

# Chinese anthropology and ethnology: the fifth way of anthropology and ethnology in the world



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Received: 27 September 2023 / Revised: 6 October 2023 / Accepted: 6 October 2023 /  
Published online: 07 November 2023  
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## Abstract

Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies are shaped by diverse schools of thought, including Western anthropology, classical Marxist ethnic theory, the Soviet school of ethnology, and Chinese experience and theory. In particular, Western anthropology, classical Marxist ethnic theory, and the Soviet school have had a tremendous impact on Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies across different historical periods. In China, practical and theoretical studies on anthropology and ethnology have become increasingly embedded in those three academic traditions. In this sense, Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies are by no means a simple replica of disciplinary progress made in other countries, nor are they a mixed-up combination of overseas studies in the Chinese context. On the contrary, Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies have developed as an independent Chinese school of thought guided by Marxist principles and a research area through the efforts of generations of Chinese scholars with lessons learned from practical experiences and global research results to produce new theories and methodologies adapted to the Chinese social context. This research area aims to improve the well-being of Chinese people, featuring Chinese academic legacy and confidence. The Chinese anthropology and ethnology as an academic discipline represents the fifth way in global anthropology and ethnology studies, following its predecessors established in the United Kingdom, continental

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Europe, the Soviet Union, and the United States. This tradition marks a unique contribution from the developing world, one that enriches and advances global anthropology and ethnology studies. In other words, with a focus on national and contemporary imperatives, Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies have leveraged and examined other anthropological and ethnological doctrines to propose innovative concepts and theories. Furthermore, it provides valuable “Chinese experience” for developing countries to navigate anthropology and ethnology.

**Keywords** Anthropology and ethnology · Western anthropology · Marxist ethnic theory · The Soviet school of ethnology · Chinese experience and theory

### Abbreviations

CPC The Communist Party of China

PRC The People’s Republic of China

### Introduction

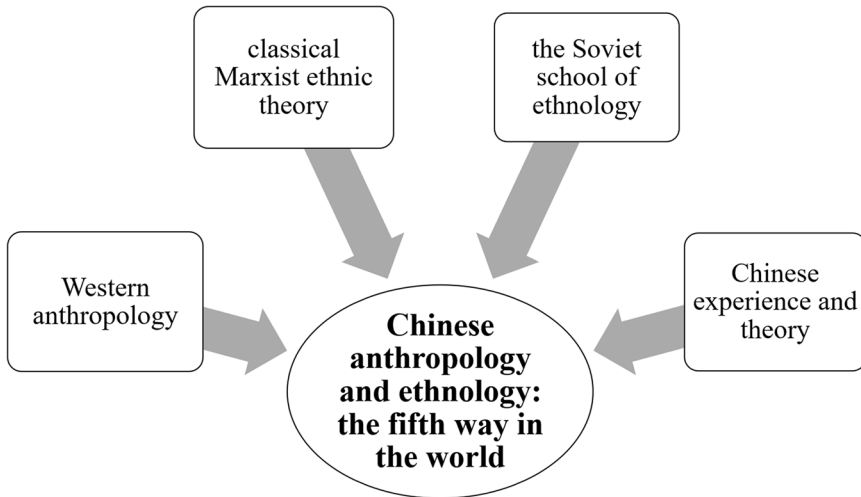
In June 2002, a series of lectures on “Four Traditions in Anthropology” were held in Halle, Germany, and the papers delivered at these lectures were collected and compiled in a book entitled *One Discipline, Four Ways: British, German, French, and American Anthropology* (Barth et al. 2005). The book highlights how the trajectory of anthropological development inevitably bears the imprint of a country’s social, political, cultural, and intellectual environment. Indeed, academic studies are often influenced by the specific social and cultural traditions and prevailing methodologies of the country in which they are conducted, giving rise to a “national” school of thought. This, in turn, profoundly influences the trajectory of a country’s academic tradition (Szacki 1975). According to differences in different countries or regions and academic traditions, early anthropology and ethnology studies were characterized by four major traditions, namely, those of the United States, the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and the Soviet Union. Specifically, around the turn of the 20th century, influenced by Franz Boas, American anthropology split into four branches to comprehensively study Native Americans, drafting the American Indian ethnography from four perspectives: physique, linguistics, archaeology, and culture. This division facilitated substantial progress in this academic discipline. While the academic community in the UK was influenced by American anthropology, it placed greater emphasis on the structural and functional analysis of the social culture. As such, British anthropology came to be known as “social anthropology”. This focus on sociocultural structure and function can be attributed partly to Darwin’s evolutionary theory and the UK’s role as a long-established colonial empire maintaining indigenous social organizations for colonial rule. In continental European countries, anthropology is synonymous with physical anthropology, while ethnology pertains to the study of human society and culture. To this day, countries like France and Germany remain focused on physical anthropology. Although situated in Europe, the Soviet Union differed from its

European counterparts and adopted dialectical materialism and historical materialism as the methodology for anthropological and ethnological studies. This tradition strongly emphasized the practical application of ethnological research. In the Soviet Union, relevant studies were aligned with the socialist development of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; scholars emphasized comprehensive research and established a theoretical discourse distinct from Western anthropological and ethnological schools. Evidently, the foundational structure and academic sources of anthropology and ethnology differ as the result of varying national circumstances and research objectives. The four models constitute the four research ways and national traditions of early anthropology and ethnology<sup>1</sup>.

Since China was first exposed to the discipline in the early 20th century before its formal establishment in the country in the 1920s, Chinese anthropology and ethnology kept drawing inspiration from practices. During this process, it was alternately influenced by Western anthropology, classical Marxist ethnic theory, and the Soviet school. Meanwhile, localizing the relevant theories and methodologies has consistently been the aspiration of generations of Chinese scholars (Xu 1997). Some scholars noted that while Chinese anthropology and ethnology had been profoundly influenced by Western paradigms, it also embodies the inheritance and development of Marxist ethnology, marked by a tendency towards localization (Yang 1991). From this perspective, Chinese anthropology and ethnology was initially imported for national survival and subsequently evolved to serve the people. Particularly, since anthropology took root in China and underwent a profound transformation, Chinese anthropologists turned to academic insights from different countries, regions, fields, and perspectives to establish their own theoretical framework and methodology (Zhang and Wu 2021). Hence, the theoretical sources of Chinese anthropology and ethnology are diverse: Western anthropology, classical Marxist ethnic theory, the Soviet school of ethnology, and Chinese experience and theory.<sup>2</sup> As depicted in Fig. 1, the first three sources have exerted considerable

<sup>1</sup> The accepted name of the discipline in China, anthropology and ethnology, shares a complex relationship with how it is recognized internationally. In China, the perceived relationship between anthropology and ethnology can be summarized in three views: (1) scholars including Lin Huixiang, Yang Shengmin, and Wang Jianmin argue that the two disciplines are essentially the same discipline; (2) scholars such as Song Shuhua and Yang Changru believe that the two are different disciplines, as defined by varying academic origins and fields of research; (3) scholars like Fei Xiaotong and Zhou Daming advocate the coexistence of anthropology and ethnology. This paper adopts the coexistence theory and refers to anthropology and ethnology as a united discipline, with the two existing in parallel to each other.

<sup>2</sup> Classical Marxist ethnic theory is gradually established by contributors to Classical Marxism during their examination of human history, utilizing dialectical and historical materialism to analyze a large number of ethnic phenomena and materials. The anthropology and ethnology established under the guidance of classical Marxist ethnic theory is Marxist anthropology and ethnology. In terms of worldview, class perspective, and methodology, the international ethnological community has long been divided into two major systems: Marxist anthropology and ethnology and Western anthropology and ethnology, each offering distinct interpretations of the laws governing human society and historical development. In light of this background, this paper refers to “Western anthropology” and “classical Marxist ethnic theory” as two distinct sources of academic thought of Chinese anthropology and ethnology. Until the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Soviet school had remained a mainstream school in Marxist ethnology and had a significant influence on Chinese ethnic studies during the 1950 and 1960 s. Given that the timelines, content, and scope of impact of classical Marxist ethnic theory and the Soviet school of ethnology on Chinese anthropology and ethnology are not entirely congruent, this paper also considers the “Soviet school of ethnology” as another source of academic thought of Chinese anthropology and ethnology, as well as another national academic tradition.



**Fig. 1** Four academic sources of Chinese anthropology and ethnology

and ongoing influences on the development of Chinese anthropology and ethnology over different periods, while China's local practices and theoretical explorations in anthropology and ethnology have become increasingly embedded in those traditions. Therefore, the author believes that Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies are by no means a simple replica of disciplinary progress made in other countries, nor are they a mixed-up combination of overseas studies in the Chinese context. On the contrary, they have developed as an independent Chinese school of thought that features academic legacy and confidence. Chinese anthropology and ethnology has emerged as the fifth way, or the fifth national tradition in the world anthropology and ethnology studies, following its predecessors established in the United Kingdom, continental Europe, the Soviet Union, and the United States. This tradition contributes to global anthropology and ethnology studies and provides experiences and solutions for other developing countries that are also navigating anthropology and ethnology.

## Methods

This paper employs a literature review method to systematically analyze the impact of Western anthropology, classical Marxist ethnic theory, the Soviet school of ethnology, and China's practices and theories on Chinese anthropology and ethnology over different periods. The authors had previously offered an overview of the theoretical exploration and major shifts in Chinese anthropology and ethnology from a vertical historical perspective (Zhang and Wu 2022a). However, this did not encompass a comprehensive examination of the academic sources and historical traditions spanning over a century in the development of Chinese anthropology and ethnology.

In this paper, the authors attempt to adopt an alternative approach by focusing on the four academic sources of Chinese anthropology and ethnology and its evolutionary trajectory. The objective is to elucidate its status and distinctiveness as the fifth academic tradition in the global community of anthropology and ethnology, and to explore how the evolution of varying traditions, as well as China's own academic legacy, can be leveraged to develop an academic disciplinary framework with distinctive Chinese characteristics.

## Discussion

### Four academic sources of Chinese anthropology and ethnology

#### Western anthropology

Anthropology and ethnology emerged as an independent academic discipline in the framework of Western concepts. During its course of development, Chinese anthropology and ethnology also leveraged theories, methodologies, and ethnographic practices from the West (Hu 2006). In the first two decades of the 20th century, modern schools of thought from the West, such as biological and social evolution theories (Huxley 1905), racial studies (Haberland 1903), and physical anthropology (Chen 1918), were introduced to China, providing theoretical guidance and scientific knowledge for Chinese intellectuals seeking social transformation. This development also laid the foundation for the emergence of anthropology as a new academic discipline in China. Influenced by Western anthropology, China adopted the terms “anthropology” and “ethnology” in 1916 (Sun 1916) and 1926 (Cai 1926), respectively. The Institute of Social Sciences and the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, both founded in China in 1928, set up the Ethnology Department and Anthropology Department, with the former focusing on ethnic cultures and the latter dedicated to physical anthropology (Du 2013). Some scholars argue that anthropology stands as a modern academic tradition that gradually spread from the West to non-Western societies (Liao 2000). As various Western schools of thought were introduced to China, the disciplinary system of Chinese anthropology and ethnology began to be established, and academic activities such as field research were carried out one after another. In this context, Western anthropology represents an important academic origin of Chinese anthropology and ethnology that propelled the initial establishment of its disciplinary framework.

In the early 20th century, Western anthropological theories were brought to China through three channels: (1) returning overseas Chinese students propagating knowledge, (2) translation of foreign anthropological works and theories, and (3) foreign anthropologists lecturing and conducting surveys in China (Yang 2000). Most of the pioneers in Chinese anthropology and ethnology built their early careers via those channels. Around 1919, many of the first-generation Chinese anthropologists and ethnologists, including Pan Guangdan, Wu Wenzao, Sun Benwen, Yang Kun, Cai

Yuanpei, and Lin Huixiang<sup>3</sup>, studied in France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, and elsewhere. Starting in 1928, under the leadership of first-generation Chinese anthropologists, local researchers started conducting independent field research, introducing specific Western anthropological ideas to China. For instance, Wu Wenzao translated the theories proposed by the British functionalist school (Wu 1990); Yang Kun focused on introducing the French Annales school (Yang and Zhang 1981); and Lin Huixiang compiled anthropology textbooks based on the Boasian School (Lin 2013). In the 1930s, the outbreak of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression prompted intense border and national crisis, leading to the launch of "Frontier Politics Studies" in China. In this movement, Chinese scholars applied Western anthropological theories and methodologies to local social studies. During the process, the pioneers mentored the second and third generations of Chinese anthropologists through researches and lectures. These successors, to varying degrees, inherited the influence of Western anthropological theories. For example, Lin Yaohua initially embraced evolutionism and his bachelor's thesis placed Yan Fu's ideas in the tradition of social evolutionism, reviewing Yan Fu's understanding and thoughts on China's social change (Lin 2000). Subsequently, Lin adopted structural functionalism to analyze Chinese Familism (Lin 2008). Francis L. K. Hsu (Xu Langguang), influenced by the cultural and personality school and functionalism, put forward the concept of "axis" in the family structures of China's society (Hsu 2001).

Prior to the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies were primarily influenced by the Western academic tradition. Of those schools of thought, the classical evolutionism and diffusionism, which emerged in Europe during the mid to late 19th century, were among the earliest ones introduced to China. These two schools complemented each other and jointly demonstrated a global historical process from the perspective of temporal and spatial evolution. The French Annales school, which arose almost in unison with diffusionism, was also introduced to China and advocated the empirical and objective examination of social phenomena. In the early 20th century, Western anthropology confronted social conflicts and issues arising after World War I. The American School of Historical Particularism and British structural functionalism challenged classical anthropological theories from different angles, unlocking new domains of research. The new ideas were gradually introduced to China and seemed to be replacing the status evolutionism in the country. This trend also led to the emergence of regional divisions in China, labeled as the Southern School and the Northern School. This classification was later termed the "branch schools" of functionalism, evolutionism, and the Cultural-historical School in China by American anthropologist Gregory E. Guldin (Guldin 2016). Meanwhile, many universities across the country adopted the American model and established four major disciplinary branches. Consequently, empirical community studies combining the theories and methodologies of anthropology, ethnology, and sociology became a prominent tradition in China's academic circle at the time (Yang 2013).

<sup>3</sup> The names of Chinese scholars in the text of this paper follow the rules of Chinese, with surnames first.

After 1949, the influence of Western anthropology on the Chinese anthropology and ethnology community gradually weakened, but it still had an impact. Particularly after the disciplinary reinstatement in 1978, Western anthropological theories once again reached China, mainly through education. This was reflected in the translation, publication, and review of the relevant academic works and the introduction of contemporary research trends. For instance, *Anthropology* (Haviland 1982) by William Haviland was translated into Chinese and published by Shanghai People's Publishing House in 1987; *Cultural Anthropology* (Harris 1983) by Marvin Harris was translated into Chinese and published by the Orient Press in 1988; and the Chinese translation of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Benedict 1946) by Ruth Benedict was published by the Commercial Press in 1990. In this context, many scholars began to employ Western anthropological theories to analyze cultural phenomena related to ethnic groups in China and beyond. In the practical application of contemporary Western anthropological theories, Chinese scholars increasingly realized that theories born in Western societies were not entirely suitable to China's realities. It became evident that the country needed an anthropology and ethnology theory with distinct Chinese characteristics reflecting its own national realities.

From the naming of the discipline to the application of theories, Western anthropology indeed constitutes a crucial academic source for the contemporary development of Chinese anthropology and ethnology and produces an ongoing influence. Particularly, before 1949, the impact of Western anthropological theories was substantial in China. It could even be argued that Western anthropology was the direct source of Chinese anthropology during that period, placing China's mainstream anthropological and ethnological studies within the Western academic framework. It is important to note, however, that China's academic community did not simply adopt all of these foreign ideas. From the very beginning, Chinese scholars called for the creation of their own school of anthropology and ethnology. Through extensive efforts, they remodeled their studies, which demonstrated distinct features, including an emphasis on application, history, border regions, and ethnic minority studies. Following the disciplinary reinstatement after China's reform and opening up in the late 1970s, the dominance of Western anthropology waned, and instead, it has become a peer of Chinese anthropology and ethnology on the global academic stage, driving each other forward via mutual contributions.

### Classical marxist ethnic theory

During the mid-19th century, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels took note of the emerging field of anthropology in the West. They employed anthropological materials to critically validate their scientific worldview and historical materialism. As these ideas evolved and deepened, the classical Marxist ethnic theory gradually took shape and profoundly influenced anthropological research in China. "We should establish a school of ethnology guided by Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, to push forward the unity and progress of Chinese people of all ethnic groups and the struggle for national liberation of

oppressed nations and peoples around the world”, said Premier Zhou Enlai in an interview in 1955; he also highlighted certain issues within the Marxist ethnic theory (Yang 1982). The classical Marxist ethnic theory has become a pivotal academic origin of Chinese anthropology and ethnology since it was first introduced to China. Starting from the 1950s, the Marxist ethnic theory has gradually evolved into the dominant academic principle and continues to wield a profound impact on the development of Chinese anthropology and ethnology, despite a subsequent reduction in its influence. The Marxist ethnic theory has significantly shaped the distinctive models of thinking and research orientations of the discipline.

The Marxist ethnic theory evolved through discussions on ethnicities and ethnic issues (Hou 1982). However, it did not remain confined to traditional theories of ethnology. Instead, the Marxist ethnic theory explored its impact on social development and its distinct interpretations of the laws governing human society and history, fostering a distinct Marxist tradition of ethnic studies that is different from Western anthropology. These historical contributions profoundly influenced anthropological and ethnological research in China. After 1917, when some Chinese scholars who just began to adopt communist ideologies translated and introduced Marxist classics, the Marxist ethnic theory started to take root in China. China also witnessed the birth of academic institutions and teaching activities dedicated to the Marxist ethnic theory during this period. For instance, some important theoretical works of the CPC in its infancy were produced in the teaching practice of the Department of Sociology of Shanghai University, including the works on ethnic theory from the Marxist standpoint<sup>4</sup> (Shao 2015); and later Yan’an Minzu Institute, the predecessor of Minzu University of China, initiated research on ethnic theories (1941). During this period, scholars began to embrace historical materialism and other Marxist theories, embarking on initial explorations of Chinese history and ethnic issues. Fan Wenlan employed Marxist perspectives to discuss China’s history from ancient times to the Opium Wars (Fan 2000); Hou Wailu integrated ancient Chinese historical records with Marxist theories to examine the path of origins and patriarchal characteristics of Chinese civilization based on the Asiatic mode of production (Hou 2000); Ya Hanzhang, drawing on the Marxist ethnic theory, addressed issues relating to the Hui ethnicity from a perspective rooted in China’s realities (Society for the Study of Ethnic Issues 1980). Based on the experience of its interacting with ethnic minorities in revolutionary practices such as the Long March, the young Communist Party of China combined the Marxist ethnic theory with the country’s realities to create ethnic policies with unique Chinese characteristics. China’s policy of regional

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<sup>4</sup> The Department of Sociology at Shanghai University began offering courses on the fundamentals of Marxism in 1923. The courses offered and publications related to ethnology by the department include: (1) Qu Qiubai’s lectures and courses on ethnic issues, as well as his works such as *Modern Sociology, Introduction to Social Sciences*, and *Modern Ethnic Issues*; (2) Li Da’s two chapters in above mentioned *Modern Sociology*, specifically discussing families and clans; (3) Shi Cuntong’s lecture on the history of social movements, which was made public; (4) Cai Hesen’s course “The Origin of Private Property and Family System” in 1922. Cai’s *History of Social Evolution* published in 1924 is hailed as the earliest Marxist work on ethnic theory in China.



ethnic autonomy began to take shape.<sup>5</sup> These examples illustrate that Marxism had influenced Chinese scholars in many ways, including their political life and teaching & research activities, prior to 1949. In other words, Chinese anthropology and ethnology demonstrated a combination of Marxism and distinct Chinese characteristics since it was used to examine local ethnic issues.

After 1949, the Marxist ethnic theory became a major theoretical foundation for anthropological and ethnological studies in China. During that period, Chinese sociologists and anthropologists primarily engaged in educational and academic activities in the name of ethnic studies. As departments in higher education institutions and disciplinary divisions for academic research underwent adjustments, “the many factions in China’s ethnology community were reorganized into a unified school known as Marxist ethnology” (Wang et al. 1998). This marks the birth of the discipline of Marxist ethnology in China, which focuses on the study of ethnic groups in ancient societies, extant ancient ethnicities, and new ethnicities after the advent of the class-based society (Jin and Zhou 2003). Learning and applying Marxist theories became a key task for Chinese scholars at many universities. Lin Yaohua, for example, systematically mastered Marxist theories, particularly historical materialism. He leveraged Engels’s “from ape to man” theory and proposed that human labor emerged with the production of tools from a perspective rooted in the history of primitive societies and paleoanthropology (Du and Du 2021). Guided by the Marxist ethnic theory, Chinese scholars also started to conduct ethnic identification and the Social-historical Survey of China’s ethnic minorities. This marked the creative application of the “leapfrog transition” theory (Marx 1997). Those efforts led to breakthroughs in ethnic works on the practical level. During this period, the mainstream Chinese anthropology and ethnology community adopted Marxist theories to study and interpret society. With the gradual restoration and reinstitution of Chinese anthropology and ethnology since 1978, particularly since the 1990s when many overseas students returned to China and contributed to these tasks, a substantial amount of Western anthropological and ethnological theories and methodologies were translated and introduced to China, which reduced the influence of the Marxist ethnic theory in China. This trajectory of disciplinary development seemed to have sidelined the Marxist ethnic theory. However, the authors of this paper believes that during this stage, the impact of Marxist ethnic theory was only superficially weakened in China. In reality, from the publication of the *Five Series of Books on Ethnic Issues* over the past thirty years to the disciplinary reinstitution since the

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<sup>5</sup> In 1941, the *Political Program for Border Areas of Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia* stipulated that “based on the principle of ethnic equality, China will ensure equal political, economic, and cultural rights for the Mongolian and Hui ethnicities in the region, and establish an autonomous area for the Mongolian and Hui ethnicities.” In 1945, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued *Instructions on Work Regarding Inner Mongolia*, which stated that “the fundamental principle for Inner Mongolia at present is to implement regional ethnic autonomy.” In 1946, it was pointed out that “in line with the guiding principle on peaceful founding, ethnic equality and autonomy should be pursued, but the call for independent autonomy should not be raised.” Guided by these principles, in 1947, the CPC established the first provincial-level autonomous region, Inner Mongolia, laying the foundation and accumulating experience for implementing regional autonomy in other ethnic regions.

1980s, Chinese anthropology and ethnology has remained rooted in the fundamental theories of Marxist ethnic theory and relies on those theories to examine Western anthropological theories and methodologies. To this day, the Marxist ethnic theory continues to profoundly influence the development of Chinese anthropology and ethnology.

In summary, the Marxist ethnic theory, as a direct academic source of Chinese anthropology and ethnology, had achieved certain successes before 1949. After 1949, the Marxist ethnic theory, which emphasizes the integration of theory and practice, gradually assumed a dominant position in Chinese anthropological and ethnological studies, along with the emergence of numerous academic achievements in anthropology and ethnology, the localization of the discipline, and the exploration of China's modernization from different perspectives. Following China's reform and opening-up policy in 1978, while the influence of Marxist ethnic theory waned to some extent, its academic tradition and modes of research still substantially influenced the research orientation of Chinese anthropology and ethnology. In fact, the Marxist ethnic theory and Chinese anthropology and ethnology have been mutually reinforcing. Through extensive research on ethnicity, society, and history in China—a country with a large population and ethnic diversity—the comprehensive framework of Marxist ethnology and anthropology has taken shape.

### The Soviet school of ethnology

Prior to World War II, the Soviet academic community integrated Russia's traditional anthropology and ethnology with Marxist ethnic theories, forming the Soviet school of ethnology. This synergy represented an academic stronghold for Marxist ethnology (Yang 1984). Soviet scholars noted that the Chinese academic community had built connections with the Soviet Union since the founding of the PRC; more specifically, the academic ties between Russia and China in the realm of ethnology can be traced back far earlier (Leshetov et al. 1991). The Soviet school of ethnology is arguably another major academic source of contemporary Chinese anthropology and ethnology. The Soviet school is symbiotic with the Marxist ethnic theory, and follows the principle of dialectical materialism, which has had a significant impact on Chinese anthropology and ethnology, especially during the infancy of the PRC.

With the advent of the October Revolution, the Soviet school of ethnology, guided by Marxist methodology, began to sprout and officially took shape in the late 1930s. As its distinct theoretical features, the school followed historical materialism, critiqued Western anthropological and ethnological theories, and opposed racism and imperialism. Soviet ethnology served as an exemplary model for Chinese ethnic researchers in their "march toward science" (Lin 1956), as it yielded substantial achievements. Since the 1950s, following its Soviet counterpart, Chinese anthropology and ethnology also undertook departmental restructuring and disciplinary transformation, emulating the Soviet model to engage in ethnic studies in China. In 1956, Lin Yaohua and several other scholars formed a Chinese delegation that participated in the Ethnological Conference of the Soviet Union held in Leningrad, which marked the initiation of direct academic exchanges between China and the Soviet Union. Since then, a large number of Soviet ethnological works and articles have

been translated into Chinese, and scholars from China and the Soviet Union had frequent interactions. The Soviet school of ethnology significantly influenced the theoretical and practical development of Chinese ethnological studies. First, at the theoretical level of ethnic studies, Chinese anthropology and ethnology embraced Marxism in research (Guldin 2016). During this period, Chinese researchers conducted studies informed by relevant Marxist theories. They followed the Soviet research model to examine China's ethnic issues, placing an emphasis on the political and practical aspects of the subject. For instance, research efforts including studies on the history of primitive societies, economic-cultural type, and ethnic identification directly impacted China's academic research and social practices at the time (Hu 2006). In 1958, Lin Yaohua and the Soviet ethnologist N. N. Cheboksarov co-published an article entitled "China's Economic-Cultural Types", which put forward economic-cultural types that aligned with China's national realities (Lin and Cheboksarov 1985). Lin Yaohua also discussed primitive society (Lin and Huang 1979) and its stages (Lin and Cheng 1981), the leapfrog transition (Lin et al. 1985), and the modernization of ethnic minorities. Chinese ethnologists also explored the formation of ethnic groups and the translation of their names. For example, Ya Hanzhang argued that the concept of ethnicity was formed in primitive society (Ya 1980). To avoid confusion with pre-capitalist concepts like clans and tribes, Zhang advocated unifying the translation of the Chinese term "Minzu" (Zhang 1962). Fang Dezhao suggested that ethnicities were formed at the end of primitive society and the beginning of class society (Fang 1963). Lin Yaohua, analyzed foreign concepts related to the term ethnicity and proposed to distinguish ethnicity from race, modern ethnicity from the general concept of ethnicity, and tribe from ethnicity (Lin 1963). Second, at the practical level of ethnic affairs, China initiated two tasks in 1950: ethnic identification and the Social-historical Survey of China's ethnic minorities. In terms of ethnic identification, to protect the rights of the country's ethnic minorities, China referred to ethnic identification efforts made in the Soviet Union from the 1920s to the 1950s, while taking account of the complicated historical circumstances of its ethnic minorities. Furthermore, China also adapted the Marxist-Leninist theory and Stalin's definition of ethnicity to its national realities. Specifically, China's ethnic identification primarily followed two principles: a focus on "ethnic characteristics" and on "respecting the will of the ethnic people". The Social-historical Survey of China's ethnic minorities, on the other hand, provided abundant vital archaeological materials for the study of primitive societies, leapfrog transitions, and societal formats in China.

Since the 1950s, the Chinese academic community has been profoundly influenced by the Soviet model in terms of departmental restructuring, translation of academic works, personnel exchange, and theoretical studies. While academic exchange between the two sides dwindled since the 1960s, to the extent that the Soviet school of ethnology almost disappeared in China, it is undeniable that the Soviet school of ethnology, particularly when merged with the Marxist ethnic theory, remains a crucial academic source of Chinese anthropology and ethnology and continues to influence the trajectory of the discipline (Li 1995).

## Chinese experience and theory

Since the early 20th century when anthropology and ethnology first found its way into China, various anthropological and ethnological traditions from Europe, the United States, the Soviet Union, and Marxism have exerted varying degrees of influence on the Chinese academic community during different periods. Together, these traditions constitute major foundations of contemporary Chinese anthropology and ethnology. Concurrently, China's local practices, theories, and historical traditions have remained a key element of the discipline across all historical periods. Thanks to the efforts made by generations of Chinese scholars, the concept of "localized anthropology" has transformed from a mere slogan into tangible action, and their practices and theories have become an integral part of the discipline. Compared to the three sources mentioned earlier, Chinese anthropology and ethnology, a late-comer to the field, seems inferior in terms of theoretical and methodological intricacies. Despite that, it is deeply rooted in China's socio-cultural milieu and offers a research orientation that combines Marxism with Chinese characteristics, culminating in a unique system of Chinese anthropology and ethnology.

With respect to historical origins, even before anthropology became a modern discipline of its own right in the West, ancient Chinese literature documented anthropological knowledge and materials, including (1) records by an ethnicity of the majority people about their own culture and surrounding ethnic cultures such as official histories and local chronicles; (2) academic explorations by ancient scholars, as seen in works like *The Book of Mountains and Seas* and *Records of Diverse Matters*; and (3) ethnographical materials kept by ethnic minorities such as *The Mongol Chronicle: Altan Tobci* and *Archives in Old Manchu* (Zhang and Wu 2022b). While the original purposes of these texts vastly differed from today's anthropological studies, the accumulation of anthropological knowledge in ancient Chinese literature provides multiple pathways for investigating the origin and development of ethnicities, comparative studies among ethnic groups and different regions. What this means is that Chinese anthropologists can delve into distinctive concepts within Chinese traditional culture and philosophy and subsequently propose anthropological concepts and theories with Chinese characteristics by utilizing indigenous academic practices and research experiences familiar to Chinese scholars, making their practices and theories a major academic source of Chinese anthropology and ethnology. For instance, Pan Guangdan creatively interpreted Confucianism and proposed "the theory of Zhong He Wei Yu" (Equilibrium and Harmony, Order and Cultivation) as a central element of his "new outlook of humanities and history" (Pan 1999). Fei Xiaotong described Chinese society as a "differential mode of association" (Fei 2013). Yang Liansheng proposed "the theory of Bao" (reciprocity) to explain China's social fabric (Yang 2009). Rui Yifu focused on the interpretation of "Wulun" (five cardinal relationships) and "Li" (ritual propriety) (Rui 1967). Qiao Jian conducted research on "Guanxi" (relationships) (Qiao 1982). Jin Yaoji analyzed Chinese behavior based on the concept of "Mianzi" (the recognition of an individual's social status and prestige) (Jin 2006). Drawing from local experiences and traditional cognitive systems found in ancient texts, Chinese scholars have extracted anthropological concepts and theories from both ancient and modern Chinese social

and cultural landscapes, thereby broadening the scope of anthropological research (Zhang 2015).

Regarding research methodologies, Chinese anthropology and ethnology shares a deep-rooted connection with the science of history. Chinese historical records from different dynasties serve as a unique academic source that distinguishes Chinese anthropological research from the Western tradition. The combined approach of reviewing historical literature and conducting field research highlights the unique contribution to the development of anthropology and ethnology made by Chinese practices. Many early Chinese anthropologists and ethnologists were trained historians. They applied anthropological theories to examine historical issues or employ historical materials to explore anthropological topics, which represents a methodology familiar to Chinese scholars. As a result, when anthropology emerged as an independent discipline and was introduced to China, Chinese anthropologists were inclined toward combining diachronic and synchronic research to present a comprehensive picture and background of the issues under investigation. Bai Shouyi, for example, devoted himself to studies of ethnic issues, offering systematic exposition of the history of Islam (Bai 1985) and the history of Hui ethnic group (Bai 2007). Fang Guoyu pioneered research on the history of southwestern ethnic groups in China (Fang 1987). Zhong Jingwen consistently emphasized historical research on China's diverse ethnic folk customs, stating "our folklore studies can also be referred to as ethnology" (Zhong 2002).

In terms of research objectives, since the founding of the PRC in 1949, Chinese anthropology and ethnology studies have aimed to promote the common prosperity and unity of Chinese people of all ethnic groups and contribute to the country's modernization. The integration of knowledge and practice, and applying knowledge to practical use, have always been the hallmark of Chinese academia. Chinese anthropology and ethnology was initially introduced as an effort to "save the nation from subjugation and ensure its survival". During World War II, "Frontier Politics Studies" were established to address border crises, and contribute to "the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the building of a new country". Subsequently, as part of its modernization effort, China conducted ethnic identification and two nationwide surveys of ethnic minorities. In recent years, researchers have focused on forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. Over the years, China's anthropological and ethnological studies have consistently responded to the latest social developments in China, with an emphasis on practical applications of the discipline. At the same time, the discipline has remained committed to building a modern China. This trajectory spans from the establishment of national identity to the pattern of pluralistic integration of the Chinese nation, from economic anthropology focused on society to economic ethics centered around culture, and from rural China to the enlightenment of cultural consciousness. This journey also demonstrated that Chinese anthropology and ethnology is rooted in the Chinese context and presents solutions to the country's modern transition (Yang 2022).

Concerning the content of research, Chinese anthropology and ethnology has demonstrated diverse regional characteristics and indigenous experiences across different areas. Some scholars suggested that those academic variations can be divided into two primary categories: the Southern School and the Northern School.

Although they have been influenced to varying degrees by Western theories, the two schools have developed distinct features shaped by local experiences and academic leaders. The Southern School, often referred to as “the Historical School of China”, is mainly influenced by the Boasian school and the French Annales school. Leading scholars of the Southern School include Ling Chunsheng and Lin Huixiang. They emphasize the use of historical records in describing and organizing descriptions of the historical development and current status of various ethnic groups, with the aim of reconstructing the history of the Chinese nation. The Northern School, also known as “Chinese functionalism”, is represented by figures like Wu Wenzao, Fei Xiaotong, and Lin Yaohua. They insist that the practical characteristics of anthropology should be leveraged to address societal issues in China by studying Han Chinese communities, with an emphasis on community-based research (Wu 2017). It is important to note that both the Southern School and the Northern School encompass multiple perspectives. Rather, their academic presence varies regionally, and the terms “historical” and “functional” are only used to describe regional characteristics of the social conditions and academic traditions of the time. Further, Fei Xiaotong pioneered localized anthropological research, which starkly contrasts with Western anthropological studies on “exotic cultures”. In the preface of *Peasant Life in China*, Bronisław Malinowski referred to the study as “a milestone in the development of anthropological fieldwork and theoretical research” (Fei 2018).

In conclusion, China’s rich history, vast territory, abundant resources and diversity naturally give rise to diverse research orientations in different regions. Besides, scholars also bring their own areas of expertise to the table. Within the shared social context, Chinese anthropologists and ethnologists face common contemporary challenges: conducting Chinese socialist modernization and constructing Chinese expression of anthropology and ethnology. This leads to similar research trends, which converge into a corpus of local experience and national tradition in anthropological studies (Xu and Xu 2009). The presence of this academic tradition is evident not only in studying foreign anthropological theories over the past century, but also in the contemporary efforts to localize the discipline and foster confidence in Chinese culture.

### **Chinese anthropology and ethnology as the fifth way**

The theories and methods adopted by scholars in each discipline are closely intertwined with their local social context and cultural traditions (Li and Ma 1991). During the development of anthropology and ethnology in China over the past century, one can observe how the discipline has been influenced by Western (particularly European and American) and Soviet academic traditions, shaping its disciplinary structure, theoretical exploration, and field research. Rooted in both Western and Soviet anthropological and ethnological systems, Chinese anthropology and ethnology applies Marxist tenets to China’s realities. As such, Chinese anthropology and ethnology is a product not only influenced by multiple academic sources but also born within the nation’s historical traditions. The establishment of the framework of Chinese anthropology and ethnology began quite early. However, while learning

from the experiences of other countries, it has also been a century-long challenge for Chinese scholars to create a tradition of anthropology and ethnology with distinct Chinese characteristics and to build a Chinese school consistent with national traditions. In the 1930s, China's first-generation anthropologists started to advocate for the "localization of anthropology". Sun Benwen and Huang Wenshan believed that Chinese scholars ought to leverage suitable Western ethnological theories to build a uniquely Chinese school of anthropology (Huang 1936). Wu Wenzao argued that, based on functionalism, researchers should conduct independent Chinese anthropological studies and apply theories to specific contexts (Wu 2010). Cen Jiawu pointed out that, considering the different national realities, China should establish a Chinese school of anthropology that differs from Western anthropology in content, theory, and methodology (Cen 1946). Since the 1980s, with the revival and reinstitution of anthropology, the issue of localization resurfaced among the first and second generations of Chinese anthropologists, who are now academic leaders in the field. With decades of experience in disciplinary development, they have focused on building a genuine Chinese school of anthropology and ethnology. Yang Kun discussed the development of Marxist ethnic theory with Chinese characteristics (Yang 1991). Fei Xiaotong believed that China was on the path toward establishing a systematic discipline of applied social anthropology (Fei 1980). Lin Yaohua noted that efforts should be made to gradually find a path of development for ethnology that suits China's realities, and the Chinese academic community should endeavor to explore a Marxist-guided ethnology adapted to the Chinese context (Lin et al. 1985). These discussions played a role in the disciplinary development of Chinese anthropology and ethnology. At the same time, a new generation of Chinese scholars also started to explore the localization of the discipline. Zhang Youjun et al. proposed to localize anthropology and ethnology by conducting local fieldwork, identifying indigenous anthropological concepts, and integrating the perspectives of multiple schools (Zhang et al. 2003). He Xingliang argued that the localization of anthropology in China is based on the discipline's internationalization (He 2000). Wang Jianmin proposed to manage the balance between disciplinary standardization and localization (Wang 2000). Additionally, scholars including Xu Jieshun (Xu 1997), Zhou Daming (Zhou 1996), Liao Yang (Liao 2000), and Hu Hongbao and others (Hu et al. 1998) also discussed the purpose, content, method, and pathway of anthropology's localization in China. Chinese scholars have created a wide range of localized concepts and theories, such as the Tibetan-Yi Corridor, the pattern of pluralistic integration of the Chinese nation, the differential mode of association and gentry society (Fei Xiaotong), the sacrificial circle (Liu Zhiwan et al.), the belief circle (Lin Meirong), marginalized society (Qiao Jian), the culture theory (Zhuang Kongshao), the theory of practice-based history (Zhang Xiaojun), the extended case method (Zhu Xiaoyang), the pluralism of authority (Zhao Xudong), fountain society and transition theory (Du Jing), cultural sidewall theory (Xu Lili), Marginal Han society (Shi Feng), spring-area society (Zhang Junfeng), stranger and acquaintance theory (Zhou Xing), ethnic habitat theory (Yang Tingshuo), ethnic co-governance theory (Zhu Lun), theory of Three Circles (Wang Mingming), the rural-urban dual social structure theory, state-nation theory, corporate anthropology, and neo-classical structural-functionalism (Zhang Jijiao), among others. These studies demonstrate

how Chinese anthropology and ethnology critically reflected on its four academic sources while inheriting their ways based on theories and methodologies with distinct Chinese characteristics. They also showcase how Chinese anthropology and ethnology, in the context of a new era, has created iconic concepts and theories, explored traditional cultural elements and methodological paths in line with Chinese experience, developed a Chinese disciplinary system, and engaged in dialogues with the international academic community. Today, it can be argued that, after generations of exploration and research efforts, Chinese anthropology and ethnology has evolved into the fifth research way of anthropology and ethnology by learning from foreign academic traditions while incorporating local experiences. Although some Chinese scholars have recognized this issue and put forward new theories, a considerable number of scholars are still operating within early paradigms of anthropology, which marks a pressing concern in the academic community.

Since 1978, with the concerted efforts of generations of Chinese scholars, Chinese anthropology and ethnology has developed theoretical diversity, burgeoning subdisciplines, and distinctive research characteristics, giving rise to a Chinese school of anthropology and ethnology. Notably, certain Chinese scholars (particularly academic leaders) have produced results characterized by features of Chinese modernization. Specifically, as they examine and learn from the disciplinary development of Soviet ethnology, many Chinese scholars still focus on incorporating the Marxist ethnic theory into the disciplinary framework of Chinese anthropology and ethnology. For instance, Jin Binggao explored the application of Marxist theories to the policy of regional ethnic autonomy (Zhang et al. 2019) and discussed ethnic theories with Chinese characteristics (Zhao and Jin 2019). The influence of Western anthropology on China primarily centers on academic dialogues, such as Wang Mingming's reflections on classical anthropology (Wang 2020), academic dialogue between Zhang Jijiao and British scholar Maurice Freedman (Zhang and Dang 2020) and American scholar George William Skinner (Zhang and Wu 2020b). Studies based on Chinese local experiences have been a prominent academic focus in recent years. Scholars including Naran Bilik (Naran and Tao 2020), Zhao Xudong (Zhao 2019), Hao Yameng (Hao 2019), Xu Jieshun (Xu 2018), Wang Yanzhong (Wang 2018), Ma Guoqing (Ma 2017), and Jin Binggao (Liu and Jin 2017) extensively explored the sense of community for the Chinese nation; Zhang Jijiao focused on cultural heritage (Zhang 2020; Zhang and Wu, 2020a, 2020b) and the integration of culture and tourism development (Zhang and Wu a); Zhao Xudong examined rural revitalization (Zhao 2020). These studies reveal that Chinese anthropology and ethnology, grounded on domestic social issues, has embarked on a path toward Chinese modernization featuring both localization and internationalization in their research focus. It is therefore clear that under the influence of diverse academic ways, Chinese anthropology and ethnology, as a comprehensive disciplinary system, can now reflect the complex issues arising from China's social transformation. Additionally, the discipline is dedicated to contributing a Chinese solution to improving national well-being and global academic development. The authors believe that as the fifth way of anthropology and ethnology, Chinese anthropology and ethnology demonstrates the following characteristics:



Firstly, Chinese anthropology and ethnology has drawn inspiration from academic ways across the world, amalgamating them through innovation to create a unique academic way. China is one of the few countries influenced simultaneously by Western and Soviet anthropological traditions. However, Chinese anthropology and ethnology did not merely absorb these ways. Instead, while synthesizing academic ways worldwide, the discipline sublated negative aspects of Western and Soviet anthropological research and consistently focused on local experiences and theories. To be more specific, before the founding of the PRC in 1949, Chinese anthropology and ethnology largely adopted Western anthropological theories, particularly those advocated by evolutionism, functionalism, and the cultural-historical school. Following the founding of the PRC, influenced by the political landscape, the Soviet school of ethnology, as well as the Marxist ethnic theory, became the guiding principles for Chinese scholars. The Soviet school, in particular, was seen as the chief role model of Chinese anthropology and ethnology. By the late 1950s, the fervor for the Soviet school waned in China, and Marxist materialism started to guide anthropological and ethnological studies in China. Since the reform and opening up in 1978, Western and Soviet anthropological theories re-entered China, however, the framework of Chinese anthropology and ethnology had already been shaped by local experiences. The emphasis on Chinese experiences and theories gave birth to multiple regional academic centers, including the Southern School and the Northern School, as well as schools based in Northwest China, Southwest China, and Central China. In the first two decades of the 21st century, Chinese anthropology and ethnology critically reflected on Western ideological trends such as postmodernism and deepened research into local experiences and theories. This period also witnessed an intensified exploration of domestic experiences and theoretical research in China as well as the emergence of subdisciplines with new theories and methodologies. Over time, Chinese anthropology and ethnology developed its own distinctive characteristics, culminating in a uniquely Chinese school of anthropology and ethnology.

Secondly, Chinese anthropology and ethnology features the achievements of Chinese scholars in exploring new theories and methods across generations. As the fifth research paradigm of the subject, Chinese anthropology and ethnology is a collective achievement of Chinese researchers. Its theories, methodologies, core concepts, terminology, academic norms, and logical structures exhibit a commonality, integration, and consensus in perceptions, which reflects distinct Chinese academic characteristics. The discipline demonstrates the overall research progress and Chinese ways of a united academic community. Further, scholars have started to refine the discipline's theories and methodologies, with a focus on China's social realities, thereby enriching this emerging research paradigm. Localization, in particular, has been a recurring research theme for generations of Chinese anthropologists and ethnologists. It is the first step for China to develop a local research paradigm. The first and second generations of Chinese anthropologists proposed and attempted to address this issue, often by adapting foreign theories to the studies of Chinese society. Since the reform and opening up, senior anthropologists have re-emphasized the need to build a Chinese school of anthropology. Meanwhile, young scholars have also begun to explore local issues in China through the discourse of the discipline. They have discussed Chinese modernization and engaged in dialogues with the international

academic community to present innovative theories and methodologies with distinct Chinese characteristics.

Thirdly, Chinese anthropology and ethnology is guided by Marxism and the thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics. Basic Marxist tenets and the evolving socialist theories with Chinese characteristics have continued to play a guiding role throughout the century-long development of Chinese anthropology and ethnology, especially after the founding of the PRC. In the 1940s, the Communist Party of China combined the Marxist ethnic theory with China's realities, adopted ethnic policies with Chinese characteristics, and launched special studies on the history of primitive societies and ethnic issues. After 1949, Marxism became the main ideological foundation and academic tradition for Chinese anthropology and ethnology. Guided by Marxist ethnic theory and the Soviet school of ethnology, Chinese scholars started to conduct ethnic identification and the Social-historical Survey of China's ethnic minorities. Moreover, China creatively implemented the theory of "leapfrog transition", which led to breakthroughs in ethnic affairs and yielded academic achievements. Since 1978, the world has seen the revival of anthropology and ethnology in China, with an emphasis on applied research. Although the influence of Marxist ethnic theory on the Chinese academic community somewhat weakened compared to that of Western anthropology, its academic tradition and research patterns have remained relevant in shaping the academic approach and research orientation of Chinese anthropology and ethnology. In recent years, the Marxist ethnic theory has continued to achieve creative development in the context of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era. Forging the sense of community for the Chinese nation has become a major focus of Chinese anthropology and ethnology, yielding certain results.

Fourth, Chinese anthropology and ethnology is people-centered and fully aligns with China's socialist modernization. The integration of knowledge and practice, and applying knowledge to practical use, have been the hallmark of Chinese academia. This principle also applies to Chinese anthropology and ethnology, the ultimate purpose of which is to serve the society, the people, and the country. Initially imported as an effort to save the Chinese nation from subjugation and ensure its survival, the discipline catalyzed Frontier Politics Studies during war times. As part of the country's modernization effort, Chinese anthropologists and ethnologists conducted the ethnic identification and the nationwide Social-historical Survey of China's ethnic minorities. Over the years, Chinese anthropology and ethnology has consistently responded to the latest social developments in China. With an emphasis on practical application, the discipline has always been centered around the fundamental well-being of Chinese people of all ethnic groups. Furthermore, Chinese anthropology and ethnology emerged to address local social issues and continues to do so today. Chinese anthropologists and ethnologists are carrying on this tradition through practical studies aligned with China's modernization programs, including forging the sense of community for the Chinese nation, rural revitalization, development of towns with distinctive features, culture-tourism integration, the Belt and Road Initiative, West China development, globalization, and relationship between modernization and diverse ethnic cultures.

Fifth, Chinese anthropology and ethnology combines the study of historical literature with anthropological and ethnological research and shares a deep-rooted connection with the science of history. Chinese anthropology and ethnology started late compared to its Western counterparts. Despite that, ancient Chinese texts documented anthropological knowledge and materials even before anthropology became a modern discipline of its own right in the West. This historical context provides multiple pathways for investigating the origin and development of ethnicities, comparative studies among ethnic groups and different regions. Further, the integration of approaches in the science of history and historical literature into the study of anthropology and ethnology has been a persistent characteristic of Chinese anthropology and ethnology, spanning from the Southern School and the Northern School to the stages of development after the reform and opening up. In recent years, many anthropological and ethnological studies in China have resorted to historical literature to interpret and rectify errors in oral historical records. Meanwhile, the studies of historical anthropology have expanded from “villages” to include “towns” and even “regions (such as the Pearl River Delta)”. This approach combines the “top-down” and “bottom-up” methodologies, offering an understanding of both macro-historical narratives and micro-histories from two perspectives.

## Conclusion

From introduction and dissemination, learning and imitation, to localization and innovation, anthropology and ethnology has undergone a multifaceted journey in China. Since the early 20th century, influential global classic theories, including Western anthropology, the Marxist ethnic theory, and the Soviet school of ethnology, have significantly shaped the development of anthropology and ethnology in China and other developing countries. The evolution of Chinese anthropology and ethnology provides a distinctive yet instructive case study, as China represents one of the few instances where a nation was simultaneously influenced by the traditions of Western anthropology, the Marxist ethnic theory, and the Soviet school. Chinese anthropology and ethnology, since its inception, has continued to evolve by innovatively adapting foreign theories to China’s social developments. It is not a mere mixture of poorly digested foreign academic traditions, nor is it solely a product of local practices and experiences. Building upon the foundations of the four major academic sources, Chinese anthropologists and ethnologists have proposed new research directions, theories, and methodologies to address the complex social problems arising from economic and social structural transformation in contemporary China. Their efforts have culminated in a genuine Chinese school, that is, the fifth way of anthropology and ethnology. It is evident that Chinese anthropology and ethnology has become an independent discipline with Chinese characteristics, progressing towards localization and internationalization. Rooted in domestic fieldwork, the discipline has made significant contributions to the global academic community of anthropology and ethnology.

For anthropology and ethnology to thrive, it must align with national development trends and address contemporary social demands. Moreover, it should chart its

course through a dialogue between tradition and the future. This entails the development of methodologies, concepts, and theories suited to the specific national context, enabling an authentic interpretation of the nation's culture and contributing to national development. The emergence of Chinese anthropology and ethnology as the fifth way of anthropology and ethnology signifies that China has gradually transcended from the dogmas established under the Western frameworks, shedding its apprentice status. Instead, it integrates its historical and cultural traditions with contemporary research patterns to articulate its unique concepts and ideology, presenting China's unique experiences and theories to the global stage. Additionally, as a burgeoning academic tradition, Chinese anthropology and ethnology offers valuable Chinese insights and solutions for other developing countries seeking to establish their own academic legacies. Scholars in developing countries should anchor their research in national and contemporary issues and demands to offer practical solutions. Only through this approach can they propose innovative concepts and theories that can advance the discipline both domestically and internationally.

**Acknowledgements** Not applicable.

**Authors' contribution** Dr. Yue Wu conducts the research and writing. Dr. Jijiao Zhang is a major contributor in writing and research plan. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

**Funding** Not applicable.

**Availability of data and materials** Not applicable.

## Declarations

**Ethics approval and consent to participate** Not applicable.

**Consent for publication** Not applicable.

**Competing interests** We have no competing interests.

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