and connected peoples symbolically within the imagery of the territory and landscape of the Chinese nation embodying its diversity.

Simultaneously, this pivot is also allowing for the broadening of alternative discussions of ethnic minority culture and discourse. Scholars have pointed out how international discourse on the relationship between ecological protection and indigenous peoples has allowed the concept of indigeneity to make inroads in China (Zheng, 2018; Luo, 2018; Hathaway, 2013; Hathaway, 2010). Zheng argues that research such as Chinese scholars like Pei Shengji's work on holy hills in Xishuangbanna was able to utilise international discourse on indigenous conservation to penetrate the framework of Chinese *minzu* by connecting it with Dai practises of ecological preservation (Zheng, 2018). In the narrative around minorities and the natural environment in Southwest China the concept of 'original ecology' (*yuan sheng tai* 原生态) became prominent in the early 2000s as a marketing term which drew on the relationship minorities cultivate with their natural environment and landscapes. When it first appeared, original ecology 'was specifically used to promote the commodification of traditional and ethnic culture for commercial singing and dancing performances' but has since come to encompass the idea of an authentic relationship with nature (Su, 2021, p. 30). It borrows from the concept of ethnic minority cultures as being apart from the modern world but shifted the negative connotation with backwardness and primitiveness to framing ethnic minority cultures as an untainted, and a pristine connection with nature (Wu, 2014). However, Luo (2018) argues that 'original ecology' which is primarily a lens for commodification, affects ethnic groups differently, with some, such as the Buyi, struggling to differentiate or distil their identities within the marketing framework that 'original ecology' provides as they lack the implied exotic appeal.

5.3 Cultural Authenticity and Construction of Ethnic Villages

The discourse which surrounds cultural tourism is intertwined with differing definitions of authenticity coming from practitioners, consumers, local communities, and government facilitators (Su, 2021; Yang, 2011; Oakes, 1998). The perception of what makes an authentic tourist experience is subjective and is constantly under negotiation. While the government may control the overriding narrative through the selection of the ethnic elements to be

presented, the local minorities have room for agency in presenting their culture for tourists and inhabiting their own ethnic identities apart from their outward performances, and these endeavours are rewarded with tourist money reinforcing the successful versions of representation.

The Chinese government has invested considerable effort in gaining UNESCO recognition for intangible cultural heritage, and in the early 2000s, it sparked a rush of heritage projects (Blumenfeld and Silverman 2013). China has 43 items registered as UNESCO intangible cultural heritage: currently more than any other nation. In the pursuit of objective standards of authenticity, the government has promoted a system for registering intangible cultural heritage internally based the UNESCO model (Yan, 2021). As China developed this system, it became a tool for branding unique characteristics in rural areas in order to promote modernisation projects and economic development through industry (Oakes, 2013). In 2000, Yunnan was the first province to set forth its own regulations on the protection of cultural heritage before the rest of the country (Xu *et al.*, 2022). Government officials, scholars, artists and practitioners from local communities are all involved in the inventory process, identifying cultural inheritors and setting up bases and workshops for practise, exhibition, sales and training (Xu *et al.*, 2022).

In Jinghong, the prefectural seat of Xishuangbanna, a document issued on leapfrog development emphasises further expansion of its ecological and cultural tourism industries to achieve its goals and improve people's livelihoods directly (Jinghong People's Government, 2016_b). One of the suggestions the development plan put forth was to establish more 'boutique farms' modelled on the template of the Manzhang cultural farm. Originally a 500-year-old Dai village, Manzhang was piloted as a 'cultural farm' by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2014. It serves as a new model for turning intangible cultural heritage resources into cultural capital, and a new exploration in using ethnic culture for the enrichment of the whole village. It's a new style of building characteristic villages into cultural and ecological industrial parks' (Culture.gov., 2015). Like all ethnic tourist villages, Manzhang promises a glimpse of life in a traditional i.e., 'authentic' ethnic village. The comprehensive environment Dai culture and holistic 'experience' offered are reminiscent of a living museum where developers must balance 'authenticity' while playing into tourist desires. The village now serves as a cultural tourist site where a fourth of the households have been trained to cultivate and present different forms of intangible cultural heritage of the Dai people, from brocade weaving to an introduction to palm leave sutras.

To qualify for development as a cultural tourist site, the location must already embody a certain potential which can be perfected and then idealised by the consumers i.e., beautiful natural

surroundings and elements of characteristic architecture. Cultural elements are introduced, where lacking, and a portfolio of cultural heritage is tailored to meet the needs of the tourist. During the site's development period, villagers learn cultural skills and receive training from previously trained intangible cultural inheritors so that they can then exhibit their newly learned traditional skills for the tourists where 'every home is a transmission hall, every household is a processing workshop, every building is a sales point, and everyone is a person of cultural' (Culture.gov., 2015). The model of 'cultural farms' is designed to allow for the community to be better involved and able to reap the benefits of tourism: this also positions them both as agents in their own representation but still constrained by the market. Part of the allure of Man Zhang over other ethnic villages is the comprehensive array of cultural elements ready for consumption. While other village models might specialise in a distinctive trait, Man Zhang takes a buffet approach in representing Dai identity. For ethnic tourist villages and communities, there is a danger that capitalising on select traits may limit expressions of identity and culture (Yang, 2006).

The planning, constructing and development of ethnic characteristic towns was a significant issue in the data set. In order to develop local economies many different initiatives, policies and programmes are being linked together. One of these is the Chinese 'traditional characteristic village' programme which when awarded raises the national awareness of the town as well as making it eligible for financial support and funding⁸. This project, which started in 2012, has been rolled out across China and is not specifically aimed at ethnic minorities. As many as 6,819 villages have been awarded the title across China, and in Yunnan there are currently 708 villages with the title. Attributing to over 10% of the national total, the majority of Yunnan's 'traditional' villages are ethnic minority villages. To be eligible for acceptance, the village must possess beautiful natural landscape, strong architectural style, and significant folk customs which are being actively passed down. A new batch of 'traditional' villages is announced every two years. Across the province, local governments strongly advocate for further applications for the title of 'traditional characteristic villages.' But in order to meet the criteria, villages need to ensure buildings and houses follow an architectural style and select a cultural element to capitalise on. As part of a national heritage project, the criteria are slightly higher than that of the 'cultural farms' where ethnic customs can be imported by experts and cultural inheritors to be taught to the locals. This programme is mentioned across the data set, with local governments setting up their targets. The local government will identify what cultural resources are available to be developed into a 'characteristic feature'. The awarded funding for infrastructure often covers the cost of facilities to exhibit these cultural elements; whether

⁸ Official traditional township website:
<http://www.chuantongcunluo.com/index.php/Home/search/search.html>

that be a workshop for handicrafts or a public stage for song and dance performances. Infrastructure funds also go towards paving roads to make access more convenient, public facilities, including toilets, construction of rural tourist attractions, and reception service facilities. Also, 'ethnic characteristic gates' and public ornamentation are important to give the village a definite 'ethnic' feel (Yunnan Tourism and Culture, 2017). Infrastructure concerns also extends to housing. Many poor villages have a hodgepodge appearance and use different materials and building styles. In order to tend to this issue, the policies require buildings to match a style templet when new construction or repairs on dilapidated, worn-down buildings are carried out. Officials are not to let villagers build willy-nilly according to their own taste and judgement. The control of the physical structure of the home is a manifestation of the power dynamics in rural towns undergoing rebuilding and revitalisation. It re-enforces sovereignty and projects the state's power to improve the conditions and impact lives (Yeh, 2013; Choi, 2017).

5.4 Marketisation of Culture

The main path to Yunnan's strategic development is 'to promote the transformation of resource advantages into economic advantages' (Jinghong People's Government, 2019).

These documents show ethnic culture is significant to the state when it is economically valuable, for instance, in Xishuangbanna prefecture, the location, ecology and specifically the Dai ethnic group are identified and targeted as particular resources for the local government to 'monetise.' Policy documents embody the tension that ethnic tourism presents. On one hand tourism is only profitable because people want to experience and see a way of life that is different from their own. It is designed to play alongside a reductive fantasy, the minorities are not like 'me', they are exotic, stuck in the past, closer to nature etc. It is by its very nature 'othering' (Schein, 2000). Chinese tourists come to Yunnan attracted to the image of minority identities that are portrayed in mainstream culture. This drives the market and in turn, becomes the template around which minorities involved in tourism form their public expressions of identity. For the government, there is also a danger that this could lead minorities to also see themselves as fundamentally different from the Han tourist visiting from the other side of the country. Tourism and the narratives being told must be controlled and handled carefully by the government. For the state, the usefulness of ethnic tourism goes beyond economic development. It is also a useful method for the government to connect with ethnic minority groups (Shih, 2002). It can be a tool in a 'civilisation project' to reinforce state power building on the hierarchical relationship between the Han-dominated party and minorities to instil a

sense of gratitude in the local population towards the state for its development initiatives (Harrell, 1995).

The degree to which tourism benefits the local community can be uneven and is dependent on the development, planning, and structure put into place (Donaldson, 2007). The Yunnan provincial and local governments are aware of this, and in the past, Yunnan has opted to follow tourism models, which brought considerable revenue to the province but had little impact on the livelihoods of the locals (Oakes, 1998). As the poverty alleviation campaign intensive and bootstrap thinking was being encouraged among the rural populations, a greater emphasis was placed on designing tourism projects which would give room for the local population to participate and supplement their incomes. While the local and provincial governments are still courting larger partners for project development and state government funding for characteristic townships. They are seeking to engage more of the rural population in supporting industries as cultural practitioners and savvy e-commerce business owners and developers. This place primary concern on economic growth and increases neoliberal market practises while opening the local population to opportunities to create their own meaning and take charge of elements of their cultural heritage to shape their identities (Zhu, 2018).

In their research on returned migrants, Zhang noted different modes of entrepreneurial diffusion in rural poverty alleviation, which were also reflected in the data set. The first mode is 'cooperative + enterprise', which is focused on inter-relational growth, recruiting friends and family members to serve as the backbone of the business and banding together local farmers to form a cooperative. The second is 'e-commerce poverty alleviation', which relies on establishing an online platform and live video feeds to elicit sales of handicrafts or agricultural and speciality products. In these models, one individual, usually a returned migrant worker who possesses some work experience and technical ability, will spark off an industry which spreads throughout the village and surrounding area (Zhang *et al.*, 2023). Villagers who lack the experience or mindset beforehand learn through exposure and it changes local attitudes. The state hopes that this would result in a shift from what they view as a *laissez-faire* attitude of the rural poor to rely on the state to provide for them and repeated bail them out with 'blood transfusions' when they fall back into poverty. Zhang *et al.* (2023) also show that after a village is successfully engaged, they also begin to take on social services for the community, such as opening a canteen to feed the elderly and paving roads. This form of governmentality, while encouraging neoliberal management of social services and engagement with the market, is still overseen by the government, especially in the initial stages, guiding what it sees as preferred behaviour to meet the desired outcome.

As Yunnan positions itself as the gateway to South and Southeast Asia, Xishuangbanna is the first point of entry and is seeking to attract more visitors from the Greater Mekong Subregion. Tourism sites are either state-owned, joint ventures or private businesses, usually run by an investor from outside the region (Yang and Wall, 2008). Interfacing with a mix of both Han Chinese and cross-border tourists can prove to be an interesting challenge in framing ethnic cultures. Ethnic tourism often has this shifting terrain where on one hand, minorities are admired for their differences, yet simultaneously have their narrative controlled by the government. Seventy percent of the population of Jinghong are ethnic minorities. Jinghong City is further pushing cultural tourism towards international 'boutique tourism' and cultural experiences. Jinghong's policies seek to strengthen hospitality training courses in vocational education, encouraging ethnic minorities to get involved in training. As part of their economic development plans, prefectures such as Xishuangbanna aim to achieve a 10% minimum of its GDP from tourism. Policies which support more ethnic minorities to receive hospitality and leisure education degrees will boost the numbers of ethnic tour guides for better representation and engagement with the ethnic minority communities.

The city draws on the tropical rainforest, and the exotic 'charm' of the Dai to develop spa resorts and cross-border international tourism to tap into its Southeast Asia connections and style. Boutique culture, of course, requires a certain aesthetic appeal to be met by the surroundings, accommodations, food and entertainment. They aim to reflect qualities of taste and refinement. In boutique tourism culture is often reimagined or reinvigorated and 'beautified'. One document in the data set from Jinghong published in 2020⁹, was widely circulated online, even making it into English language articles¹⁰. The document was a notice which encouraged staff to wear ethnic minority clothing to work at least twice a week. The scope of the notice wasn't just for the governmental office though. The provision covered all ranges of society, as far as calling for student uniforms to contain ethnic elements and employees at star-rated hotels and tourist attractions should likewise have ethnic costumes or styled uniforms. Ethnic clothing was also to be worn on holidays, festivals and during important meetings and events. The ethnic costume in question is mostly Dai, but depending on the individual, they may also wear the clothing of other local ethnic groups. Jinghong's identity is closely tied to the image of Dai, and it's clear that they view this as one of their greatest assets. Other ethnic groups in the region don't receive the same recognition and are overshadowed.

⁹ Valid through 2023

¹⁰ See sixth tone article here <https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1006051/yunnan-city-asks-government-workers-to-wear-ethnic-clothing> at time of writing the Weibo discussion mentioned in the article had been removed. See also Global Times news article <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1197325.shtml>

This technique of state ordered performativity in institutions works to normalise and reinforce the symbolic nature of ethnic clothing and reduce its meaning to mere theatrics. When symbolic ethnicity becomes the salient mode of identification ethnic clothing becomes a token and costume while playing into the ethnic identity. Also, the frivolity of the provision lent itself to on-line derision. A small degree of resistance was displayed by joking netizens where the logic of the policy was questioned. Such minor forms of resistance may initially be permitted but eventually disparate views are brought under control.

In line with its development goals for rural tourism, local governments are encouraging ethnic minorities to open *nongjiale* or country stays. This form of rural tourism has become quite popular in China, reminiscent of a bed and breakfast with an emphasis on the food rather than the bed. Country stays are hosted by farmers and rural inhabitants; the big attraction is the large home-cooked meals, while the residence also offers accommodation and rural scenery. The country stays offer a way to develop rural tourism and are being promoted in poverty alleviation policies directed towards encouraging private entrepreneurship endeavours to increase the local farmer's income. Country-stay businesses can be opened by individuals working out of their own houses, or as a village collective. Jinghong's policy for implementing industrial poverty alleviation encourages village collectives, families with influence, enterprises, and developers to work together in joint shares as well as urban and rural individuals to pair up in business (Jinghong People's Government, 2018_c). Local characteristics are a resource in attracting more visitors, and owners are encouraged to embrace local characteristics e.g., rainforests, rivers, and Dai, when building fish farm stays, forest stays, and ethnic house stays. Ethnic country stays offer homecooked ethnic meals, which are very popular with anyone wanting to taste some authentic cuisine. The ingredients are locally sourced; in the case of fish farms, visitors can catch their own fish if they wish. They are viewed as a special treat and a fun afternoon out for both tourists and Yunnan locals.

While recent research on ethnic Nong Jiale's emphasise the questions of authenticity in the 'culture' being presented by ethnic elites and the marketing of foods to outsiders and Han tourists (Xu, 2014). Beyond this an interesting viewpoint to consider is the patronage of ethnic minority consumers. The venues may also increasingly serve as a nostalgic experience of ethnic identity expression for minorities who have become urbanised and have money to spend on leisure pursuits. During my time in Yunnan, I visited a Dai Nong Jiale with Yan Long on several occasions accompanied by family and friends. The meal was something they all had been looking forward to, saying

that they didn't often have the opportunity to eat this style of food, apart from holidays and special occasions. Some of them had lived in Kunming for years and had missed Dai cuisine. Visiting the Nong Jiale was a treat and a way for them to tap into their ethnic culture again. Over the course of the meal, they repeatedly told me how proud they were to share the experience with me. It is often said that eating together is very intimate and serves an important social function. As far as ethnic tourist attractions go, country-stays and sharing cuisine may be more edifying than most. After several years and getting back in touch with Yan Long, one of our first conversations was a video call where he sat at a low bamboo wicker table filled with food. He pointed his phone around the surroundings and asked if I remembered the place. He was back at the Nong Jiale we had visited. While I suspect the purpose of the conversation was to make me jealous, it was also an expression of his pride in his ethnic heritage. Just as Han or foreign tourists may visit to experience a taste of ethnic flavour and culture, urbanised minorities may also engage as a form of symbolic ethnicity. Ethnic tourism can also be engaged in by co-ethnics as a means of connecting with their heritage.

The branding of locations, people and things is a significant part of China's current cultural development model as an effective way of marketing and instrumentalising cultural symbols as a commodity for economic development. This commodification or 'branding' of is not unique to ethnic minorities in China, when it comes to ethnic identities, 'branding' has become a global phenomenon that arises on the capitalist neoliberal market where identities and culture are reimagined and objectified in a process of co-construction or 'ethnopreneurship' (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). Branding is about constructing an image and is by nature a marketing ploy. The Sani Yi from around the Shilin (Stone Forest) area near Kunming have had a very successful history marketing their embroidery and handicrafts (Swain, 1998; Guo,2019). The documents in the data set from Chuxiong Prefecture very heavily promoted the marketing potential of Yi embroidery. Much like how 'Sani Yi embroidery' has become a cultural brand, Dayao County in Chuxiong Prefecture hopes to build its own 'Yi embroidery brand'. To this end, they are setting up vocational training programmes aimed at Yi women to take advantage of this opening market and inject it with private capital (Dayao People's Government, 2019_a). This is once again a poverty alleviation strategy which serves a double purpose. By improving the employment skills of rural women, it is also promoting the 'protection' of this traditional skill through training. Working together with the Chuxiong Technical College and the county's

vocational education centre, these women are given further entrepreneurial support and are helped to organise a group of 'Yi village embroidery girls'. Tourist policy documents from further up north in Diqing Prefecture state that it is looking to brand Shangri-La (香格里拉) as 'the most distinctive international tourist destination in Tibetan areas across the country' (Diqing People's Government, 2016). Diqing has already had great success in the branding game by winning the coveted right to rename its capital city, Zhongdian, to Shangri-la after the mythic location in James Hilton's novel *Lost Horizon*. The policy seeks to further build on this through Tibetan ethnomedicine, accessibility and connection through Yunnan's northern tourist route to embrace its representation of Tibetan culture for the world.

As tourism increases so do related services and consumer goods industries. Construction and infrastructure projects to turn villages into 'minority characteristic villages' not only stimulate the economy through revenue brought by increased tourism but create a central point to develop further 'ethnic characteristic' industries. The marketisation of ethnic handicrafts, costumes, food products, and biopharmaceuticals from Yi, Dai and Tibetan medicine is encouraged. The aim is to better match souvenirs to fit the region while being locally produced so that the revenue directly increases in the local community. To sell well, villagers and the government need to pay attention to the tourists' tastes and market value. Documents from Chuxiong Prefecture heavily emphasise that the road to development in Dayao County is dependent on marketing elements of Yi ethnic culture allowing local residents to increase their income by 1,800 yuan a year through these side-line industries (Dayao People's Government, 2019_b). Policies which promote 'branding' and entrepreneurship are key to this increased private marketisation of ethnic identity.

'One village, one product, one township, one industry' is a nationwide policy to strengthen the local economy by specializing in high-quality products based on local conditions (Dayao Peoples' Government, 2019). While the policy is more closely tied to agricultural products (in Yunnan, examples are fresh-cut flowers, tobacco, fresh fruits and vegetables). The 'one village, one product' policy is not meant to completely dictate the local economy, but rather it is a form of marketing to create an image linking the product with a location and reputation. It is also used to promote tourism in ethnic cultural villages in Yunnan, such as Mengda village in Mengla County. The village is an ancient Dai residence and has received 10,000 yuan for infrastructure support (Mengla People's Government, 2018) and a title for branding and drawing in more tourists. Funds awarded went toward the construction of village public toilets, landscaping, public signs, tourist reception facilities, and rural entertainment support. The local governments are putting money into construction and infrastructure in the hopes of luring more tourists and encouraging locals and ethnic minorities to engage in entrepreneurialism and developing culturally branded industry and products.

The tourism industry both embraces 'traditional' ethnic culture and reimagines it to create new kinds of cultural elements like a fusion of folk cultures, reflecting Chinese *zhonghua minzu*. Traditional and new cultural representations are treated equally as cultural 'brands' to attract more consumers. While coding the documents, there were repeated mentions of the growing festival 'brands' to become nationally and internationally famous, along the lines of the successful Dai Water Splashing Festival, the Torch Festival of the Yi, or the Third Month Streets festival of the Bai. In hopes of building a portfolio of attractions, many county policy documents promote lesser-known ethnic festivals such as TEMAOKE, the Jinuo New Year Festival. These traditional festivals are paired alongside newly created festivals such as 'Yi Embroidery Festival' and the 'Confucian Culture Festival' or the 'Dayao County Walnut Festival'. These traditional ethnic festivals are increasingly run by the local governments and are losing their organic nature.

Before Yan Long's family relocated from their village in 2013, the Dai Water Splashing Festival (泼水节) was the highlight of the year. Even after moving up to Kunming, Yan Long never missed returning home for the celebration. Likewise, families from the surrounding villages, and all the family members and friends who had moved away returned to the village to participate in the festivities. The celebrations lasted several days, Yan Long says, that on the final day everyone would congregate beside the holy hills¹¹ to present offerings before spending the afternoon playing the elephant foot drum, drinking, eating, and enjoying themselves then returning to the village to complete the temple ceremony and bring the statues of the buddha out and wash them. Finally, the irrigation channels which ran through the village towards the fields were filled, and the water splashing would begin. It was a small village, so celebrations were organic and not overly organised; instead, it was dictated by tradition and habit.

Speaking with Yan Long recently about the Water Splashing Festival, it was clear his attitude had changed as he showed a marked disinterest. During one video call, he sat with a few of his old friends as they drank beer, played cards and chatted back and forth. I asked him what his plans were for the

¹¹ When several townships are in close proximity, they will have a holy hill area which is considerably larger and belongs to all the villages and is called Nong Meng, see: *Some Effects of the Dai People's Cultural Beliefs and Practises on the Plant Environment of Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province, Southwest China* (Pei, 1985)

upcoming festival and where he had been celebrating it since the old village was flooded. This sparked a discussion where all the men expressed dissatisfaction with the festival now that they had moved. Some had been down to Jinghong to celebrate, some had travelled to friends and family to towns elsewhere, but none of them was satisfied with the experiences and complained that it was too commercialised, and the crowds were too big. 'People come from Shanghai to play; I even saw a bunch of foreigners that look like you. It is really popular now; people see it on TV and want to try it out. It's a cultural thing you come and see. Probably the most famous thing about Yunnan.' 'Yeah, Jinghong Park is fun to do once, just to see what it's like, so many different people there and the girls all dressed up.' The conversation then took a detour into ribbing and jokes about looking for love with the Jinghong beauties.

But they then questioned if this wasn't just because they were older now and romanticising the past, to which one piped up that things had changed. Yes, part of it was probably age but had any of them gone to the temple or done anything but mess around and splash water? It used to be lively (renao 热闹) but could also get a little messy (luan 乱). Now it was boring with organised dancers and shows. One joked that it wasn't that bad before you would watch your nainai (grandma) dance, but now you get to watch meinu (pretty girls). But for them, the atmosphere felt almost distant now that it was programmed and controlled, and it can't make up for that original feeling. In the end, Yan Long just sighed and said that his daughter would grow up and wouldn't have the same type of experiences, and it was a shame; he would have liked her to see the old village and how things were. As the holiday became a major cultural commodity both for Dai communities and Yunnan as a whole, it has not only affected larger commercialised celebrations like the one in Jinghong, but smaller communities also look to open up their celebrations. And in welcoming others, there is also a need to open the narrative, refine the presentation and organise activities, which in effect make it broader and depersonalised.

In contrast, the celebration of Chinese New Year has become more prominent in his life. Growing up, Chinese New Year was only celebrated in a minimal way. When we first met years ago, he told me that his village didn't

do anything in particular to celebrate it. It was a Han holiday, and they weren't Han, so it meant very little to them. The most significant part for him was that as a kid, he would have time off from the boarding school in the neighbouring village and would come home for a few days. At most, they'd have a slightly bigger meal, and it was an excuse to have a few beers with friends. He had never watched the New Year's Gala, an institution of Han Chinese Culture. But after moving into a city, the first year when they had access to electricity and a working TV, the family watched the show. Over the next several years he began the tradition, which involved watching the Gala and having a large meal and maybe even setting off firecrackers with his family or friends. It was still just for fun, but he said he has begun to think of it less as a Han celebration and more as a 'peoples' celebration 'after all, we are all Chinese.'

Likewise, the prefectural city of Yuxi is creating a cultural brand by developing and adapting traditional ethnic dances and songs like the 'brown fan dance' of the Hani and the 'picking mushroom song' of the Yi. These dances can be spread through performances and training so that they become popular with people in both urban and rural areas (Yunnan Ethnic Affairs Bureau, 2019_b). The government actively encourages the creation of new ethnic songs and dances. In the loop of creation and consumption of cultural branding, 'ethnic' culture is developed under governmental tutelage according to a list of commodifiable characteristics to be taught and transmitted at the local level and then promoted to bring in new revenue and interest to the region.

The design and manufacturing of souvenirs which draw on local ethnic culture to be sold on e-commerce platforms, souvenir streets and Yunnan's comprehensive travel app GO-YUNNAN (一部手机旅云南) further pushes the marketisation of ethnic products as a strategy to increase private income. The app, which was developed in conjunction with TENCENT, gives recommendations for shops, restaurants, and hotels and even live feed cams at popular destinations. After launching, the app received mixed reviews, but it is still being promoted in Yunnan policies with local governments being called to make better use of it. There is also an English version of the app as Yunnan hopes to attract more international tourist as well. The process of moving online is both a top-down and bottom-up process. The national government began promoting online entrepreneurship in 2015 with 'Mass Entrepreneurship and Mass Innovation', encouraging the rural poor to engage online (Hou and Zhang, 2022). Yunnan is looking to better adapt the tourism industry to the requirements of a new digital age.

The 'internet + digital tourism' project brings all aspects of the industry together and makes it available online, it broadens access to local speciality products through live web broadcasts. Rural villages have been setting up free 5G Wi-Fi for the convenience of tourists but also allowing the locals to engage in e-commerce selling their handicrafts and receiving online bookings at their guesthouses and inns, opening the market for entrepreneurial e-commerce. Furthermore, e-commerce relies on live streaming video to sell products, leading some to migrate over to content creation about village and farm life. Hou and Zhang also point out that on platforms such as *kuaishou* 快手 (a short video format platform which caters to a less affluent, rural base of content creators), there is a level of 'discipline' over expressions and representation of identities, producing a governmentality that replicates the existing social inequalities and limits counter expressions (Hou and Zhang, 2022). Those who embody positive qualities such as hard work and industrial spirit may gain recognition, both from followers online or with government awards, as a model of entrepreneurship and innovation.

5.5 Government Protection of Culture through Marketing

Within the data set there were two policies which specifically highlight the issue of how government initiatives combine cultural 'rescue and protection' with its economic initiatives. In 2016 the provincial government put forward the 'Yunnan top 100 traditional cultural talents' programme as part of the initiative of constructing demonstration zones of 'national unity and progress'. The programme is specifically designed to cultivate talent and training in traditional ethnic cultural skills. It marries the rhetoric of cultural 'rescue, inheritance, and protection' with development, marketability, and business management skills. The programme is headed by the provincial Religious and Ethnic Affairs Commission, which selects and supports 100 different 'masters' of ethnic folk culture, art and handicrafts. The second programme, called 'The top 100 ethnic minority cultural works in Yunnan Province', identifies and categorises cultural elements which highlight the charm of ethnic culture. The works should be beautiful and ornamental while reflecting good ideological values that can drive the development of characteristic industries. 'Ideologically they should reflect core socialist values and spread contemporary *zhonghua* values while reflecting ethnic minority culture... to achieve the organic unity of ideology, artistry and appreciation' (Yunnan People's Government, 2015_a). Since 2016 the programme has supported 20 projects every year. The provincial Ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission allocates 10 million yuan a year or funds of 200,000 to 700,000 yuan per project. By 2020, 100 projects were funded and continue to be supported.

Together, the two projects are referred to as the 'double 100' project. The level of support a project receives depends on its market value. Top-level funding goes to subjects which have

strong potential for marketability. The second level is awarded to projects with lower marketability but good prospects for teaching and cultural inheritance. The lowest level goes to projects which have little marketability but still have value in terms of cultural importance and preservation. The economic support received is directly correspondent to the market value and these incentives shape new subjectivities as the towns select markers and traits to capitalise on under a neoliberal market mentality.

One project in the double 100 projects that received a high level of support and funding was a stage production called 'Cloud Embroidered Yi Dress' (*yun xiu yichang* 云秀彝裳). This large-scale stage performance tells the history of Yi clothing through a story of a young Yi girl. It was partially funded as a joint endeavour by the Shanghai-Yunnan cultural assistance cooperation in 2019. As part of the national poverty alleviation plan, Yunnan was paired with Shanghai in the East-West cooperation scheme, wherein projects such as this are developed and financed primarily through investments from affluent Eastern provinces and companies to promote development opportunities for Yunnan and other poor western provinces. The stage production was envisioned as a mobile marketing campaign which can tour the country and promote tourism in Chuxiong, while also marketing the handicrafts and Yi embroidery goods for sale through e-commerce platforms. At performances, a table of embroidered handbags and modern clothing is put on display so that audiences can view and buy their own piece of traditional Yi embroidery for themselves. The production was designed and managed by various governmental departments from both Chuxiong and Shanghai. The end product is an amalgamation of traditional and new cultures. The topic of Yi dress and embroidery was selected for its 'excellent trait of beauty' and then creatively worked into a form which was designed to attract the eyes of interest of consumers. Whatever expression of Yi identity it may hold is emmeshed within the government's own vision.

The government actively encourages the creation of new ethnic songs and dances. In the loop of creation and consumption of cultural branding, 'ethnic' culture is developed under governmental tutelage according to a list of commodifiable characteristics to be taught and transmitted at the local level and then promoted to bring in new revenue and interest to the region. These dances can be spread through performances and training so that they become popular with people in both urban and rural areas as well as becoming well known 'brands' across the country (Yunnan Ethnic Affairs Bureau, 2019). The data set indicates that the Yunnan government is primarily concerned with the areas of ethnic culture which can impact the development of its economy. Governmental concern towards both intangible and material culture is highly intertwined with industry and developmental goals. The documents in the data set also reflected this fact. Cultural protection was highly coded, and language of 'excavation,

sorting, and organising' for the rescue, inheritance and protection of ethnic culture is only secondary to the economic advantages that preserving and promoting ethnic culture offers.

As China moves into its 'New Era', there is concern that historical and traditional elements of culture may disappear with the changing times. The state government has made efforts to embrace traditional handicrafts and folk culture through production, preservation, archiving and inheritance. This is often framed under preserving *zhonghua* culture and history. The emphasis on handicrafts is not particular to ethnic minorities. Many rural communities across China are producing local traditional handicrafts as part of their poverty alleviation schemes. Yet the issue of marketing local intangible folk culture is not completely interchangeable with marketing intangible ethnic culture. A phrase often repeated by government officials is that as China moves forward, it must separate the wheat from the chaff. The 'excellent' cultural elements must be preserved, and those which are ill-aligned to the socialist ideology and *zhonghua* identity must be left behind and forgotten. The state decides what is wheat and what is chaff. They will prune the elements they don't like and promote the ones which serve a purpose in their construction of identity. The documents in the data set show that the value of traditional 'excellent' culture is that which can be sold on the marketplace.

5.6 Conclusion

Since 2016, the rural tourism policy in Yunnan has made a significant impact on poverty alleviation efforts. More than 1,000 characteristic tourism villages have been established, and the government has put 150 billion yuan towards infrastructure and other cultural tourism projects. (Yunnan Travel and Culture, 2020). Over 800,000 people in rural villages across Yunnan have become involved in the tourism industry; that is 12.3% of people that the government has claimed to have successfully 'lifted out of poverty' in Yunnan. This includes cultural and tourism training for more than 250,000 people.

Poverty alleviation and tourism policies go hand in hand in Yunnan, as many of the poorest areas are also in regions of impressive natural beauty and concentrated minority populations. Capitalising on these elements, which capture the tourist imagination, has been Yunnan's approach for years. But as the poverty alleviation efforts intensified around 2016, tourism became more integrated with people's everyday lives through entrepreneurship, marketing and production. The funding that small ethnic villages receive for infrastructure based on the nexus of poverty alleviation and tourism allows them to finally get paved roads, streetlights, public toilets, or proper sewage systems and these necessities and improvements to their quality of life were obtained through marketing their identities. It is one thing for the

government to see this in a very pragmatic way of using resources to their advantage, but to view people and their culture in this way can also be a path for hollowing out those identities through the homogenising power of the market.

Tourism in Yunnan will always be connected to ethnic minorities to some extent. Tourism policies embed ethnic minorities in ecology, health, business and an array of other developing tourism directions. The strategy is to combine as many unique or 'characteristic' features together and build up areas that can meet the needs and interests of the tourists. 'The production of tourism products, places and imagery is a powerful mechanism through which to relay ideology and act as a conduit of power' (Lee and Abrahams, 2018, p. 187). During their stay, cultural tourists encounter ethnic minorities through cultural elements, such as food, clothing, festivals, handicrafts, boutique experiences, music and architecture, things which can be mined and commodified. The funding and support for cultural preservation of ethnic traditional culture is primarily tied to efforts to bolster tourism and conducted through the lens of 'protecting' ethnic culture as part of *zhonghua minzu* heritage. By highlighting the overarching *zhonghua* culture, it serves a dual purpose of tethering the local minority groups back to China and the CCP. A reminder that they are *zhonghua minzu* and are bound together with the other *minzu* groups 'like pomegranate seeds', as Xi likes to put it.

This follows my initial expectations as stated in Chapter 1, that Yunnan continues to embrace its minority cultures even in light of a growing emphasis on *zhonghua* identity. This chapter focused on neoliberal techniques of marketisation which tied into tourist project control, site building management and the orchestration and categorisation of cultural management. The primacy of the market and economic value of ethnic minority culture was at the forefront of the data. The neoliberal rational is a significant issue in how Yunnan manages its minority population and shapes their subjectivities as ethnic culture is broken down into identifiable resources which are then engaged with in tandem with the consumer. This interaction also echoes a form of ethnic relations where cultural characteristics become symbolic and ready to be consumed as a product while simultaneously being co-opted and fused into *zhonghua* culture. In analysing the data, the idea of fusing ethnic cultures together, which was both invertedly hinted at and in some cases stated plainly, was surprising. It seems to me that any success exhibited in fusing traditions together only goes so far as creating a 'Yunnan' identity rather than a *zhonghua* one. The depiction of ethnic diversity and unity can still feel local and therefore relatable to the population, especially if it reflects groups that have a presence within Yunnan. But perhaps such images will ring less true in other regions.

Chapter 6 Ethnic Unity and Building a Strong Chinese National Consciousness

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5, which highlighted ethnic culture, is subsumed in a framework of Chinese governmentality with particular emphasis on economic development through the neoliberal marketisation of ethnic identity and the techniques utilised by the government to encourage individuals to capitalise on their personal cultural resources, while still maintaining a narrative of gratitude for party support and its care for ethnic, cultural heritage. In this chapter, the focus is on the neo-socialist style of governmentality, which seeks to shape the subjectivities of the Chinese people to embody the values of ethnic work in the 'New Era' through technocratic techniques and social engineering. Jefferies and Sigley (2009) note that Chinese governmentality does not sit in line in-line with traditional views of neoliberalism, and it is 'both authoritarian in a familiar political and technocratic sense and yet also seeks to govern certain subjects through their own autonomy' (Jefferies and Sigley, 2009, p. 9).

While a neoliberal rationale is based on the market economy and self-fulfillment, a Chinese neo-socialist governmentality encompasses in addition two other rationales i.e.: a socialist rationale based on loyalty to the party, and a Chinese rationale based on a nationalistic ideology which desires to place China at the top of the world's stage, showcasing its glorious history and culture (Palmer and Winiger, 2019). Each rationale impacts the population's subjectivities accordingly. In this chapter we will explore how the socialist and Chinese rationales seek to shape subjectivities sometimes in tandem as the party is often given legitimacy through connections to the preservation of the ancient tradition of Chinese culture.

As discussed in the third chapter, 'Background on Chinese Ethnic Theory', the current trend in Chinese ethnic policy can be broadly summarised as a shift toward unity and integration and away from diversity and the scaffolding of ethnic rights. China's ethnic policy has developed alongside political discourse and state-sanctioned ethnic theory based on Marxist thought. A major concern of the Chinese Communist Party since its beginnings has been ethnic harmony and equality. The relationship between the Han and minorities, which started as a central theme in the construction of the national narrative, has moved to an emphasis on the practicalities of interethnic unity via 'policy practise and social rules' (Sui *et al.*, 2020, p. 2). As China moves forward in its 'New Era,' the political goalpost has moved and adjusted to suit the new situation and build a strong sense of nationalism. Recent efforts in the 'Initiative

Promoting Interethnic Unity and Common Progress' as put forth by Xi Jinping at the 18th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party held in October 2019, state that a common Chinese national identity is the foundation of the Chinese Nation, and as such, it is imperative that at all levels of government from the very top down to bottom level village offices work to cultivate a sense of Chinese national/*zhonghua minzu* identity in the hearts of the people. The initiative couples the goal of ethnic cohesion with economic and social development, helped along by the construction of demonstration zones and units.

As a centrally published dictate, the 'initiative' calls for efforts to be made from the national to local levels and across all sectors of society. Yunnan's 13th 5-year plan (2016-2020) included the initiative as one of five goals for the province (Li, 2019). By 2035 the whole of Yunnan will serve as a national demonstration area. This will be done through policies and funding which target both poverty-stricken and border areas, educating the public on ethnic unity, creating platforms for cultural and interactional opportunities, as well as promoting leapfrog development to address the issues of poverty and ethnic unity together (Li, 2019). The 'three jiaos' (inter-ethnic communication, mingling and interaction) in particular are to be emphasised, along with ethnic unity propaganda and education, and strengthening the recognition of the five identifications (Motherland, *zhonghua minzu*, *zhonghua* culture, the Party and socialism with Chinese characteristics) for citizens of all ethnicities (Yunnan Ethnic Affairs Bureau, 2020 and 2019_b).

In this chapter, we will be discussing how this policy initiative has appeared in our data set. As mentioned before, the policy documents we are specifically looking at reference ethnic minorities, so this is not a comprehensive look at the 'initiative of ethnic unity and common progress' itself, but how ethnic unity is forming specifically within ethnic minority-related documents and the degree to which national-level discourse is affecting the local policy. In the previous chapter, we discussed how ethnic minority culture and identity is viewed as a resource to bolster the provincial and local economy. In this chapter, we will explore how some of these social and economic development efforts are based in demonstration zones, which figure heavily in Yunnan's provincial ethnic work approach urged on explicitly by Xi Jinping's remarks during his visits to Yunnan. After outlining the scope of the 'initiative of ethnic unity and common progress' in demonstration zones and activities, we will discuss *zhonghua minzu* identity and the ideological core, which is shaping a new cultural attitude.

6.2 The Initiative on Ethnic Unity and Progress

The 'initiative on promoting inter-ethnic unity and common progress' is a policy direction which emphasises social and economic development alongside integration, unity and protecting 'the

best interests of the country (Sui *et al.*, 2020). During the reform and opening up period developing economic equality (no ethnic group left behind) was the main concern of inter-ethnic unity. As the east coast's economy was taking off, the western mountainous regions where ethnic minority populations were concentrated lagged behind. When the initiative appeared in 2009 under Hu Jintao, the primary concern was for the social and economic development of ethnic minority groups, in order that the nation as a whole transform into a 'moderately well-off society in an all-around way' for the 'common prosperity and development of all ethnic groups'. In May 2011, the State Council published 'Building Yunnan into a Demonstration Area for Ethnic Unity and Progress, and Frontier Prosperity and Stability.' The initiative was strengthened in 2014 at the fourth central conference on ethnic work by Xi Jinping when he emphasised its importance and stressed that interethnic unity was at the core of all ethnic work (Sui *et al.*, 2020). It has been under Xi Jinping that the initiative has really taken shape and has grown along with 'Xi Jinping Thought'; it now encompasses more ideology. It is a tool of integration, and its main political/ideological value is building up a Chinese *zhonghua* identity. It is described as the 'accumulation of the Sinicisation of Marxist ethnic theory for the solidarity of all ethnic groups' (Sui *et al.*, 2020, p. 2). Policies and practises that fall under this initiative are influenced by both the economic and neoliberal rationale of Hu Jintao's governance and the neo-socialist and nationalistic rationales at play under Xi. This demonstrates how neoliberal and neo-socialist governmentalities can form a complex system of practises together resulting in an assimilationist agenda. In order to promote the initiative, all levels of government and cadre must work to reach the masses and to inoculate the heart and minds of the people. Xi underscored that ethnic unity work is to permeate the community at every level. Within documents on the initiative, the phrase 'nine entrances' refers to the objective that ethnic unity knowledge and acceptance present in all sectors of society entering into institutions, temples, communities, schools, businesses, villages and towns, military and police stations, hospitals, and families (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2018). The initiative on ethnic unity and progress seeks to strengthen identification with the nation in a holistic way by covering policy, ideology, culture, material, social and legal targets (Yunnan Ethnic Affairs Bureau, 2020). The initiative is conducted through a neo-socialist governmentality which will:

extensively mobilize and organize 'external system' forces, such as civil society organizations, individual and private enterprises, grassroots mass self-government organizations, non-governmental volunteer teams, religious people from all walks of life to be involved in ethnic work. Build a large pattern of socialization of ethnic work in the 'New Era'. Everyone will work together to win the hearts of the people in the work of ethnic unity. By working together to communicate, cultivate, and harmonize ethnic

sentiments the consciousness of the community of *zhonghua minzu* is forged by society (JRMZ, 2022).

Shaping the population's subjectivity and creating conceptual space for *zhonghua minzu* is accomplished through a network of institutions and private groups which could be thought of as neoliberal in that it is positioned as coming from social powers and private enterprises, but this is still functioning under a neo-socialist rationality of government intervention driven by a grand image of socialist future and not economic incentives.

The 'Opinions on Comprehensively Carrying out the Work of Promoting Inter-ethnic Unity and Common Progress' published by the central government, states that the initiative should be part of the cadre responsibility system and urges local governments to include it in their cadre assessments (Li, 2019). This signals that the central government is taking the policy seriously. The local governments of Yunnan have been putting out opinion papers and implementation plans on the initiative since 2015. Honghe (an autonomous prefecture) stated in their implementation plan that they would develop their leadership responsibility, assessment, positive incentives and cooperation to be included in the initiative on ethnic unity and common progress (Yunnan Ethnic Affairs Bureau, 2020). In Xishuangbanna, the importance of national, ethnic unity work is marked in the 'Work Guide for Demonstration Units of National Unity and Common Progress' by cadre incentivisation, inspection, and daily supervision. The 'ethnic unity and common progress' initiative seeks to address ideological/legal, cultural/social, and material/economic issues and is behind a vast range of projects and ideology drives from demonstration zones, building relocation towns, orchestrating ethnic holiday activities, ethnic policy education drives, to efforts in forging a common Chinese identity. The initiative is broad enough that it could cover veto targets (no ethnic or religious conflicts), hard targets (construction of relocation villages and ethnic schools or the development of ethnic enterprises for poverty alleviation) and soft targets (instilling values through education and publishing material). Based on the data set, local governments are passing policy documents connected to ethnic unity and progress which meet the criteria of hard and soft targets for cadre assessment¹².

Yunnan's ethnic work has been lauded for its success in cultivating harmonious ethnic relations while addressing economic development. The 'Yunnan phenomenon' (云南现象) has been used to describe Yunnan's strategy, led by the government to take advantage of its cultural and ethnic heritage as a resource in integrating with the national development goals (China Daily, 2010). This is paired with what is referred to as 'Yunnan's experience' (云南经验) which forms a narrative of Yunnan's successful ethnic work in establishing harmonious

¹² See Chapter 3.3 for a description of the tiao/kuai system and cadre assessment.

relations and national unity. The successful performance of the province has been attributed to closely following and correctly implementing the party's theories and policies for ethnic work. Yunnan takes considerable pride in its positive track record, and the provincial government is keen to keep-up the standard. While visiting Yunnan, Xi Jinping declared, 'The most valuable wealth of Yunnan is its harmonious ethnic relations and the outstanding achievements of its ethnic work' (Xi, 2015). The explicit support of Xi Jinping, the state council and the central party committee in Yunnan's ethnic work for following the 'correct path' of implementing the CCP's ethnic theory and national policies has led Yunnan to become the national model of ethnic unity and progress.

While this is a national initiative, it carries considerable weight in Yunnan due to the province's demographics. The phrase 'in Yunnan', it is not enough to seek the overall situation without seeking ethnic work' is often used in discussions on Yunnan ethnic policy; the idea being that due to the dispersed ethnic groups and widespread multi-ethnic communities, practically every policy carried out will affect ethnic minorities and thus it becomes a part of ethnic work (everything that involves ethnic minorities becomes an issue of ethnic policy and ethnic relations). From the data set we can see that references to ethnic unity and demonstration zones are well represented throughout the policy papers. Out of the 102 documents in the data set, 51 of them mention ethnic unity, accounting for over 629 references, while ethnic unity demonstration zones are mentioned in 34 of the documents - a total of 142 times. The data set has reflected how diverse the policy and government actions under ethnic unity and progress are. The policies and directives which fall under the initiative can be broken down into five categories: quality of life, economic development, ecology, ethnic culture, and ideology. The infrastructure conditions in remote ethnic minority regions are far below national standards. Many of the policy papers in the data set outline construction projects and address issues such as sewage management, separating livestock from the villagers' living quarters and building everything from roads to basketball courts. Other issues regarding the quality of life are measures for advancing public services, such as social security, legal aid and hospital care. Economic development has long been one of Yunnan's greatest challenges, and poverty alleviation efforts have been strongly tied to ethnic unity and progress work. Likewise, as Yunnan positions itself as a hub for connections to Southeast Asia, it seeks to build up the industries and enterprises in the border regions by funding industrial parks. In terms of ecology, Yunnan is also building its environmental policies by establishing nature reserves, reforestation of farmlands, managing water reservoirs and pollution control. Many policies in the data set refer to projects for preserving and inheriting ethnic culture, such as the Yi embroidery schools mentioned in the previous chapter. However, beyond the hard target

development goals, the ideological element of the initiative is very pronounced. There is no ethnic unity and progress initiative without ethnic theory, propaganda and education.

6.3 The Construction of Demonstration Zones

Demonstration zones play a significant role in the 'initiative of interethnic unity and common progress' Demonstration units are meant to be easily replicable models which are spread through urban and rural settings in minority and mixed areas. They may include government departments, businesses, schools, railroads, temples, scenic spots and all manner of organisations (Sui *et al.*, 2020). They can be anything from communities, which highlight integration efforts, to display windows and billboards, which promote ethnic policy propaganda. Demonstration zones often serve as a pilot programme; a way for officials to experiment with policy ideas before rolling them out more widely.

At the national level, the construction and management of demonstration zones were dictated in 2012. The provinces quickly followed suit and published their own formulations of construction and management guidelines for demonstration zones. The efforts to build demonstration zones have been most pronounced in Yunnan. The work has been supported by national ministries to formulate 14 policy measures covering nine different aspects of the construction (JRMZ, 2022). Recently, the Yunnan Provincial Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee issued the 'Three-year Action Plan for Yunnan Provincial National Unity and Progress 'Ten Counties, One Hundred Towns, One Thousand Villages and Ten Thousand Households' Demonstration and Leading Construction Project (2022-2024).' This is the latest round of the 'ten thousand' project, which outlines the provincial goals for the building and construction of ethnic unity demonstration zones within a three-year time period. As the lengthy name indicates, across the province 14 national unity and progress demonstration counties are to be established, 129 demonstration townships, and 1,200 demonstration villages and communities, and 10,000 demonstration households. The demonstration counties receive a total of 15 million yuan (five million annually for three years) to put towards infrastructure needs as well as cultural venues where ethnic policy education can be carried out. The ethnic characteristic of villages mentioned in the previous chapter are often part of the 'ten thousand' projects. Beyond the provincial government publishing construction guidelines for demonstration zones, many of the prefectures have also published their own versions, such as Xishuangbanna's '15885 Demonstration Project' (1 demonstration City, 5 demonstration townships, 80 demonstration villages, 881 demonstration households, and 5 demonstration communities) (Jinghong People's Government, 2016a).

There are criteria at each level of the demonstration zones which must be met. For example, demonstration communities should establish Chinese cultural symbols and images, build an inter-embedded social structure and community environment, strengthen the service management system for the ethnic minority floating population, and carry out activities themed on ethnic unity and progress. While the criteria for demonstration households are that they should take the lead in participating in rural revitalisation, the development of characteristic industries¹³, promoting national unity, advocating civilized life, consciously abiding by laws and regulations, and playing a leading role in the demonstration area.

As mentioned previously, policies often piggyback on top of each other. In Yunnan, the policy strategy pairs the construction of demonstration zones with rural revitalisation efforts. The documents note that villages have old houses without waterproofing and structurally unfit to withstand natural disasters, poor communication systems, lack of public activity venues and poor sanitation. By connecting ethnic unity with rural revitalisation, local governments can invest in infrastructure. A village or township could receive 10 to 5 million yuan in funding. It allows villages and communities to demolish dilapidated houses and even build poverty relocation villages. The project gives funding for community improvements, such as paving roads, landscaping and basic infrastructure such as building new drinking water reservoirs, automatic public toilets, lit basketball courts, ethnic culture squares and LED solar streetlamps. Not all the changes are universally welcomed, though. Some changes made for sanitation when towns get refitted are less practical. In order to separate the living environments of the livestock and the villagers, the renovated villages relocate pigpens and other livestock to designated locations on the outskirts of the villages. While this may improve sanitation, it is difficult for villagers to keep and raise their livestock, and this can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction. And while the communities receive a significant amount of funding from both the provincial and prefectural government, the village committee may still be responsible for paying part of the cost, which will come out of the villagers' pockets (Merkle, 2003; Gomersall, 2018).

Many of the updates were not made solely with local well-being in mind, such as the installation of automatic toilets and plumbing works. Toilets appear both in policy documents on the 'toilet revolution', which was a nationwide campaign started in 2015, and featured in lists of updates needed for tourist spots. In rural locations sanitation is primarily limited to pit toilets. These improvements are efforts to raise the *suzhi* of the location and to meet the needs of the tourists. Expanding public services serves a double purpose of raising the quality of life for locals, and

¹³ Entrepreneurial ethnic industries. In the previous chapter we mentioned how leading households in Xishuangbanna were being called to get involved in establishing nongjiale and other boutique homestay experiences.

playing into neoliberal concerns of consumer interest forming a subjectivity where modernisation and development are part of the civilising nature of inclusion. While toilets are just one aspect of the improvements being made it also shows how seemingly unrelated national policies become intertwined on the ground and can shape subjectivities.

6.4 Relocation and Demonstration Communities

For Yunnan, poverty alleviation has been the province's most urgent issue. Frequently the obstacles faced by a village, such as environmental (habitual landslides) or health related (malaria), are so great that it is deemed necessary to relocate the entire village. Resettlements may also occur for other reasons, for example, major construction and infrastructural projects, such as the numerous hydroelectric dam projects. When it comes to relocation, the government places ethnic unity as a key consideration in designing community plans. These new communities are then often branded as demonstration areas. A successful community must include economic and educational opportunities, infrastructure and services, and also meet the cultural and spiritual needs of community members. The literature on resettlement, both in China and abroad, shows that the design and implementation of relocation programmes for displaced villagers create new subjectivities and evolving dynamics of power between the state and local communities (Habich-Sobigalla and Rousseau, 2020; Gomersall, 2021; Lestrelin, 2011; Hammond, 2011). In a study on two Yi villages in Sichuan, Yue Du uncovers the local resistance, which appears in the form of 'working the government', allowing villagers to profit from the system of governmentality while frustrating the state's aims and retaining their original Yi clan identities (Du, 2022). Du (2022) describes these tactics of contestation as a method which goes beyond tactics of passive resistance yet does not engage with direct shows of defiance either. Instead, it is an opportunistic approach to outwardly meet the expectations of the state whilst playing the game to one's own advantage, and in this way, the villagers are engaging in counter-conduct within the framework of governmentality. 'As resettlement programmes typically involve compensation, subsidies, infrastructure improvement and other material benefits, local households take advantage of these benefits while denying the original goals of state projects' (Du, 2022, p. 155).

When I first met Yan Long his village was in the early phase of discussion on relocation. Over the next eight years, he often mentioned tension among the villagers and even fights and disputes breaking out during village meetings. His family was frustrated with the compensation plans,

but by 2013 the last of the remaining families had left the village. The majority of villagers were relocated to four different towns, and only a few took their compensation money and moved off elsewhere early on in the process. Yan Long's family separated, moving into three different towns. The relocation site that Yan Long's parents moved to is an ethnic unity demonstration district in a larger town located near the border with Myanmar.

The new home is a significant improvement from the previous living conditions. The old home was a mud brick four-room house with a thatched roof. They now had a constructed house of cement and glazed tile. It was built in a 'modern' hybrid 'Dai' style with little blue peacocks at the corners of the roof. The parent's house in the new village has 10 rooms, plenty of room to give Yan Long the option of moving back in and starting a family. However, most importantly, they now had indoor plumbing, working electricity and bathrooms. However, regardless of these improvements to the material quality of life, there were still feelings of frustration under the surface.

When I asked about his parents soon after we were in contact again, he said that they were still struggling to settle in. The parents felt they were under-compensated, and the subsidies they received did not cover the cost of the move. Since moving, they had not been doing well enough to pay the loans which they had taken to cover the cost of the house. The land was more expensive in their new location, and the quality was poor as well. Yan Long's parents did not have much to begin with, and now they had to make do with even less. To make matters worse, the fields and the livestock were located a considerable distance from the house, and his father was no longer in the best health. It had become difficult for him to get the work he needed done. His parents had no other life or work experience apart from farming and neither could read or write. Moving into the urban periphery, they had very few options open to them. This caused considerable stress and worry about how they would be unable to care for themselves.

When moving into urban areas many individuals may find themselves struggling to adapt for a variety of reasons. They may be subjected to further techniques of governance and management such as appointed jobs where the individual has little room to refuse and is likely to be

subjected to criticism and scolding if they are not shown to be willing subjects. This is a neo-socialist technique where those who cannot find work are targeted after they fail to meet the neoliberal expectations of being gainfully employed and thus able to care for themselves without reliance on the state. Individuals may stubbornly resist, or they may passively go along yet not fully engage with their new positions until they have the chance to leave or are let go due to poor performance.

Eventually, work outside the fields was arranged for Yan Long's Mother. However, none of the jobs have been steady; she has bounced between a few kitchen jobs, working in a rice noodle restaurant and now currently at the school canteen. As she only spoke the local language and Lancang dialect, she had been 'encouraged' to attend evening classes to improve her Mandarin. She had always been shy communicating with me and could only manage a sentence or two in Mandarin. However, one day Yan Long video called me so that I could say hello to his mother while she was in the city visiting him. We had a brief conversation, and she tried to piece together a few questions with the help of Yan Long about how I had been doing. By the end, she laughed it off, saying she was old and that was the best she could before reverting to Lancang dialect leaving Yan Long to fill in the gaps in our communication.

Nujiang, in the north-western reaches of the province (bordering Burma and Tibet), is one of the worst-hit areas for poverty. There have been 96,000 relocated households, all to urban resettlements. Many of these households have been unsuccessfully relocated before. Each settlement has at least 4 ethnic groups, so the promotion of the 'three jiaos' at demonstration points within the community is emphasised to ensure that all citizens integrate into their new urban homes (Yun, 2019). To ensure a harmonious ethnic atmosphere before the newcomers settle into an already established town, officials take into consideration the combination of groups and their interactions, including the villager's willingness to have newcomers move into the area. While at another site near Xinping, Gasa (central Yunnan), between the years 2013 and 2018, 3,152 households from 46 villages, consisting of 11 ethnic groups were relocated in the area. The success of these new communities not only relies on the occupants staying above the poverty line but also on their ability to adapt and integrate into their new communities. Eleven different training courses and social services are offered to the newly settled community, including skills for construction work and catering services. Those who complete the training courses are sent to work in nearby satellite factories, as mentioned in

Chapter 3, as part of the poverty alleviation rural labour programme. Attention has also been paid to transmitting ethnic culture in schools. The Yi flower drum dance is taught as a class exercise at three schools, while nine schools have Yi language classes, and five schools are teaching the Dai language (Han, 2019)

In 2015 the Wanhua Residential District in Dali (in north-west Yunnan), an ethnic unity demonstration site, had 17,117 permanent residents (6,729 or 39.31% are minorities) and a floating population of 769 people. Together there are 18 ethnic groups residing in the district, including the Bai, Yi, Hui, Naxi, and Tibetans. Part of the funding for ethnic unity demonstration zones goes towards infrastructure and features of designed space which reinforce the discourse of state-led development, gratitude, *zhonghua* identity and unity. This residential district features a culture exhibition room, reading room and dispute room. These locations serve as distribution points to broadcast information on ethnic laws, policies and the ideology of ethnic unity. Other features include minority service windows and a hotline for minority rights protection. (Yunnan Urban Minority Work, 2020; Yu and Song, 2015). The community is divided into 12 ethnic contact services grids with a team branch secretary and a resident group leader for each. The government depicts the growing use of the ethnical framed grid and management systems in sites like these as key in ensuring stability and providing pastoral care to meet minority needs. However, in reality, it allows the party to penetrate the community and keep close supervision on the minority and religious population. The grid-based management also serves to help promote the 'harmonious temples and churches' (Jinghong People's Government, 2016_b), keeping track of the activities of religious institutes and their members. The resident group leader of the grid serves as liaison and informant, and meetings are held to resolve any conflicts when they arise. The community regularly holds education and training activities as well as music and performance activities which promote ethnic unity. Social and medical services are offered to minorities in the community through the hospital affiliated with Dali University, which provides free medical consultations to minorities in need and even reduces or waives medical fees for some. The community also has demonstration activities which promote attitudes and actions in line with the initiative on ethnic unity and progress through its four-model system for workplaces, courtyards, families, and individuals. As of 2015, 22 model work units, model courtyards and model families and 10 model individuals have been awarded. (Yu and Song, 2015).

Model locations and people are a common form of governmentality used by the CCP. They set a standard for the population of ideal participation, actions, and beliefs. The best-known model was the soldier Lei Feng who was a central figure in a CCP propaganda campaign in the 1960s. The party continues to award people and institutions for categories such as model

citizens, entrepreneurs, innovators, ethnic minorities etc... As part of the initiative for ethnic unity and progress, the province has been encouraging local governments to place 'increased effort on the publicity and cultivation of advanced model ethnic minorities' (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2015). These are minorities who are actively engaged with the communities and working to build a better socialist society. They serve as ideological and behavioural examples for people to use as models (Lin and Zhao, 2020). Locations and institutions serve as design models that can be replicated, and as mentioned in Chapter 5, officials often come to tour and observe model locations and institutions. People, on the other hand, should be self-regulating, and role models serve to exemplify the behaviour which the party wishes to see, as it allows for smoother governance and control.

Within these brief descriptions of demonstration districts, we can see the framework of governmentality being enacted. Villagers are made to reposition themselves within the resettlement communities, changing from rural to urban and traditional lifestyles to market-oriented ones (Yeh, 2013). As a result, both economic and social identities are transformed. They are encouraged to embrace these new subjectivities themselves and replicate role model behaviour, all under the gaze of state security. The original community networks are divided and broken apart as villagers readjust to new locations, which are designed to introduce a new sense of identity. The discourse of development, modernity and ethnic unity, which reflect the values of China in the 'New Era' is expressed physically in the design of the town's layout and infrastructure (Gomersall, 2017). The grid management system further renders villagers legible to the gaze of the state. New village designs utilise tools of urban management and regulation to control diversity and embed it within the discourse of 'unity in diversity' with an emphasis on unity rather than simply embracing and promoting ethnic diversity in and of itself.

6.5 Events and Entertainment

Mass participation is seen as an integral aspect of ethnic work (Sui *et al.*, 2020). It is no surprise then that since 2014 the government's emphasis on national unity has targeted the local level with 'activities which are popular with the masses.' Events such as minority festivals are included in ethnic unity work by making their events where everyone can participate while promoting ethnic theory and ideology. This is often done hand in hand with tourism but also just within local communities, opening up more opportunities to exchange culture. Ethnic festivals are used to popularise 'national policies and national knowledge, and encourage people of all ethnic groups to interact, exchange and blend, to build and share a beautiful home... We will regularly hold ethnic minority traditional sports games, literary and artistic performances of ethnic and folk songs and dances so that ethnic culture can become a

lubricant, catalyst and adhesive to promote ethnic unity' (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2015). When experiences are shared, it gives ownership to all who participate in it, softening ethnic distinction and embracing a unified identity. As a neo-socialist technique of discursive control, traditional ethnic festivals are also used as a vehicle for ethnic unity education. Using traditional ethnic festivals as a vehicle for ethnic unity education is a practical method of discursive control. For each minority group, the state has its own approved narrative for its history, including its relationship with China and the CCP. The presence of cadre and the promotion of ethnic unity education at these activities ensures that the 'correct' understanding is being expressed and passed on.

However, events are not the only way to get the masses involved and engaged. Entertainment is also an important element in convincing citizens of the importance of a unified identity. The government has called for greater attention to be paid to producing quality entertainment which addresses ethnic unity in all types of media, from TV and movies to books and music (Sui *et al.*, 2020). In recent years CCTV (China Central Television) and local/provincial television broadcasting stations have produced a number of television shows and productions, which concern ethnic minorities, to bring stories about them to the greater population. Ranging from dramas and documentaries to casual entertainment, these shows follow storylines which cover the prominent issues surrounding minorities, especially drawing on the themes of ethnic work, which have been emphasised since the 18th National Congress (The Paper, 2022).

One example of how this broad initiative, which is being realised in the entertainment front, is the new CCTV programme *Happiness On-top of Happiness* (喜上加喜) which is a community-based dating programme released in 2020. Each episode is recorded in different locations across China and features musical and dance performances, along with interaction with the audience made up of members of the local rural community. The show promotes stories of poverty alleviation and entrepreneurship. It celebrates ethnic unity and the common goal of progress. The show embodies the economic and social development aspects, which are often the practical vehicles for promoting ethnic unity. Four of the six episodes were filmed in various areas in Yunnan, and many of the dating contestants are themselves from ethnic minorities, dressed in their national costumes, and they usually showcase their identity through a short cultural performance.

All One Family (都是一家人), released in late 2019, is a light drama set in the fictional city of Yunhai -the show centres on a newly appointed director of the city's Ethnic and Religious Affairs Work Bureau. Along with the main protagonist, the audience learns about the nature of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, what it is responsible for and why it is such important

work, vital to the nation. The storyline also covers policies like ethnic minority migrant education and floating population rights. The show sets the narrative that the government wishes to ingrain into the public, inoculating the audience to hold proper views of the governmental agency and its work, as well as the proper relationship between ethnic groups and the nation.

The Manzhang cultural farm, which was mentioned in the previous chapter, also appeared in a 2019 CCTV drama called '*Let Me Understand Your Language*' (让我听懂你的语言). The story centres around a cross-ethnic romance of a young couple. The man is a 'fuerdai' (rich second-generation youth) from Shanghai, and the woman is a Dai tour guide who works at an ethnic park. It follows his trials both in the relationship and his business involvement, developing a fictionalised version of Manzhang village for tourism. The drama focuses on ecology and the Dais' relationship with nature and also touches on the tensions between the Dai community and the local tourism industry, reflecting many of the issues discussed in the last chapter.

These television productions all serve to buttress the image of the *zhonghua* community, where all ethnic groups are living and working together for development and are backed by the tireless and selfless work of the party. Ethnic groups are not depicted in isolation but as part of the larger *zhonghua minzu* family. They also cover ethnic groups across the nation, such as *The Legend of Silk* (丝绸之路传奇), which takes place in Xinjiang and depicts the Belt and Road Initiative, *The Northern Land* (北方大地) from Inner Mongolia, covering industrial development, *Aba- All one Family* (阿坝, 一家人) which is placed in the Aba (Ngawa) Tibetan and Qiang autonomous prefecture in Sichuan and is about a Tibetan-Han family and poverty alleviation, to *My Home Under Changbai Mountain* (长白山下我的家) from Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture which follows a family over three generations and social development (The paper, 2022).

There is limited room for creativity or authentic representations of ethnic minorities in these dramas as national TV must align with party ideology and the political propaganda. The shows encapsulate how the party wishes ethnic work and issues to be viewed and covers everything from ecological protection, relocating and integrating into cities, poverty alleviation, tourism, inter-ethnic relationships and modernisation. The inclusion of minority stories is part of the effort to create and build an image of *zhonghua minzu* in the collective consciousness. Propaganda is made to form and direct public opinion and these dramas present the 'opportunity to propagandise in the guise of entertainment' (Wang, 2019, p. 22). When it comes to ethnic culture, the government states that the wheat must be separated from the

chaff. The 'excellent' cultural elements are kept, while the less desirable ones are discarded and forgotten. The nature of Chinese television does not allow for authentic depictions of real people, thoughts, beliefs, or emotions. It is far from reality. The depictions of ethnic minorities likewise carry the same sanitised representation, and deference to the party where characters are just the 'carriers of symbolic concepts.'

In 2017 Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission issued a trial plan for the review of all media in any format published, both within and outside of Yunnan, which 'involves the contents and themes of ethnic and religious issues in Yunnan province' (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2017). All media that is published and disseminated to the public, regardless of the location in which it was produced, must obtain Yunnan's expert approval. To gain approval, of course, all publications must toe the party line and agree with the ideology of the 'New Era'. It must not 'distort national religious culture and history' or undermine national unity, fail to respect the custom and habits of minorities or insult religious beliefs. If the review raises any objections, it must provide an explanation with relevant policies and regulations.

6.6 The Five Identifications

The initiative of ethnic unity and common progress has two main concerns: development and ideology. Up to now, we have described the practical elements of the initiative and ethnic policies in Yunnan. In the remaining section of the chapter, we will discuss how the ideological side of these policies which come under the initiative are shaping identities. This section will also refer to issues discussed in the background Chapters 2 and ethnic theory Chapter 3.

The theory of the five identities was put forth in the 19th Chinese Communist Party National Congress. Its purpose is to strengthen all citizens' identification at the national level. Along with *zhonghua* identity, the five identifications hone the aspect of the CCP that all individuals within *zhonghua* community are to primarily identify with the motherland, the CCP, *zhonghua minzu*, *zhonghua* culture, and socialism with Chinese characteristics. As noted in Chapter 3, Chinese theorists argue that in past, China's ethnic theory and policy had been tilted towards reifying ethnic identities to the detriment of an overall national identity. An insistence on strengthening the five identities is an effort to correct that trend. It places the national identity and *zhonghua minzu* above ethnic identity. While the five identities were only introduced in 2017 within the database, they were mentioned twenty-two times across eight files. Four of those files were published in 2021. Being paired with building *zhonghua* consciousness, the appearance of the phrase will no doubt increase with time.

The five identities are closely tied to Red, i.e., Chinese communist revolutionary culture. 'Red culture' has also become a niche area of tourism based around historically important locations linked to the revolutionary efforts. 'Red culture' encompasses the 'spiritual legacy of the CPC members and other Chinese people—unity, solidarity, and industriousness' (Shu, 2022, p. 436). The documents place education on the revolutionary martyrs and Tibetan calvary, the long march, and the four histories (history of the Party, the history of the new China, the history of reform and opening-up, and the history of socialist development) in direct relation to the five identities. When PRC was founded, the importance of incorporating ethnic minorities and their support was an important aspect of the CCP's success. The party is trying to reinforce its legitimacy in the hearts of the local population by controlling the discourse of history and pulling in the local minorities, and 'educating' them that the ethnic policies and position of the state are correct. The five identities are promoted through activities and propaganda involved in the ethnic unity education and demonstration venues. Events such as ethnic holidays and Yunnan's annual ethnic sports competition are all seen as paths to get the masses involved. The identities are also set alongside development and the path to a better society and 'civilisation'. Along the border, the five identities are also juxtaposed with border security and safeguarding the motherland, alongside political education for transborder migrant minorities.

6.7 Zhonghua Minzu Consciousness

In 2017 at the 19th National Congress 'Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the 'New Era' was embedded into the constitution. This marks the point that *zhonghua minzu* identity rises in significance as part of Xi's fourteen points for the 'New Era' in forging the consciousness of a Chinese national community. *Zhonghua minzu* is meant to be a supra-nationality, drawing its life from China's long history, yet owing its full realisation to the party. Without the party it could never truly appear in the flesh. *Zhonghua minzu* consciousness needs to be the very foundation and core of the ideology work.

In the data set, *zhonghua minzu* is used in context with other political themes and buzzwords, such as socialist values, traditional virtues, the Chinese dream, moral education, party building, ideology and spiritual civilisation. A clear hierarchy is present with *zhonghua minzu* at the top, followed by ethnic and then regional culture. The order in which these are set out establishes each level's relative value. *Zhonghua* culture is frequently mentioned in conjunction with education. Education has an important role in integrating and transforming 'excellent Chinese (*zhonghua*) traditional culture' with the culture of ethnic minorities. Schools' curricula are to include basic knowledge of ethnic minorities into their teaching content 'all children will know ethnic minority songs, stories and dances, and all will embrace

each other in the big Chinese family'. Under the 'initiative of ethnic unity and common progress', ethnic minority culture is never promoted in isolation. It cannot be taught on its own; it must be couched within *zhonghua minzu* and ethnic unity education. Schools are to simultaneously publicise and work on teacher and student awareness of the Chinese national community (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2019). Spiritual and moral cultivation is sought through art and aesthetics education. The relationship between ethnic minorities, *zhonghua minzu*, and Han artistic and cultural works are blurred through new creations and artistic fusion.

In efforts to support the concept in the consciousness of the population, the party has looked for ways to amplify *zhonghua minzu* research and education and publications. In 2020, Yunnan University was selected as one of ten national-level research centres for 'forging a united community of Chinese national (*zhonghua minzu*) consciousness'. This move goes along with a growing emphasis on strengthening Chinese national identity and unity within the spheres of national and ethnic policy. The 'forging a united community of Chinese national consciousness' research centres have a close relationship with various state government bodies. The United Front Work Department of the Central Committee, the Central Propaganda Department, the Ministry of Education, and the State Ethnic Affairs Commission were involved in the selection and will continue to oversee the research centres and their output (Yunnan Net News, 2020). The focus of the research centres is to produce innovative work on the theoretical and practical realities of *zhonghua minzu* in modern China, develop the discourse of *zhonghua minzu* identity and consciousness, aid and advise in policy and development, and cultivate national-level researchers and talent.

Literature on provincial agencies has clearly shown that actors and institutions at different levels may be involved in both policy development and implementation. Lampton (2008) points out that the number of agents and institutions involved in policy development is growing. While Lampton's (2008) focus is on foreign policy, he highlights how both provinces, individuals and organisations can impact policy. His discussion of what he calls professionalisation indicates that those at the top can rely on research organisations to supplement their knowledge with specialised information to inform their decisions (Lampton, 2008). University research departments are often connected to state bureaus and government agencies. Zhao, and Tok (2020) illustrate how ethnic issues have been influenced by researchers using their connections with CCP bureaucrats to champion their positions. Academics and research institutions can have a dual impact on policy – they can uphold government directives and support them, as well as influence high level politicians to take on certain policy initiatives.

At Yunnan University, the research centre for ‘forging a united Chinese national community consciousness’ is based in the political science department (Yunnan Net News, 2020). Thus, its position in influencing this discourse is unique, as *zhonghua minzu* is being positioned not just as a cultural identity but also as a political identity and ‘national form’. As the Chinese national consciousness is emphasised as being of key importance in national policy, these research centres recognise the need to clarify and develop the discourse surrounding the term. As a *raison d'être* of the Chinese nation, the concept needs a robust foundation to support it. The collaboration and advice that academic research provides to state agencies on ethnic policy may colour policy initiatives in Yunnan, connecting to larger national schemes. Uradyn Bulag has shown how this new emphasis on *zhonghua minzu* goes beyond semantics and is closely tied to the recent oppression of minorities in Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia. Efforts to force the population into the new ‘national form’ that the state dictates will have a tangible effect on policy and the lives of ethnic minorities (Bulag, 2021).

6.8 Conclusion

The combination of the creation of demonstration zones, ethnic unity education, mass activities and entertainment shows that policy is covering spatial and ideological governance which spreads across multiple domains of life, subjectivities and rationales. Here we see an emphasis on neo-socialist techniques of governmentality coming to the forefront as the policies are focused on managing the ethnic populations identities both as socialist subjects and as Chinese subjects. The relationship between the party and a greater national identity of *zhonghua minzu* is encapsulated in the ‘New Era’ goals. The extent of the propaganda and ideological control exceeded my expectations in scale for the promotion of ethnic unity. To me this highlights the significance of the discursive control over ethnic relations and future projections, clearly aiming at shaping the subjectivities of the population through consistent and continual reiteration.

Under Xi Jinping, the goal of ethnic work is to build *zhonghua* identity, not to protect ethnic rights. Chinese scholars firmly deny charges of forced assimilation, claiming that forced assimilation cannot be used to erase the historical and cultural differences between ethnic groups as this would only weaken the construction of *zhonghua minzu*. It would cause ethnic resentment and fractures, leading to greater instability, much as the instance of a unified cultural Soviet identity weakened the Soviet Union. The ‘initiative of ethnic unity and common progress’ shows the CCP’s preferred strategy. It is not a quick and obvious form of assimilation, but a moderately slow process of integration and fusion. The goal is still to diminish differences and the salience of ethnic identity. The construction of the national

community needs constant maintenance. Chinese scholars point to the multiculturalism of America and the West as something which cannot be maintained, as the fluidity of different cultures existing as one leads to the overall change in the content of their cultural identity. If China is to avoid a breakdown of its identity, it needs constant maintenance and engineering to take its own path of *zhonghua minzu* unity in diversity.

In 2020, all eight of Yunnan's autonomous prefectures amended their ethnic autonomy laws. The format of the changes all followed the same outline using standardised language and phrases which mirrored the amendment to the national constitution placing Xi's thought alongside Marxism- Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory. For example, Article 5 of Deqing's Autonomy regulations, originally written in 1989, recognised Marxism and Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. It highlighted economic-centred efforts and the practical use of natural resources. In 2006 it was amended, and Deng Xiaoping's Theory and 'the three represents' were added while a section on the building of a moderately prosperous society in an all-around way was also added. In the new 2020 version, Xi's thought was added as, 'Guided by the Scientific Outlook on Development and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a 'New Era', we shall strengthen self-confidence in the road, theory, system, and culture, practise the core socialist values, and enhance all ethnic groups' understanding of the great motherland, the Chinese nation, Chinese culture, and the Communist Party of China, the recognition of socialism with Chinese characteristics, strengthen exchanges and integration of various ethnic group' (Deqing, 2020). Article 9 also adds the forging of *zhonghua* identity into the regulations. While small, we can see that the change reflects a shift of interest from economics to ideology. It also reflects the hierarchical position that *zhonghua minzu* has.

The ethnic unity initiative encapsulated Xi Jinping's ethnic policy position and hence the likely trajectory of China's ethnic policies in the future. As we have mentioned, China's ethnic policy has seen shifts between integration and the protection of rights. China is currently entering a 'New Era' brought in by Xi Jinping and as he has secured his third term: we can expect this trend to increase as the past policies, which were brought in during a time of bolstering ethnic rights, now shifts to Chinese identity hierarchy and party and state loyalty, the Sinification of religion, the promotion of Mandarin and the promotion of inter-ethnic exchanges, intermingling and blending. This does not necessarily mean complete assimilation or across the board abuse of ethnic rights, as have been seen in other regions. Like many things in China, it is not a national one size fits all situation. As they say, ethnic work should fit the overall situation and in Yunnan, moderate policies towards ethnic minorities have been successful. Ethnic minorities are still a resource useful to the local government, but even so, in Yunnan, it is a nuanced issue. Ethnic identity is being instrumentalised in resource allocation. It is engaged

and used as a tool to gain community benefits, but within the confines of a policy, which clearly sets up an identity hierarchy. Villagers' lives may improve on the surface level with community sanitary works, proper working toilets and streetlights, but it is the party and the *zhonghua minzu* community for which they are grateful. Even within Yunnan, the local governments have different concerns and adapt their policies accordingly. Yunnan was an effective location to showcase the initiative. Xi emphasises building a strong *zhonghua* identity because it solidifies his position and influence on both the domestic and global stages. If the CCP fails to build its salience within the bounds of mainland China, how can it be called upon in Taiwan or with overseas Chinese? The legitimacy of *zhonghua minzu* consciousness must bear out within Yunnan if it is to truly carry any weight. The ideological work is evident throughout Chinese society areas and groups, which cause the CCP unease to receive more heavy-handed indoctrination and handling.

Chapter 7 Ethnic Mass Work: Ideology and Education

7.1 Introduction

To forge a solid awareness of the community of *zhonghua minzu*, we must not only do visible and tangible work, but also ‘silently moisten things’ (QSTHEORY, 2022).

The above is a quote attributed to Xi Jinping at the two sessions meeting in March 2022. ‘Silently moisten things’¹⁴ is a line from the Tang dynasty poet Du Fu indicating a slow and subtle change. This quote draws attention to an underlining seam of ethnic work in the ‘New Era’ which is characterised by propaganda and ideology work to enact a quiet transformation in the minds of the population. This chapter will discuss the methods of connecting the masses to the party line, which forms the neo-socialist governmentality. Propaganda is a significant component of the CCP’s approach to communicating with the Chinese people, it is a key technique of neo-socialist governmentality. Propaganda and ideology were well established tools of governance in the early years of Communist China, and they continue to hold significance as instruments in the CCP’s governance and ethnic work. The prominence of the party, along with Xi’s emphasis on ‘rule of law’, cast a shadow of influence on all ethnic affairs. Since the debate over the second-generation of ethnic policy took place in 2011 the ‘three jiaos’ (ethnic integration, interaction and blending) have increasingly appeared in ethnic policy and research. We will discuss how this concept has emerged alongside ethnic unity and *zhonghua* identity in our policy documents as well as efforts to promote the ‘three jiaos’ in society and legitimise it as a historical part of ethnic relations. The documents in the data set place the ‘three jiaos’ as a strategy on the road towards ethnic unity and the forging of national *zhonghua minzu* identity. Beyond the data set we also draw on news reports and reports from governmental meetings to illustrate the interconnected issues. The popularisation of ethnic unity policy also heavily relies on propaganda work, ideology, and legal education.

This project uses neo-socialist governmentality to refer to a mode of governmentality which relies on techniques in line with the authoritarian framework of Chinese governance and elements of revolutionary mass work of the Mao-era which has seen a resurgence in recent years under Xi Jinping. The party recognises the usefulness of the techniques of propaganda, mass activities, policy education, and the continued persistent repetition for the formation of new subjectivities and ‘is absolutely transparent in its goals, its methods, and the centralised

¹⁴ ‘润物细无声’ from the poem, Spring Night’s Rain

political party it serves - a transparency that, ironically, is its main veil, as the subjects of its power shrug off or ignore the propaganda it encodes, while it increasingly saturates public and private spaces. (Palmer and Winiger, 2019). This chapter primarily addresses socialist subjectivities where policies are aimed at shaping individual's relations to the party as well as inter-ethnic relations through the discursive control of the party.

7.2 Ethnic Unity Education

The documents in the data set emphasise that ethnic unity education is a top-down national issue and a key element of the 'New Era' to be taken seriously by the local governmental departments and cadre. As mentioned in Chapter 6, ethnic unity education and propaganda are physically present in people's lives through the spatial organisation and prominent visual markers, such as demonstration windows, pavilions and community centres, which are erected at every ethnic unity demonstration site. However, for direct interaction, schools are a key location for strengthening the consciousness of *zhonghua* identity and orienting students towards ethnic solidarity (Brady, 2012; Chu, 2018). In 2008 the national guidelines for ethnic unity education were published, and since then, Yunnan's prefectural governments have published their own guidelines for the development of ethnic unity education to meet the needs of the local conditions. Due to the ideological importance of ethnic unity, the curriculum and teaching materials must be of a high standard and planned for longevity, as well as political insight and a deep understanding of the party policy. For example, the Education Bureau in Dayao county - Chuxiong prefecture published a 'Notice on Conscientiously Carrying Out the National Unity Education for 2018', which outlines the ethnic unity goals for primary and secondary schools. The document sets requirements that ethnic unity courses are to be given in alternating grades, consisting of a course load of 8-14 hours of classroom work per academic year. The class curriculum not only covers ethnic unity and the relationship of the *zhonghua minzu* family, but also morality and politics classes. Select teachers are also organised to receive separate training for conducting ethnic minority-themed projects on topics such as ethnic clothing, song, dance, and holidays (Dayao People's Government, 2018_b). National unity and progress run through all aspects of school education and the environment (Xishuangbanna People's Government, 2020). According to the guidelines, the culture and customs of the local minorities are to be interwoven into daily education through physical activities (ethnic sports and dance), and the arts (music, painting, handicrafts and costumes).

While ethnic minorities remain highly visible within these cultural activities, the depiction of ethnic minorities within the curriculum focuses heavily on song, dance and clothing to express ethnic minorities and culture (Liu *et al.*, 2022). Chu's (2018) study on the *zhonghua minzu*

representations in elementary school textbooks shows that minority identities follow the same exoticising othering noted by Schein (1997) as 'internal orientalism'. So even while the curriculum seeks to create a sense of family, it still places minorities in opposition to the Han being defined by their colourful characteristics. In painting the symbolic image of all ethnic groups interacting, they encourage acceptance of ethnic minorities as a visible yet decorative part of the *zhonghua* family. The essentialised depictions can be attributed to the grade level and 'appropriate' information for younger students. However, it is also indicative of the value and logic of *zhonghua minzu* wherein ethnic minorities supply the flavour, colour, and splash of exotism to the *zhonghua* identity. Likewise, ethnic minority students are simultaneously receiving implicit instruction to embrace these flourishes and, in so doing, they are fulfilling their role within the *zhonghua* family. As mentioned in Chapter 6, any information alluding to Yunnan's ethnic minorities or religions published within China must be approved by Yunnan's ethnic and religious affairs bureau (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2017). In her article on ethnic propaganda, Brady (2012) highlights how the representation of ethnic minorities is guided by the Central Propaganda Department in conjunction with the United Front Work Department, State Ethnic Affairs Commission and other ministries to control the approved narratives of ethnic minority groups. Information about ethnic groups is curated and so these depictions must be seen as the desired vision of the party. Independent coverage or discussions of ethnic minorities is not allowed.

7.3 Propaganda and Mass Activities

Zhonghua cultural consciousness is also cultivated through ethnic unity-themed language arts competitions, which include writing and speech competitions, as well as recitations of Chinese literature classics (Dayao People's Government, 2018_b). These activities provide a space for children to practise nationalistic sentiment through the recitation of stories, singing patriotic songs about the constitution and party and also build their connection to the five identifications. Adams and Rustemova's (2009) research on the use of mass spectacles in former Soviet Uzbekistan show a paternalistic pattern of governmentality which is in many ways similar to the Chinese model, which views the population as malleable and places them in a hierarchical structure emphasising the state as the source of knowledge/truth providing a historic looking essentialist view of national/ethnic identity. While their research focused on holiday celebrations, it can be more broadly applied to celebratory mass activities which are designed to engage the public. Durkheim (1915, p. 236-45, in Adam and Rustemova 2009, p. 1252) note that these activities 'cloaked in spectacle, take on a vibrant quality of democratic participation, even though there is nothing democratic or participatory about it. Mass

spectacles produce a hum of excitement and physiological arousal that, as Durkheim noted, binds us more closely to the group sharing the experience and fixes in our minds the ideas and symbols portrayed therein.’ These mass celebratory activities serve as a field of activity wherein symbols, repetition, ritual and a celebratory atmosphere are utilised to reinforce the relationship of the public to the state.

Mass activities are a concrete way of gaining peoples sympathy and moulding their understanding.

Make full use of the ‘National Solidarity Publicity Month’, ‘Publicity Week’ and traditional ethnic festivals to carry out mass publicity activities. Popularise ethnic policies and ethnic knowledge and encourage people of all ethnic groups in the ‘three jiaos’ (integration, interaction and blending). Together we will build and share a beautiful homeland. We will intensify efforts to cultivate and publicise advanced models of ethnic minorities and create a social atmosphere that respects the culture, customs and religious beliefs of ethnic minorities (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2022).

The concentration of efforts itself is worth commenting on; the varied methods that the government employs for popularising policy and laws and the breadth of activities used in conducting propaganda is vast. Party officials are constantly developing numerous avenues to connect with the public. A study conducted by Zeng and Hui on the frequency of mass cultural activities held across the country showed that Yunnan ranked in at number eight out of 31 regions included. In 2020 alone, the province held 653 activities organised by the Ministry of Cultural and Tourism, which primarily emphasised the intangible cultural heritage of ethnic minorities (Zeng and Hui, 2022). The Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau set up special online columns and WeChat groups to answer questions regarding policy and give legal aid. The Cadre participate in community events to carry out publicity activities, engaging with people in villages and temples. They organise symposiums, reports, lectures, and on-site legal publicity and advisory services (Honghe People’s Government, 2016). A policy document from Diqing listed an array of propaganda tools required in each city, among which were loudspeakers and a propaganda car (Diqing People’s Government, 2021). Many of these strategies are tried and true methods of propaganda work. Performances and plays have been a popular form of propaganda since the founding of the CCP and remain an extremely effective method for working the emotions of the people (Perry, 2017).

As part of reaching ethnic minorities in the ‘rule of law’ campaign in Lijiang, the local government has been putting on plays and skits catered to the local ethnic groups. The plays are designed as vignettes to teach information on relevant laws in an easily accessible manner. The actors wear ethnic costumes and use both Mandarin and ethnic minority languages (Rule of Law Daily, 2020). In Lincang in the southwest, over a thousand public outdoor screenings

of bilingual propaganda films were shown as part of a campaign to ‘bring law propaganda films to the borders.’ This type of propaganda work is part of Yunnan’s ‘five purpose work method’ for popularising the ‘rule of law’: use ethnic and religious affairs cadre in propaganda work, use ethnic minority written languages to translate material, use ethnic minority language to disseminate it, use ethnic festivals to display it, and use ethnic minority culture to reflect and embody it.

Local conditions and history are also used to adopt and frame the policies. The documents from Diqing show that the power of appealing to the past and revolutionary times is particularly strong. A 2021 document from Deqin county in Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on rural revitalisation funding stated that 200,000 yuan was invested in the construction of the Helong Bridge National Unity Education Site. This venue was thematically focused on the influence of the Red Army's Long March through Deqin and the influence and contribution of revolutionary martyrs (Deqin People’s Government, 2021). The emphasis on Red and revolutionary history can be used as a device for engaging ethnic minorities in the story of modern China. It is used to share a history of ethnic loyalty to the party, carrying the message that ‘we belong together’, as well as encouraging ethnic minority pride in their role in the founding of modern China. Building on this image of the minority-CCP relationship is particularly important as the Diqing government desires to become the model for all Tibetan areas in China.

7.4 The ‘Three Jiaos’ and Developing Ethnic Theory

The ‘three jiaos’ were first mentioned in January of 2010 in speeches made by Hu Jintao at the Fifth Central Tibet Work Symposium and the Central Xinjiang Work Symposium, but it wasn’t until 2012 that the phrase was fully expounded on by Hu Angang and Hu Lianhe¹⁵ as part of their suggestion of reshaping ethnic policy towards a more assimilative model. Ethnic interaction, integration, and blending (*jiao wang, jiao liu, jiao rong* 交往交流交融) are sometimes abbreviated in Chinese as 三交 (*san jiao*). In order to recognise the particular phraseology being used, I chose to translate this in English as the ‘three jiaos’ rather than simplifying it as ethnic interaction or integration as is sometimes used in English language texts. It is important to keep track of phrases which are used in repetition in Chinese discourse, especially those with political significance.

During the self-proclaimed ‘New Era’ of Chinese society the party stresses that adopting a series of new measures for ethnic unity, new methods of approaching ethnic work, and new

¹⁵ See Chapter 3 on Ethnic Theory in China

ideas are necessary for facing the reality of ethnic relations in the current stage of Chinese society. These efforts include engagement with research and academics to legitimise the narrative of 'new China' and its history. As ethnic policy is based on historic materialism, it is important to the party that they validate its historic origins. The party seeks support for its ethnic theories and policies and looks to academics to show how its positions are rooted in China's history. This is taking place with research on *zhonghua* identity as discussed in Chapter 3. The 'three jiaos' are likewise being positioned as historic fact. The state has sponsored a series of books detailing the history of the 'three jiaos' within China. As part of this effort, they are compiling a volume on the history of the 'three jiaos' in Yunnan as 'a pioneering, as well as a highly political and academic work... It will adhere to historical materialism and respect the main position of the people, highlight the mainline and ensure the correct direction of the compilation. It will eliminate the false, retain the true and do a good job in screening historical materials' (Minzu Times, 2022). The party shapes ideology through a primordial vision of China's ethnic relations built on its own version of its historical narrative.

Since the Central Ethnic Work Conference in 2014 the 'three jiaos' have been recognised as an instrument in the nation's ethnic relations toolkit. The areas of focus for the 'three jiaos' are economic integration, strengthening a shared cultural identity and combating negative factors in social harmony and security. The importance it holds for ethnic work was reflected in a meeting forum titled 'Promoting 'three jiaos' Among All Ethnic Groups and Strengthening the Construction of the *Zhonghua Minzu* Community' held by the 13th CPPCC National Committee in Beijing in August 2022. The meeting was attended by senior party members, including the head of the Central United Front Work Department, Central Propaganda Department, Ministry of Education, and State Ethnic Affairs Commission. The meeting was the result of academics and local governments discussing research and surveys which were carried out throughout the country, including Yunnan, and set out guidance for effectively promoting ethnic interaction through the 'three jiaos'. The outcomes of the meeting reflected the policy documents, news and propaganda on the comprehensive array of strategies for 'three jiaos' campaign published in Yunnan.

Recently, the 'three jiaos' in particular have been utilised to re-frame and operationalise Fei Xiaotong's theory of plurality and unity. Originally in his theory, Fei (1998) described the growth and development of the Chinese identity throughout history as a snowball formed through constant interaction and blending of ethnic groups with the Han at its core. The theory forms the most widely accepted and approved approach to the historical development of ethnic relations in China and the formation of the Chinese people. In the simplest sense, it describes the normal process of inter-ethnic relations and evolution over a vast period of time. Ethnic groups living in close contact experience inter-ethnic interactions, shifting of boundaries and

even assimilation. However, the party is manipulating the narrative of the Chinese civilisation by historicising the ‘three jiaos’ as the legacy of 5,000 years of the Chinese people. By promoting the ‘three jiaos’ as a political concept, it gains legitimacy when placed alongside Fei Xiaotong’s theory of plurality and unity. This also puts distance between it and its connection to the aggressive assimilation model pushed by Hu Angang and Hu Lianhe. The party continually claims that the ‘three jiaos’ is a non-assimilationist methodology. This goes back to the debate over the second-generation policies, which were discarded because outright assimilation was too abrupt and likely to create more tension and upheaval than the slow, steady process of natural blending. According to Marxist theory, at some point in the future ethnic identities will eventually die out. The ‘three jiaos’ then are not the heavy-handed instruments of assimilation as when Hu Lianhe and Hu Angang initially envisioned them. They have been realigned as a political concept in the management of ethnic relations which will ease the eventual dilution of ethnic identities. As a technique of neo-socialist governmentality, it acts as a form of social engineering leading to social transformation once accepted and internalised by the population.

7.5 The ‘Three Jiaos’ as Action-oriented Strategy

The tradition of the ‘three jiaos’ vividly embodies the historical practise and folk wisdom of the mutual integration and sympathy of the ethnic groups in Yunnan. It could be said that they are representational of the ‘harmony gene’ of Yunnan traditional culture. The ‘three jiaos’ have not only made a unique historical contribution in forming long-term harmonious ethnic relations in Yunnan, but they are also a precious gift for Yunnan today as a province with strong ethnic culture building itself into a demonstration base for China’s national unity and progress (Minzu Today, 2021).

The ‘three jiaos’ are said to be close to the spirit and heart of ethnic work, laying a solid economic, ideological and cultural foundation for the *zhonghua minzu* community. The policy documents in the data set link the ‘three jiaos’ to infrastructure (construction of demonstration zones), propaganda (cultural promotion and activities), as well social and economic development (settling ethnic minorities moving into the cities). Communities which are successful in promoting the ‘three jiaos’ will have:

A mutually embedded community and social structure forming a harmonious environment in which people of all ethnic groups can live, learn, and work together. Make cities better equipped to accept ethnic minority people and help ethnic minority people to better integrate into the cities. Establish a grid management system based on townships, communities, institutions, and social organizations. Widely carry out ethnic assistance and friendship exchange activities such as ‘pairing up’ ‘hand in hand’, ‘heart-to-heart’ and ‘family relatives’, to build bridges of communication among various ethnic groups (Jinghong People’s Government, 2019).

One task of the ‘three jiaos’ is to update infrastructure in the countryside in order to encourage communities to intermingle. Rural revitalisation strategies and schemes, which allow local

governments to overhaul the village layout and redesign residential areas, also present opportunities for creating integrated communities and social structures. These embedded communities are then serviced through grid management systems. The community is divided into ethnic contact services grids with a team branch secretary and a resident group leader for each who serve as both an informant for the government and as a mediator in conflicts. As discussed in Chapter 6, new city construction and relocation villages are designed with inter-ethnic integration in mind. The ethnic unity demonstration zones are also key for instilling this sense of social embeddedness. Ethnic co-mingling also erodes the ethnic enclaves or areas of dense population by moving other groups in and opening up opportunities for the locals to move out. Mobilising the population is likely to have a trickle-down effect on ethnic identity salience. As mentioned in Chapter 2, two conditions of symbolic ethnicity are higher intermarriage rates and heterogeneous communities.

Inter-ethnic interaction and integration is best encouraged through mixed communities. From building relocation villages with mixed ethnic residences and encouraging schools to schedule mixed ethnic classes and dormitories to promote migration of both minorities into urban cities and Han into ethnic areas, the party is encouraging local governments to put the ‘three jiao’ strategy into action. For the party, the ‘three jiaos’ ideally would be a completely natural and an organic mode of ethnic interaction. However, in reality, in order to support the backing ideology, the party needs to apply significant pressure to promote the realisation of the ‘three jiaos’ through activities and social engineering.

While the ‘three jiaos’ as the model of ethnic relations is being promoted throughout the country, the particular ethnic situations differ from location to location. On China’s east coast promotion of the ‘three jiaos’ is primarily used to manage migrant minorities and set up urban ethnic services. This includes efforts to get minorities to view themselves as a ‘local’, belonging to their surroundings and not as an outsider (CPPCC Daily, 2022_a). This speaks to a sense of acceptable differences and normative behaviour. Governmental departments at both the inflow location and the destination of ethnic migrant workers have responsibilities to manage and train ethnic minorities to better adapt to their new surroundings. Companies are encouraged to practise mixed work schedules and provide integrated living quarters so the migrant ethnic minorities workers can integrate like a local. The system of residence permits should also be developed to include elements such as ethnic unity contribution. This will count towards points on residence permits and guide the behaviours of ethnic migrant workers (CPPCC Daily, 2022_{a,b}). Policy efforts are also being designed to encourage more ethnic minorities to move into medium and large cities, both across the nation and also within provinces themselves. In Yunnan, migrant workers are moving into its medium and large cities as well as taking part in cross-province surplus labour transfers, as mentioned in Chapter 2.

When this takes place, the governmental departments involved are required to give them training and education both in Mandarin and dialect on how to conduct themselves and what is acceptable behaviour.

We will strengthen the publicity and education on the rule of law among the floating population of urban ethnic minorities, focus on the publicity and education of labour and contract law, laws and local regulations on community resident management and urban management, promote the construction of harmonious labour relations, embedded social structure and community environment, and promote the ‘three jiaos’ for extensive interaction among ethnic groups (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2021).

Once ethnic minority workers relocate to urban areas the party must educate and equip these workers on matters of law and civic behaviour in their new environment, and knowledge of the ‘three jiaos’ are counted towards extra points on their residence permits. Providing legal aid services for ethnic minorities (available both in mandarin and ethnic languages) is one of the primary concerns of urban ethnic work.

The state expounds the ‘three jiaos’ as a force for strengthening economic integration of all ethnic groups. These policies also serve an important role in ensuring that all ethnic groups in the area are involved in local businesses and that they cooperate with each other in the marketplace. Encouraging ethnic groups to develop businesses together will lead to economic and social development in the area and stronger economic ties between groups (Jinghong People’s Government, 2017). The party then extolls these inspiring stories as models of successful employment and entrepreneurship and examples of good deeds of ethnic groups helping each other. In Pu’er, the local government has been promoting ‘Binnong Saihai’¹⁶ relationships. The name is taken from the Dai language, and it roughly means ‘friends who are close like blood relatives.’ Based on the local inter-ethnic culture and Dai’s peaceful co-existence with the other minorities in the area, ‘Binnong Saihai’ has been heavily promoted in Pu’er and co-opted by local governments. ‘Binnong Saihai’ extends to all interethnic relations treating the other as family, however, the concept has also met with success and acceptance in the business area. The idea allows for ethnic unity and poverty alleviation efforts to blend together with ques taken from the local culture (China Daily, 2020).

7.6 Policy Education and Indoctrination

To achieve an interbedded ethnic community and control ethnic relations, the party leans on policy education and propaganda. The documents in the data set exhort the provinces and counties to increase their interaction with the masses through legal education and propaganda

¹⁶ 宾弄赛嗨

campaigns, seizing opportunities to mould the hearts of the masses and provide normative models for their interaction with the state as part of the big family of *zhonghua minzu*. The party's aim is to shift and control how individuals conceptualise ethnic relations and reality within China. The commonality of all people is now the zeitgeist, and it is of paramount importance to the party that society unifies its attitude towards ethnic relations, as this is how China will maintain its stability in the years to come. As part of the 'New Era,' Xi has also stressed the 'rule of law'.

In the data set, this is primarily in regard to enhancing people's legal awareness and broadening their understanding of legal and illegal behaviours. Local governments are responsible for nurturing citizens to become aware and knowledgeable about the laws and policies which affect them, 'so that the masses can further understand ethnic laws and regulations. We will cultivate the people's concept of abiding by the law, strengthen the education of safeguarding rights according to law, and promote the social trend of "earning laws, emphasising rights, obligations and responsibilities' (Xishuangbanna Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, 2017). The popularisation of laws and propaganda often go hand in hand. It is not enough that the people know the law; they must also believe that the laws were designed by the party for their best interest. Documents in the data set called for local governments to intensify their propaganda work in schools, public venues, and among the cadre.

7.7 Rule of Law and Ethnic Law Popularisation

While the 'rule of law' campaign is a vast national effort, from the data set, we narrowed our focus on policy popularisation and propaganda work being done by the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau as they are the department primarily involved in ethnic affairs. The Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau follows the party line under the leadership of the United Front Work Department¹⁷. In the outline for a five-year plan regarding the popularisation of 'rule of law in Yunnan published by the Ethnic and Religious Affairs bureau, emphasis was placed on the constitution, Chinese identity, language law, autonomy law, and religious law, as well as methods for reaching ethnic minorities and teaching them the content of relevant laws and policies (Honghe People's Government, 2016; Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, 2017; Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2021). From the data set we can see that there are two major concerns attached to ethnic minorities when it comes to law education and policy popularisation. The first is ideological, making the connection between the

¹⁷ Refer back to Chapter 3. for information on the united front work department

zhonghua minzu and ethnic work and making this of the foremost importance in people's hearts and minds. The second is practical, i.e., which laws are relevant in the lives of ethnic minorities and how can the party adequately educate ethnic minorities in the law. As part of Xishuangbanna prefectures five year plan on rule of law published by the Ethnic and Religious Affairs bureau, the five main goals can be summarised as: developing the bureau's ability for governing and decision making according to law; teaching ethnic theory and allowing it to guide ethnic work including the correct understanding of autonomy law (Xishuangbanna is an autonomous prefecture); developing propaganda and indoctrination opportunities; spreading ethnic unity; and *zhonghua* identity and ideology (Xishuangbanna Ethnic and Religious affairs Bureau, 2017).

The campaign to popularise laws, of course, is spread throughout Chinese society, accompanied by the slogan 'those who are responsible for the law, publicise the law'. This is to say that each government department is responsible for spreading knowledge about the laws which are the most relevant to the people. Each region is responsible for meeting the needs of the local population. Policy papers demand that each department design its activities based on the needs of the local ethnic minorities.

...vigorously publicise the basic laws of the state such as criminal law and civil law and strive to improve the legal awareness and concept of the rule of law of ethnic minorities and religious believers. We will vigorously publicise laws and regulations that protect the basic rights of ethnic minority citizens, especially the rights and interests of the elderly, women, children and the disabled, and laws and regulations that are closely related to the production and life of the people of all ethnic groups, such as education, employment, health care, food and drug safety, poverty alleviation, charity and social security, so as to promote the whole society to establish the awareness of respecting and protecting human rights and promote the protection and improvement of people's livelihood (Honghe People's Government, 2016).

Ethnic policies are sometimes categorised as any policy which affects the lives of ethnic minorities. The examples given here reflect this while leaning into the idea that ethnic minorities need tutelage in the process of becoming *zhonghua minzu* citizens. Priming ethnic minorities with legal knowledge also frames the way that they can then engage with the state. It sets the stage for how they can address grievances and normalises codes of conduct for what is expected of them and what they can expect of the state. It guides the people to express their interest and demands according to the law, and helps the people solve the legal problems around them (Honghe People's Government, 2016). The possibility that inter-personal disagreements could erupt into inter-group tensions is also a significant concern for the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau and their task of protecting ethnic stability. While 'rule of law' education does provide information on ethnic policy and individual rights, the preferential policies afforded to ethnic minorities are not the primary focus of the ethnic 'rule of law'

campaign. The legal knowledge to protect their rights also seems to be limited to interpersonal affairs and not the rights granted by the state. In the next chapter, we will discuss how the basic ethnic laws on language, religion and autonomy are treated when they are mentioned.

Ideology is of the foremost importance in the rejuvenation of China. Ethnic rights and relations are clearly positioned by the party as secondary to social stability and the good of society. Traditionally, a focus of ethnic propaganda work has been to 'manage culture' to prevent conflict and to close cultural gaps, which could be used to incite ethnic tension and division (Brady, 2012). Creating a harmonious society relies on emphasising the commonality between all ethnic groups. For this reason, the propaganda concerning ethnic minorities in this data set is primarily designed to pivot expectations away from their preferential benefits and towards building their identification with and understanding of the party and its wisdom in governing ethnic affairs.

We should grasp the two goals of building a strong sense of the Chinese national community and maintaining harmony in the religious field, ... Carry out in-depth and sustained constitutional publicity and education activities, explain the institutional basis of the 'rule of China', the significance of writing the 'zhonghua minzu' into the Constitution and the role of relevant provisions of the Constitution in strengthening the community consciousness of the zhonghua minzu, explain the principles and categories of citizens' right to freedom of religious belief, explain the connotation and significance of governing the country and ruling according to the Constitution in the 'New Era', and explain the spirit of the constitution. Strengthen the study and publicity of national flag law, National Anthem law and other constitutional laws, and strengthen national identity... Vigorously publicise the newly revised regulations of the Communist Party of China on United Front Work, and deeply study and publicise the provisions on ethnic work with the main line of building a strong sense of the zhonghua minzu community (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2021).

This selection from a policy document published by the Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau highlights an approach to guiding people's 'objective reasoning' regarding the party's ethnic policies. Its argument is built on the blocks of legal knowledge which are promoted i.e., the reason for the changes made to the constitution and elements of patriotic symbolism such as the flag law. The primary goal of ethnic-oriented 'rule by law' campaigns is not to differentiate ethnic minorities from the Han by promoting ethnic preferential policies, but by placing the focus on unity of all people and ethnic groups. This commonality is then emphasised through symbols.

Establish and highlight zhonghua cultural symbols and images which are shared by all ethnic groups to enhance the recognition of zhonghua culture by the people of all ethnic groups. Vigorously carry forward the red culture of rule of law, inherit the red gene of rule of law, educate and guide ethnic and religious cadre, people in religious circles and people of all ethnic groups to enhance their self-confidence and consciousness in taking the road of socialist rule of law with Chinese characteristics (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2021).

The first conversation I had with Yan Long about ethnic identity was in 2006. The conversation stuck out to me even at that moment, and it became a vivid memory for me during that period as I felt it was indicative of a different approach to identity than my American perspective. The conversation was sparked by a travel TV programme. The host was down in Xishuangbanna and was being introduced to Dai culture by a young woman in traditional Dai clothing. Yan Long pointed out that she belonged to the Huayao Dai or Flower Belted Dai based on her clothing. As he went on to describe the differences between the different branches of the Dai; he described himself as Handai, which he understood as a being Dai who integrated into Han society.

The categorisation and breakdown of the Dai along subgroups is controversial. As a transnational group with members spread from China, Laos, Burma, Thailand and Vietnam, there are, of course, variations in branches and dialects (Ze, 2003). But as is the case with other cross-border ethnic groups, group borders are not always constructed the same across locations. There is common confusion about the terminology surrounding Dai identity, which even many Dai individuals themselves are unclear on (Cai, 2009). There are many self-ascribed subgroups within Yunnan, however, scholars disagree on how many of them are distinct (Ze, 2003). The Han division of Water/Shui, Flower Waist/Hua Yao and Handai can be roughly superimposed onto existing Dai divisions, referring to differences in location, language and script. The term 'Handai' is a Han term historically used to distinguish Dai peoples. The confusion over 'Handai' rises from the 'han' in 'Handai' being a homophone. The proper name originating from the Qing dynasty uses the character '旱' meaning dry or drought. Thus, the 'han' Dai are the 'dry land' Dai, this is due to their living in mountain valley's rather than along the rivers in Xishuangbanna. The idea that 'Handai' simply refers to Dai which have assimilated is a result of the character 汉 i.e., the character for the Han ethnic group being mistakenly used, leading to the misunderstanding that the name arises from a closeness to the Han majority (Cai, 2009). Handai are also referred to Daine 傣讷 or Daina 傣那.

While there is very little literature available on the Handai/Daine in particular, one researcher who worked among self-proclaimed 'Handai' in the Honghe region of Yunnan, chose to use the term Handai in his work to reflect and privilege the self-ascribe identity of his participants (Rousseau, 2015). Yan Long's identification with Handai as a qualified version of Dai identity does not seem particularly salient; his identity instead appears to first be rooted in location, being from the Lancang area. His connection to 'Handai' appears to stem from the idea that his family didn't practise as much of the 'traditional' Dai culture compared to those living in

Xishuangbanna, i.e., he only remembers a little bit of Dai script he learned at school and instead uses Chinese. They did not live in the traditional Dai stilt house. And while tattoos were common among the men, for the most part, young men sported simple contemporary designs. Yet, unlike Rousseau's participants, they celebrate the Dai new year and cremate their dead and still hold customs which would separate them from Han practises. The understanding of Handai as in 'han-ified' Dai confuses the identity for others. A homogenised image of 'traditional' Dai culture and dress is highly idealised and reproduced by the Han Chinese. This forms a definite version of what Dai identity is, and it is displayed repetitively in Yunnan, especially in places like Kunming, where the Han dominate, and the Dai, are depicted for exotic allure. Efforts to qualify one's identity to an outsider when it doesn't match the expectations in such circumstances is understandable.

At the end of his description, Yan Long went on to rank his identity salience hierarchy by saying that he was first and foremost Chinese, then he was someone from Lancang, and finally, he was Dai. After reconnecting with Yan Long, we revisited this conversation during a chat about his recent life changes. Having married a Han woman, they had a choice in selecting the daughter's official minzu identity. He wanted his daughter to be Dai like him. He said that living in the city, there wasn't that much difference; most people were ethnic minorities like him; life was the same, and it didn't have much impact on the day-to-day. Yet his ethnic identity was still important to him. It connected him to his family and his old community and gave him a sense of belonging, and he wanted his daughter to be connected to those things as well. When I reminded him of our past conversation and asked how he would place himself now, he responded that he was still first and foremost Chinese. Both times he used the term zhongguo ren 中国人 as a way of stating national identity i.e., a person from the country of China. But this second time, he qualified it by saying, 'or I guess you could say zhonghua minz.,' but he felt that identifying with Dai or the Lancang region shifted in importance since his hometown had been flooded, and his identity seemed more general and untethered.

The province is also following the promotion of Mandarin, which is said to be for emotional connection and integration of all ethnic groups (Jinghong People's Government, 2019). It is believed that education policy initiatives aimed at bilingualism will promote better and more widespread communication between groups. And with the increased economic prosperity, villagers can now pursue other work opportunities outside of a life of subsistence farming, and venture farther from home for both school and work. The new mobility is creating an influx of Han coming into ethnic areas and ethnic minorities moving out into cities.

Governmental policies aimed at economic development, urbanisation and education will have an impact on further integration. Though this is not explicitly touched upon in the policy documents, integration will also lead to higher rates of intermarriage. While the ‘three jiaos’ implies close relationships between ethnic groups, the state cannot promote inter-ethnic marriages themselves. In Xinjiang, efforts to promote ethnic integration have led some policies astray when local governments encouraged inter-ethnic marriages by paying couples 10,000 RMB for the first five years of marriage (Wong, 2014). This was widely criticised inside and outside China, stating that governmental policies had no place in encouraging marriage behaviour (Xiong, 2012). The state has also distanced itself from such practises, pertaining to the inclusion of the ‘three jiaos’ the State Ethnic Affairs Commission website stated, ‘we should respect the differences of different nationalities and not solidify them; we should not only see the commonalities of different nationalities but also promote assimilation without administrative means’ (Seac.gov.cn., 2018). Policies which encourage greater ethnic intermingling in residences and schools would naturally lead to an uptick in integration and inter-ethnic marriages without administrative meddling. The government is well aware of the implication and impact the ‘three jiaos’ and integrated living spaces will have on society, and intermarriage is one result. In the light of ethnic policies, inter-ethnic marriages are viewed positively as a bridge which will lead to greater national unity, yet it is also the cause of tension if the government is seen to be promoting them. The fear of assimilation through intermarriage is especially poignant given Han’s dominant position and long history of assimilating smaller ‘weaker’ ethnic groups. Intermarriage, along with economic development and education, are three factors which simultaneously influence and reflect assimilation. Chinese researchers believe that intermarriages are on the rise and are likely to increase this trend as social mobility, education, and urbanisation become more widespread (Liu and Li, 2015; Lu, 2000).

7.8 Conclusion

In imagining a unified and homogeneous national community, Chinese historians imposed a linear and unbroken narrative of racial and cultural continuity on the rich ethnic mosaic of Chinese history—creating an arabesque of temporal and spatial connections that tightly bound the diversity of the Chinese *minzu*, or ‘nationalities’, together in a shared myth of national unfolding (Leibold, 2007, p. 147).

Throughout all levels of Chinese society, *zhonghua* identity is being implemented in a focused and intentional manner. This research has repeatedly emphasised the importance of *zhonghua minzu* identity for understanding the current situation of ethnic minorities in China. Advocacy of *zhonghua minzu* identity includes ethnic minorities through their promoted cultural elements. This chapter has the highlighted relationship between *zhonghua* identity

and party ideology which hints at the potential future of ethnic minority identities. The comprehensive and persuasive explanation of ethnic theory, law and the *zhonghua* community to the people will continue until it becomes ingrained and accepted as a social fact, just as the 56 *minzu* have by and large been uncritically accepted. 'The point is not that all people obediently carry out the slogans of Party-state propaganda, or, on the contrary, that they subvert it for their private goals. Rather, it is that they freely participate in the problematisation of public and private behaviour using language furnished by official discourse' (Palmer and Winiger, 2019, p. 576). Propaganda work can be simply the dissemination of information on laws and party thought, but it is so pervasive that it becomes part of the fabric of social life. Ethnic unity (*minzu tuanjie* 民族团结) has been the primary concern of ethnic propaganda (Brady, 2012), however, the focus on *zhonghua minzu* in the 'New Era' brings the emphasis on unity to greater heights. Propaganda should always take the positive viewpoint and depict ethnic minority groups and ethnic relations in a good light due to a 'belief that too much negative information will destroy public confidence in the regime (Brady, 2012). This follows the expectations I had at the beginning of this project, that techniques and practices used in Yunnan would follow a soft assimilation approach. The techniques of propaganda, mass activities and education are ever-present in the social milieu, but it is neither disciplinary nor oppressive and can still be an effective tool of control.

The 'three jiaos', have been hailed as a great success in helping to bolster the concept of *zhonghua minzu* among the people (Xinhua, 2019). As part of Xi Jinping's stance on ethnic work, the 'three jiaos' and *zhonghua minzu* have been repeatedly emphasised as fundamental to the nation's past, present and future. The cultural significance of the 'three jiaos' in Yunnan, according to the policy documents, is to 'promote the inheritance, protection, innovation and integration of the cultures of all ethnic groups' (Jinghong People's Government, 2019). The state stresses that the 'three jiaos' is not an assimilationist concept despite its background and prominence, originating with the two Hus. The party's position is that the purpose of the 'three jiaos' is to promote feelings of familial love and demonstrate unity in diversity. This technique of familiarity is utilised to create feelings of closeness between the people and trust that the party has the interest of all ethnic groups at its heart. According to them, ethnic identity and *zhonghua* identities are dialectical but not in tension. The Chinese nationality (*zhonghua minzu*) is the 'mother', and the 56 ethnic groups are brothers and sisters. This only makes a small departure from past Han chauvinist depictions of ethnic relations, with the Han taking the role of the big brother and other ethnic groups as little brother, indebted to the strength and wisdom of the Han. Interestingly the current dialogue doesn't explicitly discount this type of thought; after all, the Han is the nucleus of *zhonghua minzu*, possessing a 'centripetal force.' If China is embracing the excellent '*zhonghua*' tradition of harmonious culture and Confucian values,

then the hierarchy among siblings is to be respected. The Han can still play the role of an older brother, but the CCP states that they are embracing diversity in unity. Minority groups are visible and celebrated in Yunnan. Their culture is at least being instrumentalised, as we have seen in Chapters 5 and 6, to achieve some practical benefits for the people. But what is the ideology and law of ethnic policy actually promoting? According to the party, the 'three jiaos' are a way of managing ethnic harmony while avoiding ethnic tensions and 'respect for differences and tolerance of diversity,' but commonality is raised above protecting differences. The party is endeavouring to build up the symbolic power of '*zhonghua* culture', through gleaning elements both from a 'glorious' ancient past and the height of nationalist fervour in red revolutionary culture targeting both the socialist and Chinese subjectivities together.

It seems that the CCP is designing *zhonghua minzu* to become so ingrained in the lexicon that it is accepted without question. The continuous repetition is not about convincing the people about the legitimacy or utility of the concept, but instead, it needs to become a matter of fact, a matter of belief. If they are successful and soft assimilation occurs in this manner, what will that mean for ethnic minority identities? If minority culture isn't being aggressively oppressed but is, in fact, being 'preserved' in museums and categorised and maintained through government-led research and through expressions approved by the CCP, ethnic identities will likewise be pushed further towards the cultural end of the cultural/political spectrum, as described by Ma Rong (see Chapter 2). Will the pieces left behind become the totems of symbolic ethnicity for ethnic groups that have become so integrated into the *zhonghua minzu* (mainstream) community that their daily lives no longer exhibit any expressions of a salient ethnic identity? On this path of assimilation, ethnic culture may maintain a personal emotional element and remains a colourful window dressing for *zhonghua minzu* but has been hollowed out for all but casual enrichment. This seems to be the ideal intermediate outcome for the CCP.

Chapter 8 Ethnic Rights and Security

8.1 Introduction and Legal Basis for Minority Language Use

This chapter will cover the topics that are closer to the heart of ethnic laws and rights which have been granted in the constitution i.e., 'freedom' of language, religion, and autonomy. The connected issues of border regions and security will also be explored. While the first data chapter discussed culture as a resource where efforts to protect and promote ethnic culture is placed next to economic motivations and developments, and the second and third data chapters explored the ways in which ethnic unity is being promoted. This final data chapter will examine the manner in which the party approaches the cultural provisions it gives to ethnic minorities and how these 'legal' expectations are met in the policy documents.

The language education policies maintain a skeletal structure for minority language education as a surface recognition of language rights. Furthermore, the prioritising of an assimilationist Mandarin education, which leads to loss of language skills by sidestepping the practical approach to language, which the minorities themselves engage in to gain economic opportunities, serves the state's purposes under the banner of progress and unity. While presenting the good intentions of the state, it does little to actually support the future of the language and practical fluency.

During the *minzu* categorisation process in the 1950s the party used language as one of the major defining characteristics in deciding the ethnic structure of the region (Mullaney, 2011; Lin, 1987). This means that language has provided the framework for the current ethnic reality of Yunnan and has played a significant role in the identity formation of minority groups, both in relation to each other, the Han, and the State. It is important to remember that even though the categorisation process was influenced by language, many groups were shoehorned together for expediency, regardless of linguistic or other significant cultural differences. The state took on the role of the arbitrator of language standards and script for *minzu* groups. However, through the years, the language situation in China has also evolved and, Mandarin¹⁸ itself has gone through a process of standardisation and promotion.

Within the data set the term 'Putonghua' (普通话) appears a total of 10 times across four different documents compared to 'National Common Language' (*guojia tongyong yuyan* 国家

¹⁸ Typically, I would use Putonghua, but I have chosen to use Mandarin to incorporate the multiple terms in use to indicate the same language unless specifically noted otherwise.

通用语言) which appeared 32 times over ten documents. This may indicate a subtle difference in the framing of the language from 'Putonghua 普通话' which generalises the Chinese linguistic landscape into one commonly spoken language vs 'national common language 国家通用语言', which indicates its position as a lingua franca.

Within China there are up to 302 different languages and dialects spoken (Kurpaska, 2017). It is important to remember that Mandarin is itself a constructed language, which just over a century ago, was at the centre of debate and negotiation during a period of national identity construction. Its purpose has always been to promote unity. It has overshadowed the huge diversity of Han spoken languages and dialects, homogenising the Han identity. In 1955 Mandarin was established as the common language of the Han (Kurpaska, 2017). Then in the 1982, constitution article 19 stated that Mandarin was to be promoted throughout the nation. However, it wasn't until the 'Law of the People's Republic of China on the Standard Spoken and Written National Common Language,' which came into effect in 2001, that Mandarin was set as the official language of the country and state organs. Up until then it had been the common language of the majority but not the nation. The law still gives allowances for ethnic minority language rights as set out both in the constitution (article 4) and the 'Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law.' Yunnan has also published its own version of the regulations and laws which echo the national level documents. In her research on Zhuang language rights, Grey (2017) notes that article four in the constitution on language use employs the term freedom (自由) instead of rights (权利).). The two terms do not place the same burden of responsibility on the state and the use of 'freedom' denotes the level importance that cultural diversity really holds for the party. Yet these 'freedoms' are often not fully met. And due to China's weak legal framework the system is not set up to enforce minority rights. Grey (2017, p.195) further states that the freedom of language use is 'not actionable in that there is no legal procedure by which parties could enforce the freedom. The Constitution does not give legal standing to a minority language speaker to seek Article 4's enforcement in a court, either for the protection of their own or a group's linguistic freedom'.

8.1.2 Minority Languages and Governing

Make full use of the ethnic cadres who are familiar with the location, the people and the language, so that ethnic minorities will be more emotionally receptive to you and it is easier to communicate and improve the effect of rule of law publicity (Diqing Peoples' Government, 2020).

Given that ethnic minority language use is 'guaranteed' by Chinese law and constitution, yet the state organs push Mandarin as the language of the nation, how should the government

and its actors navigate the linguistic landscape when the people and the party operate in different languages? It is seen from the database how the government recognises the value in utilising local languages, not just for the edification of the population, but also for practical purposes and building an emotional connection with the masses (Deqin People's Government, 2021). Building close relationships within the local community is a tool which serves the dual purposes of educating the masses in theory and political thought as well as engendering feelings of loyalty, working on the neo-socialist subjectivity of local ethnic minorities.

Research on the distribution of language policy documents within China by Zhang Huiyu and Cai Shimeng (2021) show that in Han dominated areas language policy was more likely to be biased towards Mandarin, while minority areas were more likely to have a balanced i.e., bilingual or minority leaning policies. Bilingual policies are often written with the goal of promoting Mandarin but give concessions to minority languages. From our data set, documents which referred to language use made concessions to both Mandarin and minority language use but lean towards the promotion of Mandarin. This differs slightly from Zhang and Cai's (2021) results from Yunnan. They collected five language policies, one of which was Mandarin oriented and the remaining four were bilingual. Of the four bilinguals, three were considered balanced between Mandarin and minority languages, and one was Mandarin leaning. Zhang and Cai specifically collected language policy documents dated between 1986 to 2021. The difference could be accounted for by the timeframe of their data set, as well as the fact that the data set for this research selected a broader range of policy topics which touched upon language use.

The party uses minority language to broadcast to the ethnic population and condition them through cultural activities. This type of language work is unidirectional and not interactional communication; it relies on translation and transcription to speak to people. Policies encourage the production of media, radio and TV skits as well as themed movies in ethnic languages which promote the party's values to reach remote or isolated groups (Yunnan People's Government, 2016). This has historically been an important technique of the party for disseminating propaganda to the border regions and a key in conditioning the minority populations to party ideology (Brady, 2012). Government departments are tasked with providing and disseminating translations of the laws and public service announcements which are relevant to minority peoples and religious leaders (Diqing Peoples' Government, 2020). The accurate translation and interpretation of Mandarin to minority language is an important task as it provides the minority population with its primary knowledge of the party policies and laws. Translators are recognised and certified by the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau as 'professional technical translators' to fill positions interfacing with the ethnic population. The Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee published a notice on the 'Standard

Conditions for Professional Title Evaluation of Ethnic Minority Language Professional Translators' which stipulates requirements, including the training and level of expertise needed for different positions. Beyond language ability, work experience and education levels, a basic condition is that the translator must 'support the leadership of the CCP, abide by the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and its laws, regulations, and the implementation of both party and national policies. They must 'conscientiously safeguard ethnic and national unity' as well as 'love the cause of minority language translation' (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2022). The political standing of translators is a basic condition of their employment. As seen with other grassroots political work, party loyalty is an important requirement for civilians engaged and working in tandem with governmental agencies (Mittelstaedt, 2022).

As mentioned in the previous chapter as part of the law popularisation efforts in Yunnan, the party realises that they must use ethnic languages to reach ethnic minorities. For this reason, two of Yunnan's 'five purpose work methods' are language based. This includes promoting the legal system in minority languages and translating the legal system into minority language scripts.

First, use ethnic cadres to preach the legal system. It is necessary to discover and cultivate ethnic cadres with legal literacy and preaching ability, accelerate the establishment of a 'legal preaching talent pool for ethnic cadre'...and make full use of the advantages of ethnic cadre who are familiar with the area, the people and the language, so that ethnic minority people can be more receptive to feelings, easier to communicate in language, and improve the effect of rule of law publicity. The second is to preach the legal system in national languages. We should set up relevant columns in radio and television, shoot feature films based on typical case stories, translate relevant legal knowledge, public service advertisements and rule of law movies for broadcast, so that the masses can understand in national languages. The third is to interpret the legal system with national characters. We should keep pace with the times, translate the laws and regulations commonly used by monks and lay people into minority languages for publicity, and meet the needs of minority cadres and people to learn laws (Diqing Peoples' Government, 2020).

Law education is one of the major concerns of minority work in Yunnan. In Jinghong the city's procuratorate office opened a 'legal education school' which gives lectures in both Mandarin and Dai to reach the local ethnic population. The lectures and classes cover legal topics, such as assault, driving offenses and fraud, which are deemed to be of particular importance to the locals (Weixin, 2021). Efforts in promoting the 'rule of law' education emphasise teaching laws which are appropriate to the target audience, exhibiting a focus on anti-social/ low *suzhi*¹⁹ behaviour. While *suzhi* discourse is often focused on autonomous efforts of self-cultivation

¹⁹ *Suzhi* can have a range of implications and meanings. It's use here indicate a well-rounded character, pertaining to moral character and social capital.

that may be thought of as neoliberal (Kipnis, 2007), here it is a form of neo-socialist governmentality and a technique of social management and control (Palmer and Winiger, 2019). Rule of law education in minority areas focuses on real life situations and simplistic explanations, utilising minority language and 'flavour'. An article reporting on a 'rule of law' propaganda event in Mengrun, Xishuangbanna, which focused on cross border crimes, pointed out the importance of citing real case examples as to teach 'rule of law' (CNR news, 2023). The object of these efforts is for the villagers to be proactively learning their legal rights so they can better protect their own interests. Once again this is the party talking at or signalling to the minority population. Interactional communication is much harder to achieve as it leans on cadre who possess minority language expertise. Pursuing *suzhi* discourse has allowed for 'more autonomous and less intrusive forms of 'stability maintenance' (Leibold, 2019, p. 4). The goal of these interactions is to condition villagers to follow behaviours which will mould them into civil citizens. The goal of these interactions is to condition villagers to follow behaviours which will mould them into civil citizens.

Beyond having Mandarin fluency skills, both Han and minority cadre serving in minority areas should learn the local minority language as well. Han cadre, in particular, are strongly encouraged to learn the local minority language as this will help build communication and 'emotional integration among the people of all ethnic groups' (Jinghong People's Government, 2019), but Mandarin remains the language of the state. According to local conditions, allowances can be made for interacting with the ethnic minority population, but minority language is not placed up on equal footing with Mandarin even in ethnic autonomous regions where there are more legal concessions given to language use. A document from the Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture states that official government duties are to be carried out in Mandarin and only under appropriate conditions can the local languages of Hani and Yi be used when carrying out official duties. Even courts proceedings should be carried out in Mandarin and if a party is not familiar with Mandarin they then can be provided with a translation. Furthermore, all legal documents are to be written in Chinese characters (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, 2020). Using the framework of Zhang and Cai (2021) on language policies, this could be considered a bilingual policy document with a bias towards Mandarin promotion. The Honghe document differs from the language rights afforded in the constitution, which gives the right to use both the spoken and written language/ languages that are most common in the locality in court (art. 134). In minority concentrated areas the court and legal proceedings should be conducted in the locally used language. Only one document in the databases gave tangible directions for the strengthening of the local minority language environment. Published in 2019 in Jinghong, the work plan for constructing a national unity demonstration city set a goal of developing the Dai language cultural network

and broadening Dai language platforms into the countryside (Jinghong People's Government, 2019).

8.1.3 Language and Education

Researchers on minority language education divide the education systems into three categories: Mandarin exclusive, minority language exclusive and bilingual. The bilingual system has two main models of language instruction which differ widely in degree to which Mandarin is used as a mode of instruction (Wang, 2015). The data set captured a few points on bilingual education and schooling: support for ethnic minority students and concern over dropout rates, along with developing bilingual education and resources.

In recent years there has been growing anger within ethnic communities across China when minority languages were no longer allowed in schools as the mode of instruction for three key subject areas. This means even in minority language schools the subjects such as: morality and the law, history, and language and literature will be taught in Mandarin due to a standardisation of textbooks and the national curriculum. This is seen as a sign of forced assimilation and an affront to the survival of minority languages. An argument for the change is that greater Mandarin and Chinese script comprehension can lead to more job opportunities and 'enhance ethnic unity'.

A document from Chuxiong Prefecture on strengthening the compulsory education situation identifies student dropouts as a significant issue to be tackled. An upbringing in a minority language is partially blamed for the drop-out rates of ethnic minorities students. 'Some ethnic minority children and adolescents grew up in an ethnic language environment from childhood, resulting in poor basic learning ability, leading to school weariness and dropping out' (Dayao People's Government, 2018_c). To combat the dropout rates the document provides standardised letters to send to parents and guardians to inform them of their responsibility to enrol their children and warn them of potential criticism and punishment if they fail in their responsibilities. Here parents with truant children are targeted as unruly subjects and are threatened with punishment and criticism, a Maoist form of discipline, as governance. The county government gives greater attention to ensuring that ethnic minority children, along with left behind children, children of prisoners and disabled children meet a 100% enrolment rate. The education department is also in charge of the additional monitoring of student registration in ethnic minority areas, poor areas and other areas which are more likely to see dropouts. Of course, within the prefecture, a range of schools exist, and there are 'bilingual' institutions which ideally would provide greater support for minority students. The difficulty for minority students who don't speak Mandarin is recognised, yet language support is not addressed as

a method of improving student attendance. In Chuxiong Prefecture's Dayao County, a target of 98 – 80% attendance rate for pre-schoolers was set in 2016 while strengthening bilingual education in ethnic townships (Chuxiong People's Government, 2017). Bilingual education doesn't necessarily mean that minority language will be used as the primary mode of instruction (Rehamo and Harrell, 2018; Wang, 2015). The primacy of minority language for ethnic minority students is framed as an issue and an obstacle to education.

The autonomy regulations of Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture states that 'primary schools in autonomous prefectures, which mainly enrol minority students, can use Chinese and minority languages for teaching, and at the same time promote the national common language and standardised Chinese characters' (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, 2020). Once again this is a Mandarin leaning bilingual policy. As Zhang and Cai (2021) have noted the phrasing is telling, using 'can' (可以) instead of 'should' (应当), is a weakening of language rights through the discourse of the legal and formal documents. Furthermore, many of the bilingual policies often found in minority areas are pro Mandarin policies. The schools *can* use both minority language and Mandarin, but they are responsible for promoting Mandarin.

Bilingual education is the most prominent system mentioned in the data set. It is emphasised in minority areas, 'where Mandarin education is not available', either due to a lack of skilled teachers or students not already possessing the Mandarin language skills necessary to begin Mandarin only schooling. Minority language instruction tends to be more heavily implemented in the lower grade levels then phased out for Mandarin instruction as the student's ability grows with schooling (Wang, 2015). Training bilingual teachers is an important task for the local governments as the lack of qualified teachers have limited the implementation of the bilingual policies that are in place, especially for classes in maths and the sciences (Rehamo and Harrell, 2018). In Xishuangbanna a pilot programme for bilingual teaching was launched in 2007 with the goal of strengthening the reading, writing, listening and spoken skills of students (Xsb.edu, 2011). A 2016 document from Xishuangbanna further discusses the continued development of the programme for teacher training, setting targets for conducting evaluation reports every semester to gauge progress, teaching design and objectives and includes space for feedback for both students and teachers (Jinghong People's Government, 2016_d). In Xishuangbanna this pilot programme is aimed at teaching students the four language skills (reading, writing, oral and listening) to master the Dai language in order to 'strengthen their thinking capacity in their mother tongue' while also growing in their Mandarin language and writing ability. The Xishuangbanna programme provides an example of a balanced bilingual policy.

This goal in Xishuangbanna shows the respect for Dai language and culture as a point of pride. The ethnic education, being directed towards the deeper incubation of the Dai students' mother tongue, goes beyond typical cultural classes promoted under ethnic unity and progress initiatives. Cultural classes, while valuable, give only superficial knowledge and connection to ethnic identities and do not place focus on language or history (Chu, 2018). Perhaps this is also linked to language and ethnic situations of Xishuangbanna itself compared to the pro Mandarin leaning policies of Honghe and Chuxiong. Branches of Dai language and other cross-border ethnic groups are related to variants spoken in Thailand, Myanmar and Laos. Dai/Mandarin bilingualism would afford Dai students' greater mobility and prospects as China strengthens its efforts to reach out to the countries on its border and become the economic and cultural hub and gateway to Southeast Asia. There are practical and economic benefits for nurturing Dai language abilities. In Yunnan, the promotion and development of cross-border minority languages are key to soft power in the region. Documents in the database suggest that more minority language publications and entertainment should be produced and distributed not only to the ethnic minorities within the border regions of China but also exported to the neighbouring countries as well. (Jinghong People's Government, 2019). The government uses minority language media as vehicle to message and signal the values of the party and pass along their approved worldview and ideology.

Rehamo and Harrell (2018) pointed out that the bilingual education policies are poorly matched to the current language landscape and language goals. In their research they found that the Yi language in Liangshan was primarily used as a 'transitional tool' for students to pivot into Mandarin language education. Bilingual language education can be used for both individual oriented use and group-based language maintenance. Minority cultural elites desire to promote equal fluency in Yi and Mandarin but fear that without greater emphasis on teaching the Yi language it will die out, however the locals recognise the limited practical applications for maintaining full fluency beyond emotional and cultural inheritance (Rehamo and Harrell, 2018). Of course, the situation for every language is slightly different in terms of the vulnerability of language loss, preservation and fluency.

The data set policy documents refer to Mandarin promoting it as the language of the state, language of the law, economics and science. To be a modern citizen who is a useful, contributing member of society one needs to be able to engage in Mandarin. In Chapter 5, the 'characteristic' ethnic goods industry and skill training was discussed. The initiative paired economic development with ethnic cultural resources through the production of traditional ethnic handicrafts. Mandarin was also included in the skills training given to villagers to develop their ability to engage with the national economic market along with other modernising topics such as green development, healthy lifestyles, psychological counselling, and safety

'so as to improve the ability of migrant workers to work stably and live scientifically in cities and towns, and to promote the orderly citizenisation of the permanent population, and help achieve sustainable development and livability of cities' (Dayao People's Government, 2017). Mandarin training is paired with vocational training for youth who don't complete their education. They 'are trained in modern production technology, practical life skills, communication and Mandarin; Training on vocational skills, entrepreneurship, e-commerce, etc. will be carried out for new vocational farmers and leaders of rural prosperity' (Dayao People's Government, 2019_b). Mandarin has been painted as a necessary component of modern engagement with the economy and culturally with the nation, marking good citizenship through their neoliberal capabilities.

The language poverty alleviation app (*yuyan fupin* app 语言扶贫) is being promoted all over Yunnan, but particularly with the direct transition ethnic groups. As part of the 'implementation plan of the national universal language popularisation project of 'direct transition ethnic groups' to overcome poverty', more than 390,000 people have used it to learn Mandarin and recognise common Chinese characters (Rural Revitalization, 2020).

The language poverty alleviation app was developed to be used by direct transition groups in Yunnan. However, it is also used by minorities in Sichuan, Tibet, Xinjiang, Qinghai, and Gansu (iFLYTEK, 2021). The app uses video, audio, and pictures to help users study and recognise common Chinese characters. Also, the voice recognition capability rates the speaker's pronunciation from one to five stars. The app is marketed towards people in less developed areas and those registered on the list of poverty households (Rural Revitalization, 2020). China Mobile is also involved in the project and has supplied 20,000 free cell phones customised with the language poverty alleviation app.

The company that developed the language poverty alleviation app is iFLYTEK, a leading AI and voice recognition company in China. Outside of the app, iFLYTEK's voice recognition input method for typing is one of the most popular across China, recognising 23 Chinese dialects and three minority languages (Tibetan, Uighur and Yi), as well as some foreign languages and direct translation capabilities. The language poverty alleviation app was developed under an agreement iFLYTEK signed with the Yunnan Provincial Government in 2019 to provide AI technology to the province. The goal is that iFLYTEK will help with communication and integration efforts on the 'Belt and Road' construction, facilitate technology in health and education services, support new technologies in social governance, and help promote and develop AI technologies in Yunnan (Ciciot 2019).

The language poverty alleviation app is not the only product iFLYTEK has developed to help in poverty alleviation efforts. There are also employment networks, medical diagnostic

systems and educational tools. iFLYTEK has a very close relationship with the government; in fact, 60% of its funding comes from the state. iFLYTEK has also come under scrutiny abroad after it was indicated in the security and surveillance practises in Xinjiang. It has also worked in conjunction with Anhui public security bureau, using AI to analyse voice prints and form a database of biometric information, which has been used to fight crime and scam callers. As China develops their technology and moves towards integrating AI and big data into its governing systems and smart cities, people around the globe have been both concerned and in awe of the possibilities.

8.2 Religion

Religion and ethnic affairs are interconnected and overseen by both the United Front Work Department (UFWD) under the authority of the party and the State Ethnic Affairs Commission (SEAC) under the State Council. As Xi has concentrated the power of the CCP he has given the UFWD primacy over SEAC. The two agencies lean towards opposite attitudes on policy directions reflected in their understanding of ethnic relations and the emphasis placed on the nature of unity or diversity of the *zhonghua minzu*. The UFWD places the emphasis on unity and national stability, while SEAC places focus its on protecting ethnic diversity and rights (Zhao and Leibold, 2019). The current trend of assimilation will only deepen with UFWD as it gains more strength and influence over SEAC.

Religion and ethnicity are linked together as Islam, Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism, Christianity and Animism are all widespread within ethnic communities. Religion plays a significant role in the culture of ethnic groups such as the Hui, Dai, Tibetans, and Yi. The rights to practise 'normal' religious belief and freedom from discrimination are promised in the constitution (article 36) and the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy (Xishuangbanna People's Government, 2020), but the state holds all authority in deciding the bounds of 'normal' religious practise. The documents in the data set show the party's concern over controlling these boundaries through 'rule of law' and security propaganda. The documents primarily focus on promoting awareness within religious circles of ethnic and religious laws. 'We will strengthen education in the rule of law among religious people and believers, improve the system for religious officials to learn and use the law, deepen the publicity and education of the party's policies, laws and regulations into religious organisations, religious venues, and religious institutions, and guide religious people and believers to build a sense of state, citizenship, and the rule of law' (Diqing People's Government, 2021). Governing society and minorities in the 'New Era' include religious concerns over security, separatism, and the cultural quality of citizens (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2015).

Monks and the community of lay believers are the targets of the policies in the data set. In Honghe, the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau encourages cadre to collaborate with the religious community to take advantage of the positive aspects and influences it can have on society. 'Give full play to the positive role of religious teaching staff and representatives and ensure religious harmony in the whole prefecture' (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2015). Cadre are told to use religious leaders to spread party messages and curb trends, such as school dropouts especially those who have dropped out due to early marriage (Jinghong People's Government, 2018c). The Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau regularly puts on an 'accepting' display towards religion as a positive force in society but one that needs to be managed to ensure it doesn't become a safe haven for 'evil' or 'extremist' thought.

Yet, the attitudes towards monks and religious heads can vary. In Diqing, where Tibetan Buddhism is practised, the idea that the monasteries and monks must be strictly taught the law and under the state's control is prominent in their documents. These documents frame the religious influence, which the monasteries have on the community, as a matter of concern which needs to be reined in. The Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau seeks to separate the connection between the monastery and the community creating a junction in which they can insert themselves. "Carry out the activity of 'legal knowledge into temples'. We will carry out publicity and education on the rule of law and patriotism among monasteries, monks and nuns, and make clear that there will be 'no realm outside the law, temple outside the law, monk outside the law, and person outside the law', so as to promote new progress in the establishment of peaceful and harmonious Diqing" (Diqing Peoples' Government, 2020). Religious leaders are thought to have too much control in the rural areas and a further document from Diqing on rule of law states that "We must always grasp the 'ox nose'²⁰" of temple management and gain hold of the main battlefield of rural areas...We should carry out targeted legal education with the monks and nuns in temples and in rural areas. Educate and guide the masses to consciously abide by the law...Gradually weaken the influence of monasteries, monks and nuns on the production and life of the masses, and constantly consolidate the foundation of long-term stability in the prefecture" (Diqing Peoples' Government, 2020). This document positions monks as a source of instability to the government, almost as a power struggle over the influence on the people. Monks and nuns are subject to significant indoctrination measures for education in Mandarin and on the party:

Continuously enhance the 'five identifications' of the monks and nuns through the popularization of Mandarin and the 'four histories' and incorporate it into the teaching syllabus for the class. Open recruitment to hire professional teachers to the instruct the monks and nuns and guarantee 12 class hours per week so as to build their awareness of the Chinese national community. A large LED publicity

²⁰ Meaning a key issue

screen is to be set up in the temple and regularly broadcast the party's ethnic and religious policies as well as other relevant content. The monks and nuns are to watch the live broadcast of festival activities during important periods such as "7.1" and '10.1'²¹, and create a warm atmosphere of 'patriotism, loving the party and socialism' within the temple (Deqin People's Government, 2021).

The use of religious sites as places for propaganda and rule of law education is a method of control in the campaign to sinicise religion. The campaign, which started in 2015, has been a significant part of Xi Jinping's 'New Era' ideological revival. The sinification campaign seeks to bring the religious field under the control of the CCP and ensure that there are no havens for thought which run contrary to the party. Religion is potentially a wellspring of instability, international infiltration, and a power struggle. For this reason, religion and security issues often intertwine and the remedy is political indoctrination.

8.3 Autonomous Regions

Below the provincial level there are three other divisions of autonomous governments, prefectural, county and city/township. The key areas that are emphasised in autonomy law are representations of organs of self-government for the titular ethnic group and guaranteed participation in local government, as well as economic autonomy, which allows them to keep their revenue for use within their administrative area and ability to adapt the state economic plans to their specific needs. The Autonomy Law also allows the regions to mend national laws and policies to suit the local situation, but any changes made need to be submitted and approved by the standing committee of the National People's Congress. In the data set, documents discuss ethnic autonomy in relation to law popularisation, the role of autonomy in ethnic unity, and security.

Autonomous areas are based on ethnic composition and so they are not laid out in an organised manner. Autonomous counties can be found in non-autonomous prefectures and likewise autonomous prefectures can have non-autonomous counties within their administration. The power given to the self-governing organs only extends to local government. But in order that governance can be conducted fluidly in a top-down manner, it is clear there can be no significant difference in autonomous versus non-autonomous areas.

Globally there are many kinds of autonomous systems and there is no internationally recognised form of ethnic management, but the name itself does denote a level of power and freedom to operate independently (Ghai, 2000). During the second-generation of ethnic policy

²¹ On July 1st, the founding of the Chinese Communist Party is celebrated, and the week of October 1st is the national holiday of the establishment of the PRC.

debate, the continued relevance of China's system was called into question and whether the system gave minorities too little or too much power. Scholars from outside China agree that Chinese autonomy is in name only. When the whole system answers to the party, autonomy is never truly possible. Any regulations and directives put out by the autonomous area must be submitted to and approved by the standing committee of the National People's Congress (Article 116). 'Any 'autonomy' given by the law can be negated through the directives or influence of the CCP' (Ghai, 2000, p. 85). China's underdeveloped legal systems means that even when rights or autonomy are promised there is no recourse to executive measures or judiciary procedures to negotiate or address the issues. There are no true consequences for not meeting the rights promised by law (Ghai, 2000, p. 91).

According to the state, the system of ethnic autonomy is a fundamental part of the governmental structure of the nation and key to its stability and the governing of the minority populations. The party declares its unique solution to the question of nationality. It embodies the pattern of unity in diversity. As discussed in Chapter 2, the reasons for setting up the ethnic autonomous areas was as a concession made to minority populations after the right to cede was taken away from minority groups. The second-generation policy debate argued over autonomy system and whether it was time to retire the practise. When the debate ended, Xi Jinping declared that the system of autonomy was correct and needed to be upheld and perfected. It was never clarified how the system was to be finetuned or what elements of it could be improved.

The documents in the data set reaffirm the importance of the autonomous system as part of the 'New Era' ethnic work and key in establishing ethnic unity and stability. Mentions of improving the system are never followed by any tangible suggestions. Only one document in the data set makes any mention of areas for improvement:

Work to revise and improve the autonomy regulations of the Autonomous Prefecture, as well as Pingbian, Hekou and Jinping counties...We will strengthen legislation in key areas such as the protection of cultural heritage, the protection of the ecological environment, the promotion of national unity and the maintenance of border stability (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2015).

Developing and strengthening the legislative framework and regulations to conduct the directive of ethnic autonomous policies is an important task. Autonomous regulations and goals fit in nicely with Yunnan's five-year plan goals. The business and goals of the autonomous governments follows the mainstream plans and directions of provincial and national policies and plans. The document goes on:

We will improve the ethnic laws and regulations that are compatible with the autonomous prefecture's regulations, the Constitution, the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law and other laws and regulations. And we shall seek more policy support from higher-level state agencies to effectively promote local economic

development and improve people's livelihood (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2015).

8.4 Border Area Development and Security

Yunnan has the second largest international border area in China behind Xinjiang at 2,536 miles, which runs along Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar. In the data set, border county policies showed concern about issues of development, cross-national relations, floating populations, port security and border stability maintenance. These issues often cross with other security concerns such as crime and illicit activities, law enforcement, social governance, and the three evils: terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism.

Maintaining stable borders is important to every nation and plays in the mind of the government when border areas lack both the economic and social resources and the infrastructure of the nation's interior. This is a key issue for national security. For the areas included in the data set, it is evident that the CCP seeks security and stability through the dual use of development and policing. The government aims to increase living conditions and production in the border areas and the most stringent of poverty alleviation efforts were targeted towards the border minority populations. Training facilities, as discussed in Chapter 5, were promoted extensively in border regions (Xianggelila City People's Government, 2020). Entrepreneurship was also heavily promoted in these areas through initiatives such as 'zero cost' registration for border residents starting entrepreneurial businesses and guaranteed loans under 100,000 yuan (roughly 11,000 GBP).

A 2016 document from Jinghong on improving ethnic work under the 'new situation' pledges to use two thirds of the city's annual budget to be put towards efforts which will improve livelihoods (Jinghong People's Government, 2016_a). Cultural services are being expanded and libraries and ethnic sport facilities are being provided in border towns and ethnic autonomous counties (Jinghong People's Government, 2018_d). Another document from the same year in Jinghong on supply-side structural reform sets tasks for building more schools, updating the facilities to improve the ethnic education and bilingual training and resources, as well as providing greater policy support and funding (Jinghong People's Government, 2016_c). Yunnan has also granted border area students free education for a further four years beyond the national eight years free compulsory education (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2015). The province aims to spread the policy of 12 years of free education throughout the province in the future. In Nujiang, the most deprived region of Yunnan bordering northern Myanmar and Tibet, they are implementing 14 years of free education (Yunnan People's Government, 2016_b).

The party understands that education is key to local development. They are paying attention to keeping minority students in school through social influences i.e., religious leaders, guiding the views of society on education, and waiving tuition for vocational and technical schools for students who haven't completed high school. Policies target the recruitment of students from the eight 'cross-over' ethnic groups and minorities from the border regions. The governments receive subsidies to support funding for these students, giving them stipends, and financial support. These efforts serve as a 'concrete manifestation of the implementation of the Party's ethnic policies and education guidelines' (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2020).

To improve living conditions and economic development as part of recent five-year plans, Yunnan is investing in infrastructure to strengthen the logistics and transportation situation. It is developing multiple economic belts and circles, such as the Kunming Ruili Economic Belt, the 'North Gate' of Chengde Kunming Economic Belt, the urban economic circle in Central Yunnan and the construction of the Jinsha River Economic Belt to build physical and economic connections from border towns with other regions of Yunnan, neighboring provinces and countries (Chuxiong People's Government, 2017). This growing interconnectedness is also utilised for the creation of characteristic border towns and encouraging tourism (Mengla People's Government, 2018). Jinghong in particular has positioned itself as a hub of cross-border tourism and business for Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand. While China does not share a border with Thailand, the Dai are considered part of the Tai-lue peoples, hence they share a strong cultural connection. Increased cross border activity also brings with it more policing and concern over crime and public security.

As we have already mentioned, law popularisation is a major objective of the party. The laws being broadcast to the people are those which they feel are of particular concern. Looking at the border areas, the issues are related to the quality of locals *suzhi* (character), crime and public security. The most prominent issues were trafficking, terrorism, firearms, smuggling, fraud, domestic violence, sex trade, drug control, gambling, the promotion of safe borders and national security (Diqing People's Government, 2021; Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, 2021, Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, 2017). Issues of *suzhi* are dealt with by the expanding system of social governance. While crime and national security concerns come under a strengthened public security bureau.

Both social governance techniques and state discipline appear in the anti-drug campaigns that reach throughout the borders. Trevaskes (2013) states that China's drug policy and political narratives are connected, where social control and protecting stability and order are the upmost concern. With the proximity to the Golden Triangle, as well as being an artery for a

supply coming from the Golden Crescent, drug trafficking, abuse and the related HIV health crisis have long been a struggle for the province (Yang *et al.*, 2009 and Trevaskes, 2013). Most drug users are young, rural, unmarried men with low education levels (Zhang *et al.*, 2018). Of registered drug users in Yunnan, almost half (42.5%) were ethnic minorities. (Many of the high trafficking sites are in ethnic minority and poverty-stricken areas (Zhang *et al.*, 2018).

Drug offences related to production and trafficking are considered criminal offenses and are subject to court proceedings, resulting in fines, jail time and death sentences upon conviction, depending on the severity of the crime (Trevaskes, 2013). In contrast, drug use is not a criminal offense, instead it is an 'administrative offence' and is strictly dealt with by law enforcement and the public security bureau (Tibke, 2017).

The border areas of Yunnan, being the pathway for drug trade into China, also happen to be areas where ethnic minorities are concentrated. Research conducted by Hou and Truex (2019) on individuals who have gone through the legal court system for drug offenses in Yunnan shows that minority individuals receive slightly longer sentences compared to Han individuals charged with the same crimes. They suggest that this is partly due to location. Ethnic autonomous regions are free to amend laws and policies to fit the local situation and some have settled on harsher sentencing for drug crimes in the community. In addition, they suggest that certain groups become associated with drug trade and are seen as 'problem minorities'; an individual from one of these groups will receive harsher punishments compared to Han or even other ethnic minorities (Hou and Truex, 2019).

As for addressing drug use, the police are responsible for deciding whether or not an individual is suffering from addiction and sending them to a Compulsory Detainment and Rehabilitation Centres (*qiangzhi geli jiedu suo* 强制隔离戒毒所) (Li *et al.*, 2002)²². This is an important issue as these infractions are dealt with outside of any court or trial proceedings, and as such there is little public information available on it.

After release, drug offenders are registered by the Public Security Bureau. Their names are kept on a list for at least three years after their release and a note is made on their identity card (Liu *et al.*, 2010). As a registered drug user, individuals will be monitored and may be

²² Rebranded re-education through labour (RTL) camps which were under the control of the Public Security Bureau to deal with petty offences thought to pose a threat to social stability. They were used to detain prostitutes, gamblers, dissidents, and drug users. China officially shut down its RTL in 2013 and let all detainees but the drug users free (Tibke, 2017). Many RTL camps simply changed their names and carried on as 'rehabilitation' centres. There are 16 compulsory detainment and rehabilitation centres currently operating in Yunnan.

made subject to drug testing and police check-ins, especially when travelling; for instance, when staying in a hotel the local police station will be notified (Tibke, 2017). The shadow of drug abuse is very present within the rural communities of southern Yunnan. Rehabilitation services and support in these locations are limited as they lack both the finances and staff to address local needs (Xia, 2013).

The primary method of social governance is the grid style management. Grid style management is a grassroots form of social management and surveillance that breaks community populations down into small manageable blocks, which are overseen by volunteers who report back to the local government. While this form of social management is used throughout China, the documents in the data set emphasise the need to strengthen the system in ethnic minority areas. The information gathered is used to better monitor ethnic minority floating populations (Xishuangbanna People's Government, 2020). The data gathered is fed back into the social credit system and information database (Chuxiong People's Government, 2017). Surveillance of the population is pushed further with a drone system connected to Skynet (Chuxiong People's Government, 2016). China's mass surveillance system, Skynet, uses facial recognition and interlinked CCTV feeds to identify criminals and persons of interest.

The combination of social governance and big data and tech form a 'three-dimensional border prevention and control system' headed by the public security bureau (Yunnan People's Government, 2020). This form of smart governance combines social prevention, video surveillance, and big data to monitor early indication of illegal activity and dispatch officers immediately. A 'Strong Border Defence Commando Team' of cadre and public security to patrol the borders was even sent up, which became particularly active during the pandemic as Yunnan struggled to contain COVID-19 spreading through its borders by way of cross-national workers and illegal border crossings.

For many ethnic minorities along the borders regular crossing is part of their lives. As China builds its border security and management system, the local governments are becoming more involved with international security concerns. The documents from Jinghong note a need to work with neighbouring countries to meet their security demands and educate minorities before they cross the border, as well as 'organise and carry out 'pre-departure rule of law training' for local migrant ethnic minorities on a regular basis' (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, 2017). Beyond security efforts, border patrols are also a tool to raise the visibility of the party on the frontiers.

8.5 Conclusion

While the documents show the basic streamlined adherence of state policy, there exists subtle differences in the local context and the management of the policies. Xishuangbanna embraces the local language environment while Diqing shows significant concern over managing the temples and ensuring that monks adhere to party ideology. This, of course, reflects the local context. The implementation and interpretation of policy is subject to regional differences even within a single province. This follows my initial expectations and also emphasised just how dependent ethnic management is on context. I expected that Yunnan would exhibit a different approach than other regions of China, but I had not anticipated seeing regional signs of differences within the province. These differences reflected what was regionally valued and deemed important under the umbrella of ethnic affairs. This highlights the importance of a locations context to be able to understand the position being taken. In the data set there is little evidence that autonomy had any impact on the documents and policies being produced. 'China has been more concerned to elaborate theories of sovereignty and national unity (and external non-intervention) than local autonomy or self-government' (Ghai, 2000, p. 91).

The policy documents do show that the government is taking steps to promote and protect ethnic minority languages as part of the broader promotion of ethnic cultural elements, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 7. These cultural resources may be used as a form of economic development and industry and unity. However, the protection and inheritance of minority language is overshadowed by a call to strengthen Mandarin as the national language and promote it. As Rehamo and Harrell (2018) state, many ethnic minorities take an instrumentalist view towards language education. They understand that Mandarin will afford them with better prospects for economic prosperity and job opportunities, while still desiring to maintain the connection and generational inheritance of their languages.

Religion can wield significant influence on cultural behaviours and the government may instrumentalise it as a propaganda tool. A sizable portion of Yunnan's ethnic population are also Muslim, Christian, Tibetan Buddhist and Theravada Buddhist. In recent years international news has been filled with stories of religious suppression. The campaign of Sinicizing religion places Xi, the party and patriotism at the centre of churches, temples and mosques. The basic rights which supposedly embrace the cultural diversity of China's ethnic groups are not supported by a legal structure which can protect minority interests, especially when those rights stand in tension with goals of national unity and stability for the party.

The economic and social development of border areas follows a neoliberal rational, encouraging individuals to work and volunteer at grassroots organisations to provide social

welfare and services. Simultaneously techniques of social control, security and discipline are used to protect the borders.

Over the course of Chapters 5 through 8, this thesis has shown that within Yunnan policies there is a clear trend of soft assimilation. The goals of the two Hu's aggressive ethnic integration plan would dilute ethnic consciousness, reform administrative systems, dismantle ethnic autonomous regions, promote ethnic economic integration, support a common language, control religion, guide cultural celebrations, promote *zhonghua minzu* identity, while opening up ethnic categories, encouraging freedom of movement (Hu and Hu, 2011). We can see that most of these have been met; these actions would lead minorities towards greater integration with the Han in cities. Observing research on intermarriages, educational systems and community development, we can see how the majority of these items have been gently breached. This assimilation trend is characterised by the shifting of ground, and not by overt policy changes jumping the line of equilibrium.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This research has conducted an exploration into Yunnan's public policy to seek an understanding of how 'New Era' rhetoric is impacting policies pertaining to ethnic minorities. This sociological enquiry was conducted through a thematic analysis of 102 policy documents published between 2014 and 2022, retrieved from the governmental websites of six prefectures in Yunnan province. This final chapter will give an overview of the material covered in this thesis. First, it will review the key research findings and insights from the data in Chapters 5 through 8. Then the initial research aims and questions will be summarised. Finally, a brief acknowledgement of the research limitations and suggestions for future research will be given.

9.2 Summary of Data Chapters

Chapter 5 highlighted how ethnic culture is being instrumentalised as an economic resource within Yunnan. Ethnic culture is a primary component of the province's identity in the national imagination. Yunnan provincial and local government policies intersect with the lives of ethnic minorities through developmental strategies and provincial goals based on tourism. For decades, ethnic tourism has served as a pathway for economic development, bringing additional revenue and investment into the local economies. More recently, a neoliberal governmentality has increasingly encouraged ethnic minority engagement with entrepreneurial endeavours in the industrialisation and commodification of ethnic characteristics, as an opportunity to meet the 2020 poverty elimination deadline.

Yunnan's poverty alleviation strategies heavily relied on ethnic culture and tourism. Tourism is a key area in which Yunnan synthesises diverse policy initiatives, from the 'Healthy China 2030' plan to the creation of an 'ecological civilisation' and the construction of ethnic unity zones for the forging of *zhonghua* national consciousness. Throughout all these, the narrative of ethnic relations is continually reinforced. The construction of ethnic characteristic villages and other 'civilising projects' provide infrastructure and potential development opportunities that protect culture through commodification (Luo, 2018). The looming deadline of 2020 for meeting the criteria of poverty alleviation had a significant impact on the policies of the past decade.

Neoliberal economic techniques are increasingly evident as the government seeks to induce villagers in impoverished communities to take up individual responsibility and strive to defeat their poverty by being creative with the resources at hand, i.e., ethnic culture. Moreover, the intensification of poverty alleviation efforts in 2016 increased calls for local communities to engage in entrepreneurship. The local governments guided the direction of development through applications for official village designations such as 'ethnic characteristic towns', where material improvements are funded through the marketing of identity and culture. In an effort to promote modernisation projects and economic development in rural areas, there has been a focus on cultural heritage and the development and creation of 'brands' based on unique cultural characteristics to support growing local industries (Oakes, 2013).

Furthermore, Chapter 5 highlighted how tension is created between the commercial and the sacred, showing how ethnic minority culture is treated in a detached manner as an element to be taken advantage of and as something held dear; not just to the individual ethnic groups themselves but as part of the flair of *zhonghua minzu* culture that should be protected. The diversity of ethnic culture is embraced when it is presented as a buffet of potential characteristics yielding profit. Given the commercial component, this lends itself to the simplification, homogenisation and performance of ethnicity for the tourists' gaze. The profitable characteristics are distilled and homed in order to suit the tourists' desire. The commercialisation and preservation of cultural characteristics share much in common and are given priority. The colourful, the bright and the exotic characteristic of ethnic culture is to be celebrated and emphasised. Ethnic tourism exploits these for profit, and *zhonghua minzu* discourse exploits it for legitimisation, serving as the window dressing to validate *zhonghua minzu* as something other than Han culture.

I further note the potential of this trend to hollow out and transform ethnic identity through the dual process of commodification and a supplanting of identity salience through an increased buttressing of *zhonghua* identity as the hierarchical and dominant direction for identification. Cultural elements such as food, clothing, festivals, handicrafts, music and architecture are outward expressions of ethnic identity and are supported within a framework which enriches the local economy and national *zhonghua* culture. These characteristics are increasingly emerging as *symbolic* forms of expressions, where heritage can be emotionally accessed without subtracting from the higher-ranking *zhonghua* identity.

Chapter 6 focused on the neo-socialist styles of governmentality in the 'New Era'. This chapter discussed the 'Initiative Promoting Interethnic Unity and Common Progress', which was announced by Xi Jinping at the 18th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party held in October 2019. The initiative was one of the key policy threads impacting ethnic minorities

as it seeks to create a society with greater ethnic integration accomplished through efforts such as targeted poverty alleviation (especially in the border areas), ethnic unity education activities, mass cultural activities and leapfrog development (Li, 2019). In pairing propaganda together with infrastructure and material development, the psychological and physical manifestation of the narrative of ethnic unity under *zhonghua minzu* is being promoted.

The tension between the conceptualisation of Chinese ethnic relations, best theorised by Fei Xiaotong in his theory of *Plurality and Unity In the Configuration of the Chinese People* (1988), allows the push and pull between the pursuit of unity betwixt the ethnic groups living inside the borders of China and the recognition of their diversity. The current trend towards ethnic unity and integration is becoming increasingly evident. The 'New Era' has marked a shift in China's priorities and goals for the future in relation to how it sees itself on the world stage.

The formulation of China's domestic ethnic relations can have implications for further international policies and relations. Ethnic policies affect international policies, and the construction of a strong *zhonghua minzu* identity is highly relevant. Yunnan is embracing the *zhonghua minzu* rhetoric due to the province's prominent position as a multi-ethnic region in China. It has the potential to demonstrate multi-ethnic unity, becoming the visible symbol the party wishes to establish through the construction of a *zhonghua minzu* community consciousness. The emphasis on *zhonghua minzu* rhetoric is the CCP's effort to achieve soft assimilation, which is paired with the neo-socialist techniques of governmentality and the construction of physical spaces of integration.

Yunnan continues to construct ethnic unity demonstration zones, moving towards the goal of 2035 when the province will serve as the model and embodiment of ethnic unity and integration for the forging of a stronger *zhonghua minzu* community. The policy documents show that already a considerable amount of funding and development projects are underway in the border regions where ethnic populations are the majority. Through both economic and social development, *zhonghua* identity is meant to be fostered and further developed. These initiatives are accompanied by propaganda measures and techniques of continuous signalling of the new paradigm under the 'New Era' where the *zhonghua* community defines ethnic relations.

Chapter 7 examined how the CCP utilises propaganda to promote *zhonghua minzu* identity in relation to ideology. Efforts to reach the population rely on neo-socialist governmentality, which hark back to traditional Maoist propaganda and social engineering techniques. The CCP's use of propaganda has always been an important part of ethnic work (Brady, 2012). The CCP's continual propaganda efforts at educating the people on ethnic theory, law and the *zhonghua* community is a technique of neo-socialist governmentality. It seeks to permeate all levels of

society with the same message so that it becomes a piece of the social structure taken for granted, however, this requires constant reinforcement. A successful realisation of this soft assimilation is a slow and steady process in which ethnic differences are diminished while *zhonghua minzu* salience as an identity is strengthened.

Policy and rule of law education carried out by the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau has both ideological and practical applications. In terms of ideology, it seeks to establish a connection in peoples' minds and hearts between *zhonghua minzu* and the party's ethnic work. But also, practically, the local ethnic and religious affairs departments take into consideration the legal needs of the local population and provide them with information to protect their rights when they face disagreements and interpersonal and inter-group tensions. It is carried out in order to supply ethnic minorities with legal knowledge, as it disseminates information on ethnic policy so that minorities are aware of their rights, while at the same time it frames the way that the state interacts with them and how they can address any ethnic-based grievances.

This chapter described the 'three jiaos' (ethnic integration, interaction and blending), used to reinforce ethnic unity and legitimise *zhonghua* identity found in connection with the five identifications (motherland, *zhonghua minzu*, *zhonghua* culture, the party and socialism with Chinese characteristics). According to the party, the 'three jiaos' should promote emotional connections among the ethnic groups demonstrating unity in diversity. The 'three jiaos' has a very assimilationist undercurrent even when the party paints it simply as ethnic cohesion and cooperation.

This chapter highlighted the link between the strengthening of the *zhonghua* community and the ideology and goals of the 'New Era', which intertwines with the party's ethnic work and propaganda, which is indicative of the state seeking to mould the individual. Furthermore, it pointed to how the CCP utilises social engineering projects to shape the individuals' subjectivities to realise its national goals and projects. This once again leaves a gap in China's ethnic theory which becomes ripe with tension. On the one hand, they state that changes to ethnic relations need to be organic, yet the social engineering practises are carried out through government intervention to shape *minzu* reality.

Chapter 8 explored how the right to language use, religion and autonomy appeared within the data set, alongside an overview of border and security concerns. Minority language and education are key areas of minority rights where emotions surrounding language inheritance and the practical recognition of Mandarin fluency exist in tension, even for minorities themselves. The data set reflected the assimilationist language trend; Mandarin use and education is given priority over minority language, even in ethnic autonomous regions. While Mandarin promotion has practical benefits for economic opportunities and mobility, the state

maintains a limited scope for minority language promotion. The rights to language use are offered in a perfunctory manner; they are never offered as a functional alternative to Mandarin. Mandarin embodies the idea of unity while buffering out differences.

The state recognises the influence religious communities, monks and leaders can have on local populations. This influence is at times taken advantage of, but for the most part, the data set reflects the Sinisation of religion where the primary concern of local governments concerning religious communities is that they are included in the ethnic unity and rule of law propaganda and education. Under the few documents' sections coded under religion, one from Diqing stood out for its efforts to control the local temple and methods aimed at indoctrinating monks and nuns into party ideology.

Finally, the data set highlighted how control along the border regions is being pursued simultaneously through cultural development and infrastructure support. Ethnic minority areas also show increased securitisation of the border by means of surveillance through the expansion of grid-style management and drones, border patrols and law education for groups frequently crossing the borders.

9.3 Reviewing the Research Questions and Aims

The goal of this project was to explore how the current situation of public policy regarding ethnic minorities in Yunnan is influenced by national-level goals and rhetoric proliferating under Xi Jinping as part of the 'New Era'. Furthermore, the potential implications for a continued trend of soft assimilation were considered. This section will synthesise the findings of the four data chapters to address the initial research questions:

- 1) How are the local governments in Yunnan responding to new formulations of ethnic unity and the national *zhonghua* community within their policies?
- 2) How does it interact with ethnic targeted policies?
- 3) Can this trend be sufficiently identified as an assimilationist agenda?

This thesis has demonstrated ways that policies with a variety of aims intersect and share a link with the ultimate rational of Chinese neo-socialist governmentality i.e., shaping the subjectivities of the population to internalise the goals of the 'New Era' and solidify the *zhonghua* community and consciousness. This is accomplished through techniques of knowledge production, categorisation, and dissemination to form a 'discourse of truth' on ethnic groups, inter-ethnic relations and the relationship between ethnic groups and the party. Further techniques of marketisation, social control, propaganda, mass activities, and

education imbues the fabric of everyday life to shape subjectivities by internalising and accepting the teachings, theory and rational of the party. The combination of the three rationales of neoliberal, neo-socialist, and Chinese nationalist governmentality result in a complex strategy to progress its assimilationist policies.

This thesis has shown that the *zhonghua minzu* identity is being heavily promoted at all levels of society. It appears both directly in the form of propaganda and indirectly, embedded in other lines of policy, such as environmental and poverty alleviation initiatives which intersect with ethnic minorities.

The themes of ethnic tourism and the commodification of ethnicity showed that when ethnic minority culture is approached through the lens of unity it is engaged with by local governments and placed within the framework of *zhonghua* discourse securing it under the hierarchy of *zhonghua* identity.

Engaging in ethnic cultural heritage is encouraged but also framed under the embracing of the *zhonghua* cultural community. The promotion of 'cultural farms' modelled after Man Zhang in Xishuangbanna highlights how sites of ethnic culture are being designed to simultaneously protect and transmit cultural heritage while providing a path for economic development. Likewise, national initiatives such as 'one village, one product' are utilised by local governments to gain funding to invest in its 'brand', which becomes a selling point for tourism. As part of the cultural and regional branding of ethnic tourism, traditional culture is being reinvigorated and reimagined. The 'double one hundred' project supports artistic and cultural works with an ideological imperative to 'reflect core socialist values and spread contemporary *zhonghua* values while reflecting ethnic minority culture' (Yunnan People's Government, 2015_a), but the selected projects are still valued based on their marketability. This can also include the fusion of cultural elements from different ethnic groups in a given region to reflect a *zhonghua* culture.

Ethnic unity was further explored in the 'initiative of promoting ethnic unity and common progress', which proved to be a significant area in the policy documents. The initiative on ethnic unity and progress seeks to strengthen identification with the nation in a holistic way by covering policy, ideology, culture, material, social and legal targets (Yunnan Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau, 2020). The degree to which it has saturated party language and initiatives is telling. The data shows that local governments are pushing for further promotion of the initiative at every level of society to form a comprehensive penetration of social life. For example, the slogan of the 'nine entrances', which appeared in the documents, suggests that the 'initiative on interethnic unity and common progress' is to seep into every cell of society from both normative and disciplinary structures and institutions, such as temples, schools and

police and military stations, to social and interpersonal realms of communities, villages and individual households (Honghe Ethnic and Religious Affairs, 2018). Considering Barth's (1994) three-tier model of ethnic identity construction, the initiative itself and the goal behind it, i.e., the promotion of inter-ethnic integration to support a unified identity, sits at the macro level, which acts upon the local governments to produce the different policies documents to address that goal. The median level is the design and implementation of the 'nine entrances.' The 'nine entrances' approach, in particular, exerts controls across the median level through implicating normative structures of schools and temples, as well as envisioning the final micro level in penetrating down to the interpersonal relations and 'entering' into the lives of the population, moulding their understanding and experiences.

Language is being used as a key asset in the process of assimilation into the unity of *zhonghua minzu*. Students will form the future cultural, ideological and social landscape based on how and what they are taught. The language skills students develop now will influence the success of the party's end goal of realising a *zhonghua minzu* identity. Education policies being put into effect across the nation are strengthening the position of Mandarin, and minority language education is falling by the wayside.

Zhonghua minzu has been promoted heavily by Xi Jinping's government as the national identity for all Chinese citizens that goes beyond the ethnic affiliation, carrying an emotional weight to supersede ethnicity. The documents show the ideological importance of *zhonghua* identity, culture and community from the propaganda efforts to ensure that the people internalise the discourse surrounding it. The ideological and political backdrop of the 'three jiaos' cannot be ignored in this context. Over the length of the data chapters, this thesis has argued that Yunnan policies show a clear trend of soft assimilation. This style of assimilation is not built around brash or bold policies but is instead nuanced and quietly guiding ethnic minorities towards greater economic integration, social integration and cultural integration. Ethnic identity salience is being diluted while *zhonghua minzu* identity is offered in its stead as a primary identity.

The findings of the thesis follow my expectations as covered in Chapter 1.3 I found that Yunnan was clearly following the national level *zhonghua* and ethnic theory discourse which promotes assimilation of ethnic groups into mainstream culture and society. Yet the practises and techniques being used were measured and clearly adopted to the local context which followed the idea of the peaceful 'Yunnan Experience', forming a soft approach to assimilation. The *zhonghua* and ethnic theory discourse coming from the central government clearly emphasises the commonality among ethnic groups. The creation of ethnic fusion cultural experiences, promoting inclusiveness in ethnic festivals, and including *zhonghua* education

alongside the curriculum on ethnic minorities, demonstrates how Yunnan is implementing the discourse of commonality and inter-ethnic unity in its policies. Yet as expected ethnic group cultural differences i.e., characteristics which are identified as unique markers, are still allowed to be embraced and encouraged in so far as they are economically valuable. Even as the thesis illustrated a soft approach to assimilation that was adapted to the context and climate of regional and governing concerns, I had not expected to see the subtle signs of difference between locations in Yunnan. This shows a strategy of responsiveness as a thread running through the regional and local implementation of central policy fashioned to suit local climate.

This project has addressed an opening area of concern. As *zhonghua minzu* identity, culture and community is building in intensity, the situation of ethnic minorities will be shifting along with it. Within China the government has called for more academic research and thought to address the burgeoning topic of *zhonghua minzu*. As a concept it is still being developed, and researchers outside of China should also engage with and track the concept as it expands within the Chinese social consciousness. I hope this research will be valuable in creating an understanding of the development of *zhonghua* identity in the current era and its interaction with ethnic minority identity. The thesis also makes a broader contribution to research in nationalism and ethnic studies by examining the interaction between neoliberal and neo-socialist practices which aim to shape minority identities through the commodification of identity and playing into the securitisation of ethnicity.

9.4 Acknowledgement of Limitations

As discussed in Chapter 4.8 the limitations of data collection due to the circumstances of Covid-19, a lack of access to the field, and on-line censorship, an analysis which includes alternative forms of subjectivity was not possible. While I endeavoured to keep a space for the presence of resistance in my analysis, I simply did not have access to data on reactions to the policy campaigns and techniques covered in the thesis to explore this element. And while this thesis explored the governments objectives and techniques it cannot be assumed that the state will be completely successful in its aims. There is space for alternative subjectivities which are not fully shaped through the states discourses of truth. Feng (2015) highlights how Miao villagers in an ethnic tourist town resisted power imbalances either through direct or open tactics as individual forms of resistance. They took advantage of gaps in policies shifting blame on tourist to practise everyday forms of resistance to negotiate between benefits and cultural exploitation in the neoliberal market. Protest and demonstrations and even low-level disputes are quickly managed by cadre. As mentioned in Chapter 3.4.2 any reports of ethnic conflict become a veto mark on the responsible cadre's performance reviews and evaluation. So

ethnic or religious tensions are often handled quickly before they can be flagged. Yet we can draw on the stories from the news in the past few years which show that even if short lived, protests and demonstrations are still a mode of resistance within China. But even the small presence of outward resistance would indicate that other less visible forms of resistance must certainly be present as well. It also highlights that even under the totalising authoritarianism of neo-socialist governmentality the state does not have complete control over the construction of identities and subjectivities of the population.

As described in Chapter 4, this thesis and research project were greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a challenge to respond and adapt to the limitations of time and lack of access to the field. Of course, research in and of itself is a learning process which, having concluded, reveals insights which were unknown at the outset.

The final form of this project was decided upon during the spring of 2022, leaving less than a year to identify the data sources, refine the selection criteria, retrieve the documents, analyse the material and write up the findings. As discussed in Chapter 4, the initial project design was not based on policy documents so there was a learning curve as I became more familiar with how Chinese government websites work and the manner in which policy documents are presented and written.

The selection of the documents followed the PRISMA protocol to ensure the reliable and comprehensive selection of documents, but as described in Chapter 4, the selection was also influenced by convenience and accessibility. Using thematic analysis to identify trends, I focused on topics which intersected with the 'New Era', but further themes could be expanded and explored, such as technological development and technical training targeting minorities in the border regions. The themes I identified and explored are reflected in Yunnan's 13th 5-year plan and the national policy initiatives such as 'healthy China 2030' and the 'rule of law' campaign. National policy directions are picked up by the provincial government and addressed in the province's goals and strategic positioning to suit its own conditions.

Due to the time frame, the documents I examined were primarily published under the period of Yunnan's 13th 5-year plan, covering the period of 2016 - 2020. While many of the policies in the data set were either trial/provisional or fixed for a set timeframe, some may soon become outdated. However, the trends they reflect are still pertinent as they set the stage for future policy directions. Also, successful initiatives may pass into permanent regulations, while others may simply be refined, repurposed or set aside. For example, during this timeframe, policies related to poverty alleviation efforts were common. As China met its poverty alleviation target in 2020, these types of policies are likely to slow down, yet it is unlikely that all poverty alleviation policies will halt, especially in the border areas. Cycles of poverty have been a

prominent issue within many of the communities across Yunnan that fall back into poverty after a period of prosperity. Continuous upkeep and policy support will be needed to ensure that poverty does not return to the regions.

This project was limited to policy documents due to travel restrictions. Ideally, ground level data would be collected through interviews and ethnographic observations and used in tandem with the policy documents. Real-world conditions and actual implementation of policy initiatives are important to capture as governmental documents cannot be taken at face value as reflective of reality. Through the process of this research and loss of access to the field, I endeavoured to address this the best I could by reflecting on conversations with Yan Long, on-site research conducted by others and through secondary sources, such as news articles, to help inform my understanding and place the policies in a grounded way.

9.5 Recommendations for future work

The natural limitations of this project give space for future research examining policies on ethnic minorities in the 'New Era'. As mentioned above, this project was document-based due to the restrictions of COVID -19. I will briefly highlight three ways that future research can build upon the groundwork that this project provides.

One approach would be to refine the scope of the document selections. As an exploratory project, this thesis has provided a layout of themes and initiatives which could be examined more in-depth under the lens of the creation and coalescing of *zhonghua minzu* identity, consciousness and culture. This project used a very simple document search and selection procedure and future research, which could tweak the search terms and sources documents from other governmental agencies, such as the United Front Work Department, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, could lead to interesting results. The government has been further putting its support behind the United Front Work Department, which has offices down to the village level (Zhao and Leibold, 2019). In particular, a comparative analysis of documents between the United Front Work Department and the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau could contrast the themes around minority rights and *zhonghua* consciousness and ethnic unity. This type of document-based policy research would also be simplified with access to PKULAW. Searching government websites is time consuming and the results are hit-and-miss.

Likewise, a similar project designed on policy document research conducted in Han-dominated areas or centres of ethnic migration, could reveal differences in how *zhonghua minzu* identity and consciousness are implemented through policy under different conditions.

Also, the appearance of *zhonghua minzu* in policies outside of the mainland, in Hong Kong or Macau, would lend an interesting understanding of how *zhonghua minzu* is being framed and how its legitimacy is structured. Do the broader uses of *zhonghua* identity outside ethnic minority zones still draw attention to the minority presence within *zhonghua* identity and culture? If so, how does it differ? Furthermore, as *zhonghua* identity jumps to the level of a global or cross-border identity, how do minorities fit inside it then? Approaching the topic from outside the PRC, research discussions on *zhonghua minzu* identity should recognise the CCP's greater use of *zhonghua minzu* as an ideological tool, providing justification for reunification with Taiwan and this perspective. The concept expands beyond China's political boundaries, causing tension as it moves across the spectrums of not only the ethnic/national structure but as an ancient cultural/historical identity vs. a modern national/political one. *Zhonghua minzu* is also used to refer to the Chinese diaspora, which goes beyond political borders. It is a hybrid identity, not strictly political and is based on a historical/ cultural imagination. This may help boost nationalism but creates a conceptually muddy and problematic term which draws attention to the assimilative nature and power of the CCP.

Finally, as China opened its border again in January 2023, it is now possible to travel to locations and collect data first-hand. Further research on this topic would benefit from including interviews conducted with cadre on the implementation and objectives, alongside interviewing local residents on their insights, experiences and exposure to *zhonghua minzu* rhetoric, ethnic unity education and propaganda to gauge the degree to which it is percolating into the psyche of the local populations.

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Yunnan People's Government (2015_a) 云南省民族宗教委关于印发《云南省百名民族民间传统文化突出人才扶持管理办法》的通知 (Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission on printing and distributing the measures for supporting and managing talents with outstanding folk traditional culture of 100 ethnic groups in Yunnan). Available at: https://www.ynml.gov.cn/mzzjswj/7617.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=72117 (Accessed 22 August. 2022).

Yunnan People's Government (2015_b) 云南省民族宗教委关于印发《云南省百项少数民族文化精品扶持管理办法》的通知 (*Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission on printing and distributing the measures for supporting and managing 100 excellent ethnic minority cultures in Yunnan Province*). Available at: https://www.ynml.gov.cn/mzzjswj/7617.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=72117 (Accessed 22 August 2022).

Yunnan People's Government (2015_b) 云南省人民政府关于印发云南省民族团结进步示范区建设条例实施细则的通知 (*Notice of the people's Government of Yunnan Province on printing and distributing the detailed rules for the implementation of the regulations on the construction of Yunnan national unity and progress demonstration zone*). Available at: <http://mzw.km.gov.cn/c/2020-12-04/3766790.shtml> (Accessed 22 August 2022).

Yunnan People's Government (2016_a) 云南省人民政府办公厅关于加快推进广播电视村村通向户户通升级工作的实施意见 (*Implementation opinions of the general office of Yunnan Provincial People's Government on accelerating the upgrading of radio and television from village to household*). Available at: http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803847.htm (Accessed 21 August 2022).

Yunnan People's Government (2016_b) 云南省人民政府关于支持沿边重点地区开发开放若干政策措施的实施意见 (*Opinions of the people's Government of Yunnan Province on the implementation of several policies and measures to support the development and opening up of key border areas*). Available at: http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803860.htm (Accessed 23 August 2022).

Appendices 1. DATA SET REFERENCE TABLE

ITEM	SOURCE AND WEBSITE
JH1	<p>景洪市人民政府关于印发景洪市“十三五”加快 残疾人小康进程规划纲要的通知</p> <p>Notice of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the outline of Jinghong's 13th five-year plan for accelerating the well-off process for the disabled</p> <p>https://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=64449</p>
CX2	<p>楚雄市人民政府关于印发楚雄市国民经济和社会发展第十三个五年规划纲要实施中期评估报告的通知</p> <p>Notice of Chuxiong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the interim evaluation report on the implementation of the 13th five-year plan for national economic and social development of Chuxiong City</p> <p>http://www.cxs.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1016/xxgkcontent/11532301015170424F/201901-00009.htm</p>
CX3	<p>楚雄市国民经济和社会发展第十三个五年规划纲要</p> <p>Outline of the 13th five year plan for national economic and social development of Chuxiong City</p> <p>http://www.cxs.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1016/xxgkcontent/11532301015170424F/201803-00101.htm</p>
DY4	<p>大姚县国民经济和社会发展第十三个五年规划纲要</p> <p>Outline of the 13th five year plan for national economic and social development of Dayao County</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2022-0221001.htm</p>
GM5	<p>关于加强老年教育工作的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation Opinions on strengthening education for the elderly</p> <p>http://www.yngm.gov.cn/info/1038/7855.htm</p>

DY6	<p>大姚县实施云南省妇女儿童发展规划（2011-2020年）2020年度即终期监测报告</p> <p>Monitoring report on the implementation of Yunnan women and children development plan (2011-2020) in Dayao County in 2020</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-1226020.htm</p>
YN7	<p>云南省人民政府办公厅印发关于精准做好疫情防控加快旅游业恢复发展若干政策措施的通知</p> <p>Notice of the general office of the people's Government of Yunnan Province on several policies and measures for accurately preventing and controlling the epidemic and accelerating the recovery and development of Tourism</p> <p>http://www.ynyx.gov.cn/info/1032/6481.htm</p>
DY8	<p>大姚县人民政府办公室关于印发大姚县全民健身实施计划（2021-2025年）的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Dayao County People's Government on printing and distributing the national fitness implementation plan of Dayao County (2021-2025)</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2022-0523003.htm</p>
DY9	<p>大姚县人民政府关于印发大姚县医疗卫生服务体系规划（2016-2020年）的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government of Dayao County on printing and distributing the plan for the medical and health service system of Dayao County (2016-2020)</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-10281365.htm</p>
DY10	<p>大姚县人民政府关于印发大姚县全民健身实施计划（2016-2020年）的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government of Dayao County on printing and distributing the national fitness implementation plan of Dayao County (2016-2020)</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/000000018/2017-00018.htm</p>
JH11	<p>景洪市人民政府关于印发景洪市全民健身实施计划（2016-2020年）的通知</p> <p>Notice of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the Jinghong national fitness implementation plan (2016-2020)</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7224</p>

WX12	<p>维西傈僳族自治县人民政府办公室关于印发《维西县全民健身工作联席会议制度》的通知（2019）</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government Office of Weixi Lisu Autonomous County on printing and distributing the joint meeting system for national fitness in Weixi Count</p> <p>http://weixi.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_weixi_rmzfbgs/fdzdgknr/zdgbkwj/wzbf/202002/20200219_135529.html</p>
WD13	<p>武定县人民政府关于印发武定县推动创新创业高质量发展打造“双创”升级版实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government of Wuding County on printing and distributing the implementation plan for promoting the high-quality development of innovation and entrepreneurship and creating an upgraded version of "mass entrepreneurship and innovation" in Wuding County</p> <p>http://www.ynwd.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/11532329015178442p-/2021-0120001.htm</p>
ML14	<p>腊政发〔2021〕8号 勐腊县人民政府关于印发 推动创新创业高质量发展打造“双创”升级版 实施方案的通知 Lzf〔2021〕</p> <p>No. 8 notice of Mengla County People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan for promoting the high-quality development of innovation and entrepreneurship and creating an upgraded version of "mass entrepreneurship and innovation"</p> <p>http://www.ynml.gov.cn/114863.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=1434950</p>
JH15	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发景洪市打击传销创建“无传销城市”活动实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan of Jinghong City for combating pyramid selling and creating "cities without pyramid selling"</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=6974</p>
DIQ16	<p>关于进一步做好新形势下就业创业工作的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation Opinions on further improving employment and entrepreneurship under the new situation</p> <p>http://www.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_dqzzf_znyncj/fdzdgknr/zdgbkwj/dizhengfa/201612/20161227_99979.html</p>

WD17	<p>武定县人民政府关于印发武定县加快推进旅游转型升级实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government of Wuding County on printing and distributing the implementation plan for accelerating the transformation and upgrading of tourism in Wuding County</p> <p>http://www.ynwd.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/11532329015178442p-/2019-0321001.htm</p>
DY18	<p>大姚县人民政府印发大姚县城国家AAAA级旅游景区创建实施方案等6个方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government of Dayao County on printing and distributing six plans including the implementation plan for the establishment of national AAAA tourist attractions in Dayao County</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/000002392/2018-00893.htm</p>
ML19	<p>腊政联发〔2018〕18号 勐腊县人民政府 勐腊（磨憨）重点开发开放试验区管理委员会关于印发勐腊县加快建设世界旅游名城工作实施方案的通知 Lzlf [2018]</p> <p>No. 18 notice of the Management Committee of Mengla (Mohan) key development and opening experimental zone of the people's Government of Mengla County on printing and distributing the implementation plan for accelerating the construction of a world-famous tourism city in Mengla County</p> <p>http://www.ynml.gov.cn/114862.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=1439598</p>
DY20	<p>大姚县人民政府办公室关于楚雄州2021年8项民生工程 and 10件惠民实事分解立项督查的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Dayao County People's Government on the supervision of the establishment of 8 people's livelihood projects and 10 practical things benefiting the people in Chuxiong Prefecture in 2021</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/000003827/2021-00026.htm</p>
CX21	<p>楚雄州人民政府办公室关于印发政府向社会力量购买公共文化服务实施方案（试行）的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government Office of Chuxiong Prefecture on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the government to purchase public cultural services from social forces (for Trial Implementation)</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803853.htm</p>

JH22	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于推进基层综合性文化服务中心建设的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation opinions of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on promoting the construction of grass-roots comprehensive cultural service centres</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=64447</p>
YN23	<p>云南省人民政府办公厅关于加快推进广播电视村村通向户户通升级工作的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation opinions of the general office of Yunnan Provincial People's Government on accelerating the upgrading of radio and television from village to household</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803847.htm</p>
ML24	<p>勐腊县人民政府办公室 关于印发 2020 年 10 件惠民实事的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Mengla County People's Government on printing and distributing 10 practical things beneficial to the people in 2020</p> <p>http://www.ynml.gov.cn/114862.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=35100</p>
DIQ25	<p>中共迪庆州委 迪庆州人民政府关于贯彻落实国家创新驱动发展战略的实施意见</p> <p>Opinions of the CPC Diqing Prefecture Committee and the people's Government of Diqing Prefecture on the implementation of the national innovation driven development strategy</p> <p>http://www.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_dqzzf_zkjj/zhengcewenjian/zcwj/201802/20180227_127997.html</p>
WD26	<p>武定县人民政府办公室印发《关于进一步加强和规范殡葬管理工作实施方案》及配套措施文件的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government Office of Wuding County on printing and distributing the implementation plan on Further Strengthening and standardizing funeral management and supporting measures</p> <p>http://www.ynwd.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/11532329015178442p-/2019-1208002.htm</p>
JH27	<p>关于加强和改进新形势下民族工作的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation Opinions on strengthening and improving ethnic work under the new situation</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7571</p>

JH28	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于政协委员所提意见和建议任务分解的通知</p> <p>Circular of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on the task decomposition of the opinions and suggestions put forward by members of the CPPCC</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=76053</p>
JH29	<p>中共景洪市委关于加强和改进党的群团工作的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation opinions of Jinghong Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China on strengthening and improving the party's mass League work</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7608</p>
DY30	<p>大姚县 2019 年扶贫项目巩固提升工作实施方案</p> <p>Implementation plan for consolidation and improvement of poverty alleviation projects in Dayao County in 2019</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12265025.htm</p>
DY31	<p>三台乡 2016 年至 2019 年 7 月扶贫资金使用情况报告</p> <p>Report on the use of poverty relief funds in Santai Township from 2016 to July 2019</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12264940.htm</p>
DY32	<p>大姚县财政局关于下达 2018 年度中央财政专项扶贫资金少数民族发展资金的通知</p> <p>Notice of Dayao County Finance Bureau on Issuing the 2018 special poverty alleviation fund of the central government for the development of ethnic minorities</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12264220.htm</p>
DY33	<p>铁锁乡易地扶贫搬迁工作整改实施方案</p> <p>Implementation plan for rectification of poverty alleviation and relocation in Tiesuo Township</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12263982.htm</p>
DY34	<p>大姚县人民政府办公室关于印发大姚县教育精准扶贫实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Dayao County People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan for targeted poverty alleviation through education in Dayao County</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12263931.htm</p>

DY35	<p>大姚县人民政府办公室关于印发大姚县财政专项扶贫资金管理实施（暂行）办法的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Dayao County People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation (Interim) measures for the management of special financial poverty alleviation funds of Dayao County</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12263872.htm</p>
YN36	<p>云南省财政专项扶贫资金管理办法</p> <p>Measures for the administration of special poverty alleviation funds of Yunnan Province</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12263619.htm</p>
DY37	<p>关于开展 2015 年度扶贫对象动态管理工作的通知</p> <p>Notice on the dynamic management of poverty relief targets in 2015</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12263543.htm</p>
JH38	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发进一步动员社会力量参与扶贫开发的实施意见的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation opinions on further mobilizing social forces to participate in poverty alleviation and development</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7464</p>
JH39	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发加快推进产业扶贫实施意见的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the opinions on accelerating the implementation of industrial poverty alleviation</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=64211</p>
DY40	<p>大姚县 2018 年脱贫攻坚项目实施方案</p> <p>Implementation plan for 2018 poverty alleviation project of Dayao County</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12264733.htm</p>

DY41	<p>大姚县发展和改革局棉被、寒衣、大米采购项目</p> <p>Cotton quilt, cold clothes and rice procurement project of Dayao County Development and Reform Bureau</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12264108.htm</p>
DY42	<p>中共龙街镇委员会 龙街镇人民政府关于印发《龙街镇农村人居环境提升改善项目实施方案》的通知</p> <p>Notice of the Longjie Town Committee of the Communist Party of China and the people's Government of Longjie town on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the improvement project of rural human settlements in Longjie town</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-08043929.htm</p>
DY43	<p>金碧镇涧水塘村委会 李家小组少数民族特色村寨建设项目实施方案</p> <p>Implementation plan for minority characteristic village construction project of Lijia group of Jianshuitang village committee in Jinbi town</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12263268.htm</p>
DEQ44	<p>羊拉乡甲功村角贡、罗仁民族特色村寨验收</p> <p>Acceptance of Jiaogong and Luoren ethnic characteristic villages in Jiagong village, Yangla Township</p> <p>http://deqin.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_deqin_mzzjswj/fdzdgknr/gzdt/201905/20190528_113305.html</p>
DY45	<p>关于印发《湾碧乡高坪子村委会火草筒裙技艺保护传承建设项目实施方案》的通知</p> <p>Notice on printing and distributing the implementation plan of the construction project for the protection and inheritance of fire grass tube skirt technology of gaopingzi village committee of Wanbi Township</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12263267.htm</p>
YN46	<p>省民族宗教委关于印发《云南省百名民族民间传统文化突出人才扶持管理办法》和《云南省百项少数民族文化精品扶持管理办法》的通知</p> <p>Notice of the ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission of Yunnan Province on printing and distributing the measures for supporting and managing talents with outstanding folk traditional culture of 100 ethnic groups in Yunnan Province and the measures for supporting and managing 100 excellent ethnic minority cultures in Yunnan Province</p> <p>http://www.ynml.gov.cn/mzzjswj/7617.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=72117</p>

DY47	<p>大姚县教育局关于认真做好 2018 年 学校民族团结教育工作的通知</p> <p>Notice of Dayao County Education Bureau on conscientiously doing a good job in national unity education in schools in 2018</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-12262923.htm</p>
YN48	<p>云南省人民政府办公厅关于全面加强和改进学校美育工作的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation opinions of the general office of Yunnan Provincial People's Government on Comprehensively Strengthening and improving school art education</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803519.htm</p>
DY49	<p>大姚县人民政府办公室关于印发大姚县全民科学素质行动计划纲要实施方案（2016—2020 年）的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Dayao County People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the outline of the national scientific quality action plan of Dayao County (2016-2020)</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-1203303.htm</p>
DY50	<p>大姚县人民政府办公室关于进一步做好控辍保学提高义务教育巩固水平的通知</p> <p>Circular of the office of Dayao County People's Government on further improving the consolidation level of compulsory education</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803945.htm</p>
JH51	<p>关于印发《景洪市深化文化教育卫生体制改革实施方案》的通知</p> <p>Notice on printing and distributing the implementation plan for deepening the reform of culture, education and health system in Jinghong City</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7583</p>
JH52	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发景洪市义务教育阶段“控辍保学”实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan of "controlling dropout and ensuring schooling" in the stage of compulsory education in Jinghong City</p> <p>https://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=61867</p>

JH53	<p>景洪市人民政府关于加快发展现代职业教育的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation opinions of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on accelerating the development of modern vocational education</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=61351</p>
DIQ54	<p>中共迪庆州委 迪庆州人民政府 转发《州委宣传部、州司法局关于开展法治宣传教育的第八个五年规划（2021—2025年）》的通知</p> <p>Notice of the CPC Diqing Prefecture Committee and the people's Government of Diqing Prefecture on Forwarding the Eighth Five Year Plan (2021-2025) of the Publicity Department of the CPC Diqing Prefecture Committee and the Judicial Bureau of Diqing Prefecture on carrying out publicity and education on the rule of law</p> <p>http://www.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_dqzsf_zsfj/zhengcewenjian/zfcwjjjdwj/202112/20211214_156685.html</p>
JH55	<p>景洪市人民政府关于印发景洪市民族服饰着装暂行规定的通知(景政规〔2020〕4号)</p> <p>Notice of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the Interim Provisions on the dress of Jinghong ethnic costumes (Jing Zheng GUI [2020] No. 4)</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=90743</p>
JH56	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发《景洪市关于进一步加强文物工作的实施方案》的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan of Jinghong City on Further Strengthening Cultural Relics Work</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=56710</p>
JH57	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发景洪市第一次可移动文物普查工作实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the first general survey of movable cultural relics in Jinghong City</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7318</p>
JH58	<p>景洪市人民政府关于印发景洪市供给侧结构性改革补短板实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the supply side structural reform in Jinghong City</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7463</p>

JH59	<p>中共景洪市委关于深入贯彻落实州委跨越式发展实施意见的决定</p> <p>Decision of Jinghong Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China on thoroughly implementing the implementation opinions of the state committee on leapfrog development</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=7585</p>
JH60	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发《景洪市全民科学素质行动计划纲要实施方案（2016-2020年）》的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the outline of the Jinghong national scientific quality action plan (2016-2020)</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=60362</p>
DIQ61	<p>迪庆州科技局关于印发 2021 年迪庆州科技计划项目申报指南的通知</p> <p>Notice of Diqing science and Technology Bureau on printing and distributing the guidelines for application of Diqing science and technology plan projects in 2021</p> <p>http://www.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_dqzzf_zkjj/fdzdgknr/gzdt/202010/20201027_152438.html</p>
JH62	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发建立健全中小学教学质量管理制度着力提高教学质量的贯彻落实意见的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the opinions on the implementation of establishing and improving the teaching quality management system in primary and secondary schools and focusing on improving the teaching quality</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=61868</p>
DIQ63	<p>优秀贫困学子奖学金政策简介</p> <p>Introduction to scholarship policy for outstanding poor students</p> <p>http://dqzjty.diqing.gov.cn/tzgg/201708/20170824_4083.html</p>
JH64	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于六届人民代表大会第三次会议代表对政府三个报告审查意见主要任务分解的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on the decomposition of the main tasks of deputies to the third session of the Sixth People's Congress on the examination opinions of the three government reports</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=76051</p>

DY65	<p>大姚县人民政府办公室关于印发 大姚县第二次全国地名普查实施方案的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government Office of Dayao County on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the second national census of geographical names of Dayao County</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803336.htm</p>
DY66	<p>大姚县人民政府关于推行终身职业技能培训制度的实施意见</p> <p>Opinions of Dayao County People's Government on the implementation of lifelong vocational skill training system</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/000003431/2019-00468.htm</p>
XGL67	<p>【政务服务管理局】2020 年度农村劳动力技能培训入围公开招标</p> <p>[administration of government affairs services] the skills training of rural labour force in 2020 was shortlisted for public bidding</p> <p>http://xianggelila.diqing.gov.cn/zwxx/bmdt/202003/20200319_93005.html</p>
YN68	<p>云南省人民政府关于支持沿边重点地区开发开放若干政策措施的实施意见</p> <p>Opinions of the people's Government of Yunnan Province on the implementation of several policies and measures to support the development and opening up of key border areas</p> <p>http://dayao.gov.cn/info/egovinfo/1007/overt_centent/115323260151757350-/2021-0803860.htm</p>
JH69	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发景洪市深入实施兴边富民工程改善沿边群众生产生活条件三年行动计划（2018—2020 年）的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the three-year action plan (2018-2020) for Jinghong City to thoroughly implement the project of prospering the border areas and enriching the people and improving the production and living conditions of the people along the border</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=76552</p>
JH70	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于云南省西双版纳景洪“直过民族”地区沿边地区较大规模人口自然村通硬化路建设项目有关问题的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on issues related to the Tongjiang road construction project of large-scale population natural villages in the border areas of Jinghong "straight across ethnic" area, Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=54466</p>

JH71	<p>景洪市人民政府办公室关于印发景洪市全面推进民族团结进步示范城市建设 2019 年度重点工作计划的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Jinghong Municipal People's Government on printing and distributing the 2019 key work plan for comprehensively promoting the construction of a demonstration city of national unity and progress in Jinghong City</p> <p>http://www.jhs.gov.cn/142.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=77340</p>
DIQ72	<p>迪庆州司法行政系统 2020 年法治宣传工作指导意见</p> <p>Guiding Opinions on rule of law publicity in Diqing judicial administration system in 2020</p> <p>http://www.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_dqzsf_zsfj/zhengcewenjian/zcwj/202002/20200207_132354.html</p>
XSB73	<p>西双版纳州民族宗教事务局 西双版纳州财政局关于印发《西双版纳傣族自治州村级产业发展互助资金管理试行办法》的通知</p> <p>Notice of Xishuangbanna ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau and Xishuangbanna Finance Bureau on printing and distributing the Trial Measures for the management of mutual aid funds for village level industrial development in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture</p> <p>http://www.ynml.gov.cn/mzzjswj/7617.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=72592</p>
HQ74	<p>鹤庆县人民政府办公室关于印发《鹤庆县 2019 年脱贫攻坚统筹整合使用财政涉农资金实施方案》的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government Office of Heqing County on printing and distributing the implementation plan for the overall and integrated use of financial agriculture related funds in Heqing County in 2019</p> <p>http://www.heqing.gov.cn/dlzhqx/c106498/201910/c07e07ac92ee4a739f53798a5798aa57.shtml</p>
DEQ75	<p>德钦县 2022 年省级财政衔接推进乡村振兴补助资金（少数民族发展任务）分配方案（25 号文相关资金）</p> <p>Deqin County's 2022 provincial-level financial linkage and promotion of Rural Revitalization subsidy fund (ethnic minority development task) allocation plan (No. 25 document related funds)</p> <p>http://deqin.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_deqin_mzzjswj/fdzdgknr/gzdt/202205/20220512_167063.html</p>

WX76	<p>维西傈僳族自治县人民政府关于印发《维西县 2021 年度统筹整合财政涉农资金实施方案》 的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government of Weixi Lisu Autonomous County on printing and distributing the implementation plan for overall planning and integration of agricultural related funds in Weixi County in 2021</p> <p>http://weixi.diqing.gov.cn/zfxxgk_weixi_rmzfbgs/fdzdgknr/zdgkwj/wzf/202104/20210429_158533.html</p>
YN77	<p>云南省民委办公室关于印发《省级民族学会和在昆少数民族传统节日活动补助经费管理暂行办法》的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Yunnan Provincial Ethnic Affairs Committee on printing and distributing the Interim Measures for the administration of subsidies for provincial ethnic societies and traditional festivals of ethnic minorities in Kunming</p> <p>https://www.pkulaw.com/lar/ddd9e308da831970f7da126e9a4dc57bbdfb.html?keyword=%E5%B0%91%E6%95%B0%E6%B0%91%E6%97%8F%20</p>
YN78	<p>云南省民委、云南省财政厅关于做好 2015 年度云南省少数民族传统文化抢救保护专项经费项目申报工作的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan Provincial Ethnic Affairs Committee and Yunnan Provincial Department of Finance on the declaration of 2015 special funds for the rescue and protection of ethnic minority traditional culture in Yunnan Province</p> <p>https://www.pkulaw.com/lar/d35717ebac6f123bc7cd0ce9ce80ec90bdfb.html?keyword=%E5%B0%91%E6%95%B0%E6%B0%91%E6%97%8F%20</p>
YN79	<p>云南省民委办公室关于做好 2015 年度云南世居少数民族文化精品工程专项经费项目申报工作的通知</p> <p>Notice of the office of Yunnan Provincial Ethnic Affairs Committee on the application of special funds for the 2015 Yunnan ethnic minority cultural boutique project</p> <p>https://www.pkulaw.com/lar/ef3e85ded4481c90a77a83fd494e2c02bdfb.html?keyword=%E5%B0%91%E6%95%B0%E6%B0%91%E6%97%8F%20</p>
YN80	<p>云南省民族宗教事务委员会、云南省科学技术协会关于实施 2015 年少数民族地区双语科普试点工作的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee and Yunnan Science and Technology Association on implementing the pilot work of bilingual popular science in ethnic minority areas in 2015</p> <p>https://www.pkulaw.com/lar/5e38feae36f47c8bf2fd953548c35899bdfb.html?keyword=%E5%B0%91%E6%95%B0%E6%B0%91%E6%97%8F%20</p>

YN81	<p>云南省民族宗教事务委员会、云南省文化厅关于推荐第五届全国少数民族文艺会演参演剧(节)目的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan Provincial Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee and Yunnan Provincial Department of culture on the purpose of recommending the fifth national ethnic minority literature and Art Festival</p> <p>https://www.pkulaw.com/lar/c98e503002ad47c6b8b87a049a433e94bdfb.html?keyword=%E5%B0%91%E6%95%B0%E6%B0%91%E6%97%8F%20</p>
YN82	<p>云南省民族宗教委关于印发《云南省百名民族民间传统文化突出人才扶持管理办法》的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission on printing and distributing the measures for supporting and managing talents with outstanding folk traditional culture of 100 ethnic groups in Yunnan</p> <p>https://www.ynml.gov.cn/mzzjswj/7617.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=72117</p>
YN83	<p>云南省民族宗教委关于印发《云南省百项少数民族文化精品扶持管理办法》的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission on printing and distributing the measures for supporting and managing 100 excellent ethnic minority cultures in Yunnan Province</p> <p>https://www.ynml.gov.cn/mzzjswj/7617.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=72117</p>
YN84	<p>云南省民族宗教委关于开展云南省少数民族传统文化基本情况调查了解工作的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Commission on carrying out investigation and understanding of the basic situation of the traditional culture of ethnic minorities in Yunnan Province</p> <p>https://www.pkulaw.com/lar/526b7c1f35c7480437e23342c1b634f9bdfb.html?keyword=%E5%B0%91%E6%95%B0%E6%B0%91%E6%97%8F%20 https://mzzj.yn.gov.cn/zfxxgk/zfxxgkml/tzgg/202008/t20200805_69641.html</p>
YN85	<p>中共云南省委云南省人民政府关于贯彻乡村振兴战略的实施意见 云南省印发</p> <p>Implementation opinions of the CPC Yunnan Provincial Committee and the people's Government of Yunnan Province on implementing the Rural Revitalization Strategy printed and distributed by Yunnan Province</p> <p>https://www.xsbn.gov.cn/zmzj/65083.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=1118065</p>
YN86	<p>云南省人民政府关于印发云南省民族团结进步示范区建设条例实施细则的通知</p> <p>Notice of the people's Government of Yunnan Province on printing and distributing the detailed rules for the implementation of the regulations on the construction of Yunnan national unity and progress demonstration zone</p> <p>http://mzw.km.gov.cn/c/2020-12-04/3766790.shtml</p>

YN87	<p>云南省人民政府办公厅关于加强传统村落保护发展的指导意见（云政办发〔2020〕28号）</p> <p>Guiding opinions of the general office of the people's Government of Yunnan Province on strengthening the protection and development of traditional villages (yzbf [2020] No. 28)</p> <p>http://www.yn.gov.cn/zwgk/zcwj/yzfb/202005/t20200525_204539.html</p>
XSB88	<p>西双版纳州创建全国民族团结进步示范州领导小组办公室关于印发全面深入持久开展民族团结进步示范单位工作指南的通知</p> <p>Notice of Xishuangbanna Prefecture's leading group office for establishing a national demonstration state of national unity and progress on printing and distributing the work guide for comprehensively, deeply and persistently carrying out national unity and progress demonstration units</p> <p>https://www.xsbn.gov.cn/zmzj/65083.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=1118439</p>
XSB89	<p>西双版纳州民宗局五年依法行政规划（2016-2020）</p> <p>Five-year legal administration plan of Xishuangbanna Prefecture Civil and Religious Affairs Bureau (2016-2020)</p> <p>https://www.xsbn.gov.cn/zmzj/65083.news.detail.dhtml?news_id=1117735</p>
HH90	<p>云南省红河哈尼族彝族自治州自治条例</p> <p>Regulations on autonomy of Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan Province</p> <p>http://www.hhzmz.cn/04/202007/t20200721_868651.html</p>
HH91	<p>红河州民族宗教事务委员会行政执法全过程记录实施办法</p> <p>Implementation measures for recording the whole process of administrative law enforcement of Honghe ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee</p> <p>http://www.hhzmz.cn/04/201912/t20191202_788650.html</p>
HH92	<p>云南省民族团结进步示范区建设条例</p> <p>Regulations of Yunnan Province on the construction of demonstration areas for national unity and progress</p> <p>http://www.hhzmz.cn/04/201903/t20190304_591080.html</p>
HH93	<p>民族团结进步示范州的实施意见</p> <p>Implementation opinions of national unity and progress demonstration prefectures</p> <p>http://www.hhzmz.cn/04/201810/t20181008_591070.html</p>

HH94	<p>红河州民宗委 2016 年度普法依法治理工作计划</p> <p>2016 work plan of Honghe Prefecture People's and Religious Affairs Commission for popularizing law and ruling by law</p> <p>http://www.hhzmz.cn/04/201810/t20181008_591067.html</p>
HH95	<p>红河州民宗系统法治宣传教育第七个五年规划（2016—2020 年）</p> <p>The Seventh Five Year Plan for the publicity and education of the rule of law in the folk religious system of Honghe Prefecture (2016-2020)</p> <p>http://www.hhzmz.cn/04/201810/t20181008_591065.html</p>
HH96	<p>红河州民宗委“谁执法谁普法”普法责任制 实施方案</p> <p>Implementation plan for the responsibility system of law popularization of "who enforces the law, who popularizes the law" of the people and Religious Affairs Commission of Honghe Prefecture</p> <p>http://www.hhzmz.cn/04/201810/t20181008_591050.html</p>
YN97	<p>云南省人力资源和社会保障厅云南省民族宗教事务委员会关于印发《云南省少数民族语言文字翻译专业人员职称评价标准条件（试行）》的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee of human resources and Social Security Department of Yunnan Province on printing and distributing the standard conditions for Professional Title Evaluation of ethnic minority language translation professionals in Yunnan Province (for Trial Implementation)</p> <p>http://mzzj.yn.gov.cn/zfxxgk/zcwj/xzgfxwj/202204/t20220412_75979.html</p>
YN98	<p>云南省民族宗教事务委员会关于印发《云南省民族宗教系统法治宣传教育第八个五年规划（2021—2025 年）》的通知</p> <p>Notice of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee on printing and distributing the eighth five-year plan for publicity and education on the rule of law in Yunnan ethnic and religious system (2021-2025)</p> <p>http://mzzj.yn.gov.cn/zfxxgk/zcwj/qtwj/202112/t20211231_75246.html</p>
YN99	<p>关于做好 2020 年布朗族基诺族等特有民族本科及大中专班招生工作的通知 云民宗发〔2020〕14 号</p> <p>Notice on completing the enrolment of undergraduate, college and technical secondary school classes of Bulang, Jinou and other unique ethnic groups in 2020 [2020] No. 14</p> <p>http://mzzj.yn.gov.cn/zfxxgk/zcwj/qtwj/202007/t20200727_69292.html</p>

YN100	<p>云南省示范特色小镇评选办法（试行）</p> <p>Measures for the selection of demonstration Characteristic Towns in Yunnan Province (for Trial Implementation)</p> <p>http://mzzj.yn.gov.cn/zfxxgk/zcwj/qtwj/202010/t20201009_70821.html</p>
YN101	<p>云南省人民政府办公厅关于印发云南省深入实施兴边富民工程改善沿边群众生产生活条件三年行动计划（2018—2020年）的通知</p> <p>Notice of the general office of the people's Government of Yunnan Province on printing and distributing the three-year action plan (2018-2020) for Yunnan Province to thoroughly implement the project of prospering the border areas and enriching the people and improving the production and living conditions of the people along the border areas</p> <p>http://mzzj.yn.gov.cn/zfxxgk/zcwj/qtwj/202010/t20201009_70795.html</p>
YN102	<p>关于印发《云南省民族宗教事务委员会涉及民族宗教内容出版发行物（印刷品）审读工作实施办法（试行）》的通知</p> <p>Notice on printing and distributing the implementation measures of Yunnan ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee on the review and reading of publications (printed matter) involving ethnic and religious content (Trial)</p> <p>http://mzzj.yn.gov.cn/zfxxgk/zcwj/qtwj/202010/t20201009_70792.html</p>