

## **A New Perspective of Theories and Policies on Nationalities: Transition from Nation-State to State-Nation**

ZHANG Jijiao

Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Science

WEI Jianwen\*

China Academy of Social Management/ Sociology School, Beijing Normal University

YIN Peng

Theory Department, Renmin Daily

HUANG Li

Sociology Department, Central University of Finance and Economics

### **Abstract**

The term “Nation-state” is a concept from the West, and is a prevailing concept in contemporary theories and policies on nationalities in China, a multinational country to many scholars. In this paper, the authors suggest that there are three kinds of relations between nation and state, e.g. the relations between different nations, between nations and state, and between state and nations. From the perspective of relations between state and nation, we need to bring “state” back in that state comes first, following by nations. The authors use “state-nation” to illustrate this top-down relation, and declare that state plays a dominant role, and nation is subordinate to the state. This kind of relationship is realized by a series of institutionalized systems including hierarchical management, local management, category management, etc. based on official rank standard.

**Keywords:** Theories and policies on nationalities, Nation-state, State-nation

---

\* Address for Correspondence: No. 19, XinJieKouWai St., Hai Dian District, Beijing 100875, China  
Email: stanwjw@163.com.

## **Perspektif Baharu Teori dan Polisi tentang Nasionaliti: Transisi dari *Nation-State* kepada *State-Nation***

ZHANG Jijiao

Institut Ethnologi dan Anthropologi, Akademi Sains Sosial China

WEI Jianwen\*

Akademi Pengurusan Sosial China / Fakulti Sosiologi, Universiti Perguruan Beijing

YIN Peng

Jabatan Teori, Renmin Daily

HUANG Li

Jabatan Sosiologi, Universiti Kewangan dan Ekonomi Sentral

### **Abstrak**

Istilah “*Nation-state*” merupakan satu konsep dari Barat yang sering diaplikasi dalam teori dan polisi kontemporari tentang nasionaliti di China. Dalam pandangan banyak sarjana, China ialah sebuah negara pelbagai *nation*. Dalam kertas penyelidikan ini, penulis berpendapat bahawa terdapat tiga jenis hubungan antara *nation* dan *state*, yakni hubungan antara berbagai-bagai *nation*, antara *nation* dan *state* dan antara *state* dan *nation*. Dari perspektif hubungan antara *state* dan *nation*, kita perlu mengembalikan *state* yang memperlihatkan *state* mendahului *nation*. Penulis-penulis ini menggunakan “*state-nation*” untuk menunjukkan hubungan atas-bawah dan mengisytiharkan *state* memainkan peranan dominan yang menyaksikan *nation* adalah subordinat kepada *state*. Hubungan jenis ini dizahirkan melalui satu siri pengistituisian sistem yang merangkumi pengurusan berhierarki, pengurusan tempatan, pengurusan kategori dan sebagainya berdasarkan kedudukan rasmi yang standard.

**Kata kunci:** Teori dan polisi tentang nasionaliti, *Nation-state*, *State-nation*

---

\* Address for Correspondence: No. 19, XinJieKouWai St., Hai Dian District, Beijing 100875, China  
Email: stanwjw@163.com..

## 1 Introduction

In 2014, the Central Ethnic Work Conference had been successfully held, and the central leaders have profoundly elaborated on the major policies of the current and future ethnic work of China. But this does not mean that the Chinese national theory and national policy is not worthy of serious reflection, and carry out some necessary theoretical exploration and innovation.

In the field of Chinese national theory and national policy, the theory of “nation – state” is dominant that declares on one nation, one state, whether it is in favour or not in opposition. Why do we only have a theory of “national-state” theory? Does the theory of “national-state” suitably apply in China? Do we need to reflect and change a new perspective to rethink current national theory and national policy in China?

In our opinions, the basic point of Chinese national theory and national policy is to set up an appropriate relationship between the nation and the state in in the top-level design of the modern state system. Fei Xiaotong (1989) once said that the state and the nation are two different concepts or categories, both between the difference and the link (Fei, 1989). We realize that the relationship between the state and the nation, in particular, includes three relationships: the relationship between nation and nation (nation-nation), the relationship between nation and state (nation-state), and the relationship between state and nation (state-nation) relationship. How to distinguish and clarify the three relations between the state and the nation, who dominates, who is attached? That is an important theoretical issue we attempt to figure out, which has great significances on theoretical innovation in Chinese national theory and guiding for practical work in Chinese national affairs.

## 2 Literature Review

This article introduces main theories of Chinese Anthropology and Ethnology from the perspective of relationships between the state and the nation. We argue that the relationship between the state and the nation, in particular, includes three relations: the relations bet ween different nations, between nations and state and between state and nations. Therefore, what’s the real relationship between the state and the nation? It deserves to study furtherly.

### **Core concepts: nation and state**

To explore the relationship between the state and the nation, first of all is to define the two core concepts, on which scholars have made a thorough and extensive discussion in academic circles. In term of concept of “state” is concerned, it has formed different theories, such as contract theory (Hobbes, 1651/1985, p. 115-120; Locke, 1689/2009, p. 198; Rousseau, 1762/2003, p. 19; Rawls, 1971/2001, p. 364), plunder theory (Engels, 1999), public choice theory (North, 1981/1994, p. 225-226; Olson, 1965/1995, p. 40-

57; (Barzel, 2001/2006, p. 26) and so on. Similarly, the definition of “nation” is also complicated and Lenin (1986), Stalin (1953), Fei Xiaotong (1989), Lin Yaohua (1963), Bath, etc. have made their own definitions based on the specific context.<sup>1</sup>

The state in our paper is defined as the authority to manage all kinds of affairs within a certain geographical area. The nation is defined as an objective and stable community, in which people have a common identity and language, and form a close social relationship in their daily life. The point of our paper to propose the forth kind theory on between the state and the nation according to Chinese its own national conditions, combined with the three popular theories in the western academic circles.

### 3 Three Popular West Theories

The three popular west theories include nation-state theory, Marx theory of nationalism and the theory of multiculturalism, which have deeply influenced on Chinese ethnology and anthropology. Nation-state theory emerges from the historical contexts that western European nations established a unified nation-state with powerful strength of main body nation, such as France, the United Kingdom and Spain; Marx theory of nationalism has been formed on the needs of European workers movement and the national liberation movement in the nineteenth Century based on class analysis of Marx and Engels. Multiculturalism has been formed in the process of colonial expansion of France and the United Kingdom to the North American, Oceania, which has experienced the assimilation policy, the melting pot policy.

#### (1) Nation-state theory

Nation-state theory appeared in the late Middle Ages of Europe and formed in the era of bourgeois revolution or national independence movement, which focused on how the European bourgeoisie construct their own country? At that time, western thinkers put forward the theory that “one nation, one state” is the classic mode, which means that nation is the best form of state, nation is the highest form of a political entity, is a political covering of national spirit, is material reflects of national will and destiny.

The theory argues that every civilized nation in Europe has the right to self-determination, to realize national independence and integrity through merger and unified way, etc., to establish the national sovereignty, namely “the nation”. As Hagel pointed out, independence is a nation’s most basic freedom and the highest honour (Hegel, 1820/1982, p. 339). “Nation state” is actually the unification of the national boundary. Giddens also pointed out that the “nation” refers to the collective in certain territory with a clear boundary, which belongs to the administrative institution. The source of its reflection monitoring has

---

<sup>1</sup> The term of “nation” refers conventionally to two aspects, namely, ethnic minorities and ethnic areas in the uses of Chinese Ethnic administrative departments and some scholars.

included domestic and foreign national institutions. It is only when a unified administrative institution control over the territory of its sovereignty, then a nation can exist (Giddens, 1985/1998, p. 141-144).

In the three relations between the state and the nation, the nation-state theory mainly discusses the second kinds of relations. As an ideal model, it is the perfect combination of cultural cohesion and political unity (Heywood, 1999/2011, p. 107). From the point of view of the nation, the state puts on the political coat for the nation and constructs a political roof for nation's interests.

## **(2) Marx theory of nationalism**

In mid-19th century, with the fast development of the European bourgeois democratic revolution, as an independent force, the working class boarded on political arena. Liberation movements from oppressed peoples in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other Third World countries, also had climax. Therefore, how to guide the proletarian revolutionary movement in Europe, and provide a theoretical preparation for them? Marx and Engels established their own nation theory, based on in-depth research on the national movement in this period, by studying ethnology and anthropology collections and examining the relationship between proletarian revolutions and oppressed national liberation.<sup>2</sup>

Generally speaking, Nationality Theory of Marxism can be divided into two parts; One is about the theory of the law of the nation and its development, and the two is the theory of the national problem. The theory of the law of the nation and its development argues that nation, as a stable community, the main characteristic is the common region, language, economy and psychology. It is a product of a certain stage of the development of human society, formed in the late primitive society, when the private ownership, class and nation, which evolved from the tribal alliance and would withers away at a certain stage of communism. Factors affecting national development comprise three areas: national productivity levels, ethnic assimilation, political factors. Nation problems theory is that in a class society, class exploitation and oppression is the main source of national exploitation and oppression. Therefore, it is inevitable that the oppressed people's liberation struggle and the only channel to exploitation and oppression on nations are to eliminate class exploitation and oppression.

The exploitation of man by man is destroyed, and the exploitation of the nation and the nation will be destroyed. The Class antagonisms within the nation disappear; hostile relations between nations will be extinguished (Marx & Engels, 1848/2009, p. 50). National liberation movements is part of the overall problem of the social revolution:

---

<sup>2</sup> *How Einstein Think About Jewish Problem, Die heilige Familie, German Ideology, The Communist Manifesto (Manifesto of the Communist Party), Reden über Polen, Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany* etc.

on the one hand, victory of the revolution on proletariat against the bourgeoisie signals all oppressed nations liberation; on the other hand, there is no complete victory of the proletarian revolution without cooperation and support from national liberation movement (Gong, 2008).

In the three relations between the state and the nation, Marx theory of nationalism is mainly aimed at the relationship between the nation and the state, through historical materialism and class analysis, to explore the process of the establishment of the proletariat national state.

### **(3) Multiculturalism Theory**

The roots of multiculturalism theory originate in the United States in early twentieth Century. The problem that the theory focuses is that the United States is an immigrant country, how to coordinate the relationship between the various ethnic groups to solve the national contradiction in American society? The first to answer this question is from French-American scholar Hector Crevecoeur, who proposed a “melting pot Theory” (Crevecoeur & Stone, 1782/1981, p. 70-71) in 1782, that argues immigrants should completely and thoroughly forget and cut off all obligations and links with mother counties and accept American mainstream culture unconditionally (Berkson, 1920, p. 59), which was widely criticized later (Crevecoeur & Stone, 1782/1981). Multiculturalism, after the failure of the policy of assimilation melting pot policy, has been generally chosen as policy of recognition of diversity in the western countries, which later becomes a national policy of Canada, and the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and other countries adopted.

After the British scholar Watson (2005) comprehensive survey of different countries on the multiculturalism of different attitudes and priorities of different political and historical environment, multiculturalism made a wonderful summary. He believes that multiculturalism is above all a cultural outlook. Its core is the recognition of equality and mutual impact of cultural diversity and culture. He believes that multiculturalism is the first a cultural perspective. Its core is to recognize the cultural diversity as well as the equality and mutual influence between cultures. Secondly, multiculturalism is a historical view. History and tradition of a nation is the result of different experiences of mutual penetration of multi-ethnics. Then, traditional educational exclusion of non-mainstream culture must be corrected, schools must help students eliminate misunderstanding and discrimination against other cultures, and the fear of cultural conflict, learn how to understand, respect and appreciate other cultures. Finally, multiculturalism is a policy. Everyone shares equal opportunities in social, economic, cultural and political and prohibit any discrimination on racial, ethnic or national origin, colour, religion and other factors (Watson, 2000/2005).

In the three relations between the state and the nation, Multiculturalism is mainly about the third relationship, that is, the relationship between nation and nation were discussed. It advocates equal relationship and mutual recognition and respect between nations, while opposes melting and regeneration (re-forming) of all European nations (Zangwill, 1909).

## **4 Three Popular Theories in China**

### **(1) National Theory of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics**

After the founding of New China, the social structure has undergone significant changes. One of these is the transition from the unequal between the nation and the people before liberation to equal relationship. In order to realize and protect the rights of national equality and maintain national unity, it is necessary to establish a new system. However, it was not clear about nations' names and their number of population (Fei, 2000). Therefore, the two urgent questions need to address: First, what are nations and how to promote national development? The second is how to coordinate nations' relations? Since 1950, Central and local authorities of Ethnic Affairs organized research succeeded to distinguish and identify more than 50 ethnic minorities from proposed more than 400 nations. Then, national theory of socialism with China characteristics was formed, preliminary answer to the above two questions.

The theory basis of National Theory of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics is Marx theory of nationalism; it was formed by passing through several generations of collective leadership in practice, which includes four aspects: national equality, national unity, ethnic autonomy and national development and prosperity (Jin & Xiaorui, 2012). National equality is the basic premise and the core principle of China's national policy. National unity is the basic means, but also the fundamental principle of Chinese national policy (Jiang, 2005). National regional autonomy system is the basic system to solve the problem of China, and is an organic part of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Whether common prosperity of all ethnic groups or not, will ultimately affect the consolidation of national unity and ethnic equality fully achieved (Hu, 2005). At this stage, the fundamental task that Chinese government faces and solves on ethnic problems is to narrow and eliminate the gap on economic and social development, protect, inherit and develop national culture in concept of "respect differences, include and diversity" (Hao, 2007).

In the three relations between the state and the nation, the national theory of socialism with China characteristics mainly discussed the third kinds of relations, namely the relationship between nation and nation, on the basis of mutual equality between different ethnic groups, which aims to protect nation's own rights, strengthen solidarity between peoples, and finally realize the common prosperity of all nationalities.

### **(2) Pattern of multiple-integration of Chinese nation**

The theory of "pattern of multiple-integration of Chinese nation" was proposed by Fei Xiaotong at Tanner lectures organized Chinese University Hong Kong in 1989. In 1950s, research scholars naturally put ethnic studies equivalent to minority research, for the high engagement in ethnic issues and ethnic affairs, not included in the scope of the study in Han nationality. However, the minority cannot be separated from the Han nationality. Any minority cannot write its history wholly and comprehensively. In China, ethnic relations

are mainly related minority and Han nationality (Ma, 2013). Fei Xiaotong analyzes the formation process of the Chinese nation, combined with anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, history comprehensively and pointed out that the Chinese nation as a conscious entity, is the emergence of China and the Western powers in confrontation, but as a nation entity has been formed in the historical process of thousands of years. The body nation is composed of many dispersed ethnic units, through the contact, hybrid, connection and fusion, but also splitting and dying, and formed a pluralistic unity with each personality and characteristics (Zhao, 2012). Specifically this theory includes three aspects: first, the multi-level theory of national identity, that is, pattern of multiple-integration, the 56 nation is the basic level, the Chinese nation is the top; Second, during the formation of pattern of multiple integration, Han as the base layer, has play the role of the cohesion into the unity of the Chinese nation; Third, different levels can co-exist, which is not incompatible, and even at different levels, develop their own original characteristics and form a multi-lingual, multi-cultural whole.

In the three relations between the state and the nation, pattern of multiple-integration of Chinese nation also discussed the third kinds of relations, nation-nation relationship, except that it is more focused as well as different ethnic and Han relationship between higher levels of the Chinese nation.

### **(3) “Depoliticization” theory and the “Second generation National Policy”**

In 2004, “Depoliticization” theory of nationality theory was proposed by Ma Rong in his paper named “New Perspective to Understand Ethnic Relations: Depoliticization of minority issues”. There are two historical backgrounds: one is that the western scholars and some Russian scholars generally believe ethnic theory and system are the main reasons that caused the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Russia redefined the term “nation” and canceled the “nation” status on ID Card. Therefore, it is necessary for Chinese government to make major policy adjustments. Second, in the 1980s after China’s reform and opening up, with Communist ideology cohesion weaken and promotion of market mechanism, the original national policy enforcement and social effect decreased significantly, therefore, the definition of nation and declaration on minority national interests have negative impacts on Chinese national identity.

Based on combinations of the national theory and the theory of multiculturalism, Professor Ma pointed out that in the 21st century, “political” trend on ethnic issue should be changed to “culture” of the new direction and the 56 nationalities in China renamed to ethnic group (Ma, 2001, p. 156). As a result, China is the Chinese Nation - State, including 56 ethnic group. He also stressed the need to cultivate and strengthen national consciousness, and gradually dilute the ethnic consciousness. This will be Fei Xiaotong’s “pluralistic integration” theory into a political one, cultural diversity (Ma, 2004).

In 2011, Hu Angang and Hu Lianhe published the paper named “the second generation of national policy: to promote national integration and prosperity” to put forward the theory of the second generation of national policy (Hu & Hu, 2011). They



summed up methods to deal with national (races) problems all over the world, extracted the “melting pot” and “big assorted cold dishes” modes and pointed out that the “big pot” mode is comparatively successful to solve the national (races) problems. On this basis, the authors propose to promote national policy from the transition from the “first generation” to the “second generation”, namely to promote ethnic communion in political, economic, cultural, and social aspects, desalinate groups consciousness and concept 56 ethnic groups, strengthen the nation’s identity and sense of identity, promote the integration of the Chinese nation, promote integrated development and prosperity of the Chinese nation, build the Chinese nation large homes together (Jin & Xiaorui, 2012; Hao, 2012; Ma, 2013).

In the perspective of relationship between the state and the nation, both “Depoliticization” theory and “the second generation of national policy” theory argue that the state and government are very important in guiding the direction of inter-ethnic relations. However, the problem is the key issue addressed inter-ethnic relations and did not make in-depth discussion on the relation between the state and the nation.

### **New Emerging theory: State-Nation Theory**

At present, there is a dilemma in our researches that scholar from Chinese Ethnology and Anthropology often study at the “edge” minority areas, do not understand Chinese “mainstream” development situation; Sympathy in a “disadvantaged” minority compatriots, do not understand Chinese national development level; explore “local” micro-topic, do not understand Chinese and international “global” important issues and the overall ripple (Levenson, 1958/2009). Our academic research has three levels: microscopic single ethnic studies, median level of “nation – nation” relationship studies and macro level of “state-nation” studies. The difference between the “bottom-up” research idea of “nation – nation” relationship from scholar and the “top-down” work ideas of “state-nation” of central and local governments should be combined.

#### **(1) Theory Construction of “State-Nation” Theory**

##### **a Historical tradition**

From the point of view of history, China and Western countries have two distinct national concepts. The concepts of state in western countries are based on contract theory and the theory of people sovereignty (Pang, 2011), while traditional state concept of in China is a kind of homogeneous theory of home and country (Li, 2004), emphasizing the “unification” of thought, which consolidates the unity of dynastic regime in politics and became the Chinese nation’s political ideas and mode of thinking (Zhao, 2009). The concept of national unity is deep into the hearts of every Chinese, and everyone has an obligation to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country, and to oppose the country’s separation. Great unification means emperor who really meets the requirements “unified world” must actively deal with frontier affairs and consolidate the unity of the multi-ethnic

state rather than a part of the country, only to survive. Therefore, the “unification system” is an important basis for the legitimacy of state (Wang, 2001, p. 2), and formed the Chinese top-down, central-local and overall-local political structure and social structure.

In the relationship between the state and the people, there are significant differences between China and the western countries. In the west, there is a dual relationship between the state and the people. The people are the citizens of the highest legislators, and the subjects of these laws. In China, the relationship between the individual and the state is fragmented. The state is more like a family, is an extension of the people and representatives of the state. The relationship between the state and the people is a kind of clientelism of up-down.<sup>3</sup>

The central government (imperial power) is the ruler of the state, the local government is the parent of the people. Dong Zhongshu said in “Chunqiu Fanlu - Jiao Yi”: Parents of the emperor are in charge of heaven things, while descendants of emperor serve the people (Dong, 2010, p. 143). Chinese ancient political thought that argues the legitimacy of rule is based on governed people, which require the emperors have good virtues, concern about the people’s livelihood and realize good governance. It is one of the main characteristics of the “clientelism” social structure between Chinese nation and the people from top to bottom. Under the top-down relationship between the state and the people, the social structure of the “umbrella” style is presented in China. And the “umbrella” style social structure is not only a social structure, but also a way of resource allocation (Zhang, 2014). Extension of the point of view, Chinese national-ethnic relationship also takes on “umbrella” style characteristics.

## **b State-nation relationship**

Historically, in the Chinese classical political philosophy of the “world system” concept, the Central Plains Dynasty and border powers are the organic components of the world system. The emphasis on the uniqueness of the rulers in the world system and the emphasis on the consciousness of the “middle” makes the political elites of both the Han nationality and the minority nationalities have the responsibility to unify the world, regard the chaos as the unification. A series of concrete political initiatives have been taken to consolidate this united multi-ethnic state (Yu, 2007). The relationship between the central government and the borderland, relationship between ethnic minorities and Han nationality in ancient China, is a kind of Confucian political ethic principle that the frontier obeys the central authority and the central government assumes the moral responsibility of frontier security and development (Qiang, 1997).

---

<sup>3</sup> “Clientelism” is a sociological term proposed by American scholar Andrew Walder and Jean Oi, Nan Lin, David Wan have similar expressions and development.

After the founding of new China, in “state-nation” relationship, the pattern of multiple-integration characteristics still continue. Under the same country, all nationalities share common destiny, common prosperity and shame; if there is no unified country, there is no chance for the existence and development of all nationalities; there is no diversity of regional autonomy of various ethnic groups (autonomous regions, autonomous prefectures, autonomous counties, etc.).

The unity and integrity of the territory is the basis of the honour and shame of the people of all nationalities. We must emphasize the importance of a unified country and emphasize the support and assistance of state to ethnic minorities on development. Under the socialist planned economy, the Chinese government has adopted a series of measures to protect vulnerable groups (such as women, ethnic minorities, etc.) and promote equal access to education and work (Sautman, 2007, p. 86-118). After the reform and opening up, the Chinese government is also committed to the development of the economy in the western minority areas, trying to provide more employment and mobility opportunities for ethnic minorities in an attempt to eliminate the growing geographical and urban-rural gap (Goodman, 2007, p. 317-334).

Under the framework of “state-nation” relations, the role of the state is dominant, while the nation is subordinate to the state. The top-down relationship between central and minority areas and ethnic minorities is achieved through a series of institutionalized operational mechanisms, ranging from the central to the local “official standard” hierarchical management, territorial management and classification management (Zhang, Wei, Yinpeng, & Liubo, 2015). In accordance with the actual socio-economic situation, the central government has carried out policy-oriented leaning towards ethnic minority areas. It has adopted a series of policy measures to promote the economic development of ethnic minority areas and other provinces, accelerate the pace of economic development in ethnic minority areas, and strengthen the minority of the country’s identity.

## **(2) Classification Management Practices Under “State-Nation” Theory**

“Umbrella” style is one of the main features of Chinese socio-economic structure. In this kind of society, the relationship between the state and the nation is bound to be a top-down relationship of the “state–nation”. In this society, the relationship between the state and the nation must be expressed as “state – nation” top-down relationship. Here, we only discuss one of the classification management systems. Specifically, China implements the top-down classification management mechanism from the central to the local (ethnic minority areas and ethnic minorities) based on the top-down relationship between the state and the nation, and adopts corresponding policies to allocate relevant resources and power.

The power mainly refers that the state guarantees equal rights of ethnic minorities to administer state affairs and enjoys a certain degree of care in the appointment of cadres in ethnic minority areas. Policy refers that the state implements preferential policies for

minority areas and ethnic minorities. Resources are the national financial transfer payments and other aspects of the financial transfer to minority areas and ethnic minorities. The top-down relationship between the state and the nation is mainly manifested in five major fields: politics, economy, culture, society and ecology (see Figure 1).

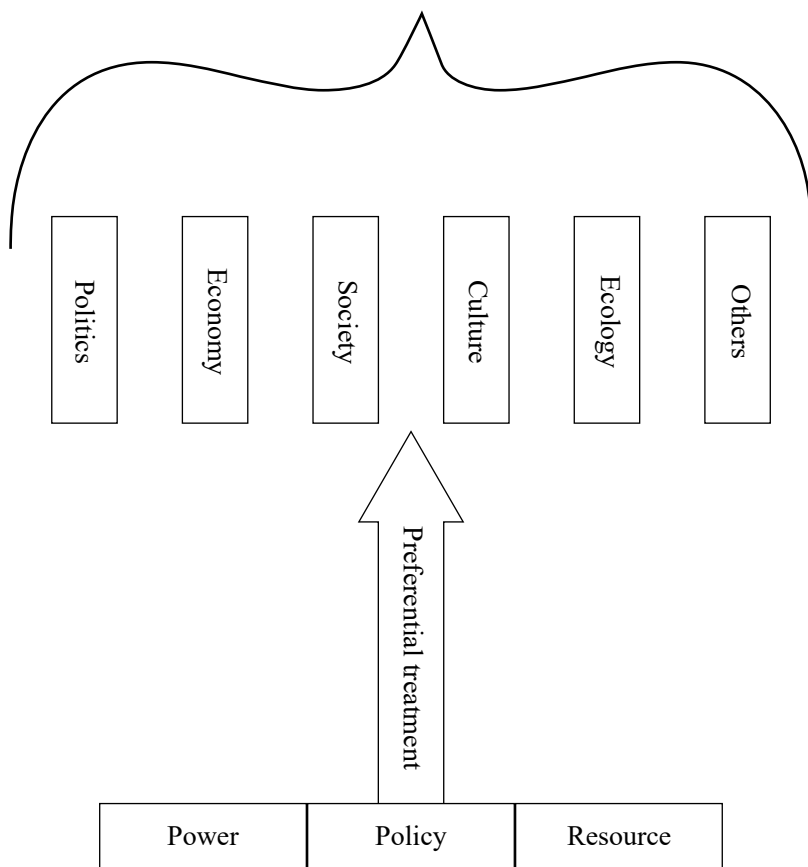


Figure 1 Top - Down Diagram of “State – Nations”

Because of the different geographical conditions and natural environment between China and Western countries, the social historical and cultural traditions are quite different. China should unswervingly take the right path to solve the ethnic problems with Chinese characteristics. The practice of China for more than 60 years has fully proved that China’s national policy is in line with the national interests of all ethnic groups and the people of all nationalities. It is correct and effective. Under this policy, the people of all ethnic groups in China have safeguarded national unity, safeguarded social stability, safeguarded national unity and opened a bright road to realize the common prosperity and development of all ethnic groups.

## 6 Conclusion and Further Discussion

To sum up, the paper has discussed seven kinds of theories above on the relationship between the state and nations. Although the focus of the analysis is different, only the state-nation theory discusses the relationship between state and nation (see Table 1).

Table 1: comparison of the seven theories

	State—nation	Nation—state	nation—nation
“Nation—state”theory		√	
Multiculturalism Theory			√
Marx theory of nationalism		√	
National Theory of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics			√
Pattern of multiple-integration of Chinese nation			√
“Depoliticization” theory and the “Second generation National Policy”			√
State-Nation Theory	√		

Specifically, these three dominant western theories mentioned above, besides the multiculturalism theory, the other two theories are involved in issue of state. The nation-state theory holds that the nation comes before the state. However, historical studies have shown that in many cases the state has created a nation, and so is China. In a sense, China is forced to accept the “nation – state” concept and enter the “nation- state” of the world system. Marxist national theory implies the concept of “class state”. However, when the state no longer emphasizes class division, no longer emphasizes class struggle, and no longer based on class dictatorship to construct the national discourse system, therefore the discussion of “class state” is parochial for China as a multi-ethnic country. The problem of China’s national theory in ethnology is to emphasize the perspective of “nation” on defining the “nation-state” relationship, emphasizing the national attribute, ignoring the state attribute. As a result, it is far-fetched and stiff to explain and apply “nation-state” theory as a single nation in China (Ningsao, 1995, p. 265-267; Zhou, 2009).

However, the national property has been implied in these kinds of Chinese national theory, that is, the state is the meaning of these theories. In the national theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, its premise to achieve national harmony is the founding of New China. In the theory of multiple-integration of Chinese nation, Fei pointed out in particular that it is not very appropriate to use the national territory as the scope of the

Chinese nation because the state and the nation are two different and related concepts. In the theory of “Depoliticization” theory and the “Second generation National Policy”, the importance of the state is more obvious, the purpose of handling of ethnic relations is to maintaining national stability and unity. We must admit that the above-mentioned theories on ethnic groups in China have laid a solid foundation for our understanding and analysis of the relationship between nation and nation. Their understanding on the state also helps us to further realize that it is indispensable to understand and analyze on the state in Chinese national theories.

Therefore In this paper, we propose that it is urgent and necessary to bring “state” back in construction and development on Chinese national theories and highlight the role of state. We argue that the role of the state in a dominant position in the top-down “state-nation” relationship framework, while the nation is subordinate to the state. The top-down relationship between central and minority areas and ethnic minorities is achieved through a series of institutionalized operational mechanisms, ranging from the central to the local “official standard” hierarchical management, territorial management and classification management. Only from the angle of the distribution of power and the allocation of resources, the new perspective of “top-down” state-nation relationship between the state and the nation that need more to further develop and deepen.

## References

- Barzel, Y. (2001). *A Theory of the State: Economic Rights, Legal Rights, and the Scope of the State*. Shanghai: University of Finance and Economics.
- Berkson, I. (1920). *Theories of Americanization: A Critical Study*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- de Crevecoeur, J.H.S.J.; Stone, A.E. (1981). *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America* (Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, Trans.). New York: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1782)
- Dong, Z. (2010). *Spring and Autumn Fan Lu*. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House.
- Engels, F. (1999). *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats* (*The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*) (Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, Trans.). Beijing: People's Publishing House. (Original work published 1884)
- Fei, X. (1989). The Pattern of Diversity in Unity of the Chinese Nation. *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Science)*, 4.
- Fei, X. (2000). My national research experience and reflection. *Journal of the Central University for Nationality (Philosophy and Social Science)*, 1.
- Giddens, A. (1985). *The nation-state and violence*. Beijing: The Commercial Press.
- Gong, X. (2008). On the System of National Theories of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. *Ethno-National Studies*, 2.
- Goodman, D. (2007). The Campaign to 'Open Up the West': National, Provincial-Level and Local Perspectives. *China Quarterly*, 4(1), 317-334.
- Hao, S. (2007). Important Ideas about the Socialist Harmonious Society: Respect to Diversity and Tolerance of Variety. *Ethno-National Studies*.
- Hao, S. (2012, February 3). The Core Principles of China's National Policy cannot be Changed. *China's National Newspaper*.
- Hegel, G. W. (1982). *Principle of law philosophy* (Y. Fan, & Q. Zhang, Trans.). Beijing: People's Publishing House. (Original work published 1820)
- Heywood, A. (1999). *Political theory an introduction*. Beijing: China Renmin University Press.
- Hobbes, T. (1985). *Leviathan* (S. Li, & T. Li, Trans.). Shanghai: The Commercial Press. (Original work published 1651)
- Hu, A., & Hu, L. (2011). The Second-Generation Ethnic Policy: Toward Integrated Ethnic and Prosperity. *Journal of Xinjiang Normal University (Edition of Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 5.

- Hu, J. (2005, May 28). *Speech at the national working conference of the central committee and the state council's fourth national conference on national unity and progress*. Retrieved February 10, 2015, from [http://www.gmw.cn/01gmr/2005-05/28/content\\_240705.html](http://www.gmw.cn/01gmr/2005-05/28/content_240705.html)
- Jiang, Z. (2005, July 23). *Speech at the central ethnic work conference in 1992*. Retrieved February 10, 2015, from [http://www.seac.gov.cn/art/2005/7/23/art\\_3094\\_69842.html](http://www.seac.gov.cn/art/2005/7/23/art_3094_69842.html)
- Jin, B., & Xiaorui. (2012). In maintaining socialism ethnic theory and policy with chinese characteristics----analysis of second-generation ethnic policy. *Journal of Northwest University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Science)*, 4.
- Lenin. (1986). *The Collected Works of Lenin* (Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, Trans.). Beijing: People's Publishing House.
- Levenson, J.R. (2009). *Confucian China and modern fate*. Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press.
- Li, L. (2004). Political Trust in Rural China. *Modern China*, 30(2), 228-258.
- Lin, Y. (1963). On the Use and Translation of the Word 'Nation'. *Historical Research*, 2.
- Locke, J. (2009). *Two Treatises of Government* (S. Yang, Trans.). Beijing: China Social Science Press. (Original work published 1689)
- Ma, R. (2001). *Nation and social development*. Beijing: The Ethnic Publishing House.
- Ma, R. (2004). New perspective to understand ethnic relations: de-politicalization of ethnicity. *Journal of Peking University (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 6.
- Ma, R. (2013). Further discussion on current ethnic problems in china. *National Sociology Research Letters*, 127.
- Marx, K. H. & Engels, F. V. (2009). *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei Vol(2)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. (Original work published 1848)
- Ningsao. (1995). International comparison between nation and nation - national relationship and national policy. *Peking University Press*, 265-267.
- North, D. C. (1994). *Structure and Change in Economic History* (Chenyu, Trans.). Shanghai: SDX Joint Publishing. (Original work published 1981)
- Olson, M. (1995). *The Logic of Collective Action* (Qianyong, & Y. Zeng, Trans.). Shanghai: People's Publishing House. (Original work published 1965)
- Pang, J. (2011). The Logic and Pedigree of the Modern Western Concept of State. *Journal of Political Science*, 5.
- Qiang, S. (1997). , Constitutionalism and Legal Transplantation: Legitimacy Reconstruction in the Transition of the Late Qing Dynasty. *Strategy and Administration*, 6.



- Rawls, J. (2001). *A Theory of Justice* (H. He., B. He, & S. Liao, Trans.). Beijing: China Social Science Press. (Original work published 1971)
- Rousseau, J. (2003). *The Social Contract* (Z. He, Trans.). Shanghai: The Commercial Press. (Original work published 1762)
- Sautman, B. (2007). Preferential Policies for Ethnic Minorities in China: The Case of Xinjiang. *Nationalism & Ethnic Politics*, 4(1).
- Stalin, L. (1953). *Collected Works of I.V. Stalin: Vol (2)* (Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, Trans.). Beijing: People's Publishing House.
- Wang, K. (2001). *Nationalities and Nation: the Genealogical Genealogy of China's Multi-Nationality Unification State*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Literature Publishing House.
- Watson, C. (2000). *Multi-Culturalism*. Changchun: Jilin People's Publishing House.
- Yu, F. (2007). Evolution of Hua-yi and the Build of the Great Unification Thought Frame—a Review on the Relevant Account of 'Historical Records'. *China's Borderland History and Geography Studies*, 2.
- Zangwill, I. (1909). *The Melting Pot*. New York: Macmillan.
- Zhang, J. (2014). An Umbrella Style Society: a New Concept and Observation of the Transformation of China's Economic and Social Structure. *Thinking*, 4.
- Zhang, J., Wei, J., Yinpeng, & Liubo. (2015). A new perspective on theories and policies on nationalities: transition from "nation-state" to "state-nation". *Guangxi Ethnic Studies*, 4.
- Zhao, D. (2009). The Mandate of Heaven and Performance Legitimation in Historical and Contemporary China. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53.
- Zhao, X. (2012). Discussions on the Multi-Element Ethnic Relations: a Review based on Fei Xiaotong's Concept of Pluralistic Integration of the Chinese Nation. *Social Science*, 4.
- Zhou, P. (2009). Re-understanding of Nation-State. *Political Science*, 4.